

An Exploration of Playful Music Pedagogy Within Selected Irish Primary School

Contexts

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Education is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RUB' followed by a flourish.

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCM	Constant Comparative Method of Analysis
DCA	Directed Content Analysis
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
GERM	Global Education Reform Movement
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (Ireland)
PD	Professional Development
PDST	Professional Development Service for Teachers (Ireland)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLC	Professional Learning Community
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SPHE	Social Personal and Health Education (Irish curricular area)
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Maths
UN	United Nations
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Abstract

An Exploration of Playful Music Pedagogy Within Selected Irish Primary School

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Rachael Byrne

Evidenced by its inclusion within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and increased policy and research presence, vitally important for children, play is suggested to deepen and enrich learning in the primary school. However, in the Irish context, opportunities to engage in playful learning often diminish as children enter and advance through primary school as teachers engage in increasingly formal pedagogical practices.

Following completion of a day-long professional development workshop on play-based music education inspired by the music education approaches of Kodály and Kokas, 6 Irish generalist primary teachers explored playful music pedagogy within their respective contexts over a 6-week period in 2019. Data gathered as part of this qualitative case study, included teacher reflections on playful activities facilitated, photographs, recordings of professional learning community meetings and semi-structured interviews.

Within-case and cross-case analysis pertaining to practices of playful music pedagogy was facilitated by the use of directed content analysis and a constant comparative method of analysis.

Findings suggest transformation in classroom culture thought integral to playful music pedagogy and manifesting in increased informality, shifts in ownership, movement outside comfort zones and challenges to stereotypes. Findings also indicate a positive shift in the level of meaningful engagement for pupils, and contribution to musical, curricular and holistic learning.

The research proffers a framework for playful music learning along a continuum of ownership to support generalist teachers' practices of music education in Irish primary schools. However, it also sheds light on challenges associated with realising increasingly informal, active and playful teaching in this context, owing to a lack of infrastructure, and cultural expectations.

Recommendations include suggestion that teacher-education, at preservice and in-service levels in Ireland, could benefit from incorporating playful music pedagogy in support of curriculum frameworks that emphasise the vital importance of play for children throughout the primary years.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Play, in all of its different manifestations, offers scope for broad and deep learning, enjoyment, engagement, intrinsic motivation and inclusive practices in education (Edwards, 2017; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hakkarainen, 1999; Zosh et al., 2017, 2018). It can encourage open-ended, creative engagement or provide scaffolded experiential practice in relation to a range of skills and competencies (Cassim, 2020; Edwards, 2017, Hakkarainen, 1999; Mardell, Solis & Bray, 2019; Trawick-Smith, 2012). In recent years, play and play-based pedagogy are receiving ever-increasing traction in educational literature and policy around the world. Studies at early-childhood (Allee-Herndon et al., 2021; Kukkonen et al., 2020), primary level (Allee-Herndon & Killingsworth Roberts, 2021) and beyond into post-primary and tertiary education (Cassim, 2020; Pászto et al., 2021) have focused on the benefits of fusing play and games into the educational sphere. This is often with a view to attending to holistic and academic development in line with skills and competencies thought integral for 21st century learners (Andreopoulou & Moustakas, 2019).

A growing body of literature and policy suggests greater openness to channelling play within everyday educational practices (Edwards, 2017). However, transfer of such practices in schools is less evident, particularly as pupils move past the earliest stages (Gray & Ryan, 2016; Whitebread & Jameson, 2010). Commentators have suggested that there is a need for increased understanding as to what playful pedagogy might actually look like in practice, and how curricula and attitudes might need to change to allow for playful practices (Gray & Ryan, 2016; Mardell et al., 2019).

Drawing upon recent work in the field of education by Pyle & Daniels (2017) and Zosh, Hirsh-Pasek, Hopkins, Jensen, Liu, Neale, Solis & Whitebread (2018), it has been suggested that educators can “provide a variety of strategies to facilitate and

engage students in playful learning experiences" that involve a combination of "child-initiated and directed activities to more adult-initiated and guided experiences" (Mardell et al., 2019, p. 234). Such suggestions are highly aspirational, yet there is a need for increased clarity for educators as to what this might entail within specific curricular areas (The LEGO Foundation, 2018). Where pragmatic educators seize upon connections between play and pedagogy pertaining to different subject areas, Cassim (2020, pp. 531–532) has suggested an opportunity to disrupt a "one-size fits-all" approach" to curriculum whilst "prioritising engagement" (Cassim, 2020, pp. 531–532).

Cognisant of the broader context pertaining to play and education, the current study was designed with a view to exploring generalist primary school teachers' practices of a form of playful music pedagogy that combines elements of child-led and teacher-directed musical play in the learning process. This playful music pedagogy was inspired by and developed from the work of Hungarian music education pedagogues, Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) and Klára Kokas (1929-2010).

Having undertaken study at the Kodály Institute, Kecskemét, Hungary, the work of Kodály and Kokas has played an important role in shaping my personal philosophy of education, both musical and otherwise. In many respects my interest in playful pedagogy has been inspired by these music education approaches. Although the Kodály approach has been described as overly structured by some commentators (Abril & Gault, 2016; Gault, 2016), my experience of this approach was different. I was fascinated to observe generalist and specialist teachers' use of a range of games and experiential learning activities to playfully support and scaffold pupils' music learning, which is inherent to Kodály music education (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). I was similarly impressed by the increasingly free, playful guided and child-centred Kokas approach, said to complement the structured and scaffolded Kodály concept of music

education through “free movement” (Hawbaker, 2000, p. 2). With similar approaches utilised in the Kodály Institute to scaffold student teachers’ music educational development, I was afforded opportunities to learn through playful musical engagement. Here, students (and indeed educators) within all of these contexts were implicitly encouraged to take on playful roles in the music-making process and their enthusiastic and joyful engagement was evidenced within their learning. However, such practices did not resonate with my experience of a more restrained culture surrounding music education in Irish primary schools. In this context, primary school music education, facilitated by generalist teachers, has been struggling for decades as evidenced in seminal reports (Benson, 1979; Heneghan, 2001; Herron, 1985) and inspectorate and teacher-generated data (Inspectorate, 2002; Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009). This was an important factor in my decision to commence doctoral study in the realm of music education upon my return to Ireland from Hungary.

As I engaged with the literature pertaining to play, musical play, music education, informal learning, and playful pedagogies as part of the EdD programme in DCU, I came to view key elements associated with the work of Kodály and Kokas to exist along a continuum of ownership. This aligned with previous work by Dewey (1916a) in the realm of education and by Wright (2016) a century later, in relation to continua of ownership and intentionality within increasingly informal music education practices. As I continued to explore the playful elements of the Kodály and Kokas music education approaches, I was particularly encouraged to see tendencies to conceptualise playful pedagogies along a similar spectrum or continuum of ownership (Edwards, 2017; Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Zosh et al., 2017, 2018) within the broader educational literature.

Cognisant of the broader context, I began to consider whether playful pedagogy drawing upon aspects of the Kodály and Kokas approaches might inform the development of a playful music learning framework to underpin generalist primary school teachers' music education practices in Ireland with associated benefits for pupil learning and engagement at all ages across the primary school.

With music education, playful pedagogy, play and musical play providing an important springboard for the present study, it has of course been necessary to draw from across traditional disciplinary boundaries for the research. The present chapter discusses the policy, philosophy and rhetoric underpinning playful pedagogy. In doing so, it reflects upon important tensions within the literature pertaining to the notion of playful pedagogy. These relate to how play is defined and valued, the extent to which play and work can exist in tandem with one another, and perceptions of the appropriateness of play in the context of pupil learning as children move past early childhood education. Following exploration of these tensions with reference to broader policy, the specifics of the problem underpinning this research are discussed. Subsequently, the rationale, aims, scope and delimitations are detailed before the chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis document.

Play and The Policy Context for Playful Pedagogy in Primary Schools

Play and Playful Pedagogy

Play has been defined in many diverse ways. For example, some scholars suggest that it represents “a set of cultural practices” (Frost, Wortham & Reifel, 2012, p. 3), a “critical” activity for young children and those with “difficult life circumstances” and something “integral to our wellbeing” (Michnick Golinkoff et al., 2006, pp. 7–8). Others have considered it to be a driver for the pursuit of knowledge, the basis for the arts and pursuance of creativity (Frost et al., 2012; Swanwick, 2005)

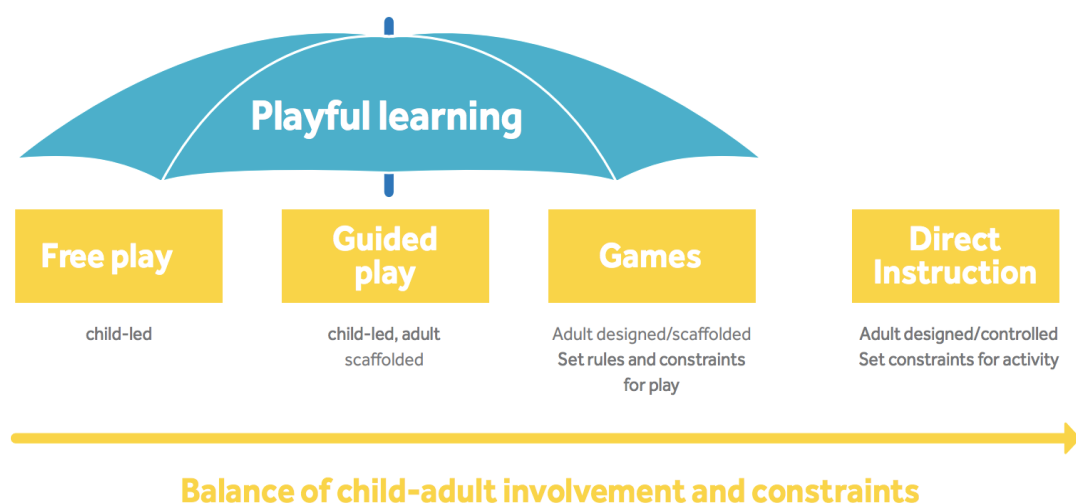
and even “a waste of time” (Michnick Golinkoff et al., 2006, p. 4). The value of play has long been debated, shedding light on the role history and culture plays in shaping our perceptions of the value of play for children and adults alike (Cohen, 2018). Aside from its value, defining features of play vary but tend to relate to a foregrounding of process, freedom, experience and agreed-upon rules, with potential involvement of pretence and imagination (Bruce, 2015). Mardell et al. (2016, p. 2) have emphasised core tenets of play as “taking risks, making mistakes, exploring new ideas, and experiencing joy”.

Critically, providing opportunities for exploration, skill-development, practice and encouraging deep involvement in learning (Bruce, 2015), play has been said to present the ideal and most natural context for children’s learning and development (Froebel, 1967; Moyles, 2010; Trawick-Smith, 2012; Vygotsky, 1967). However, viewing play as “an expression of freedom” (Gray, 2008, para. 9), some commentators and teachers have proposed that it should not be manipulated by adults towards pedagogical goals (Pyle & Danniels, 2017). This can pose difficulties when seeking to provide play opportunities in schools. Conversely, others suggest that instead of insisting that play should retain all of its “critical components as it permeates more formal schooling” there is a need to consider “how play might have to change” in this new context (Hall & Abbott, 1991, p. 4). The latter perspective is adopted within the present research, which is not to detract from the value and importance of free play for children, but rather to conceptualise ways to make playful learning achievable in the educational sphere (Zosh et al. 2017).

Van Hoor, Nourot, Scales & Alward, (2007) have advocated the notion of a play-centred curriculum to channel play towards children’s learning and development by balancing different forms of play and teacher-directed activities. Such a perspective

aligns with that of Zosh et al. (2017, p. 3) who have generated research and resources on behalf of the LEGO Foundation, which aims to “build a future where learning through play empowers children to become creative, engaged, lifelong learners”. Maintaining that “learning through play can happen through free play and when adults or aspects of the environment structure the play situation towards a particular learning goal”, these researchers have presented a framework of playful learning which is seen to exist along a continuum of ownership (Zosh et al., 2017, p. 13). This framework allows for an extended view of playful learning along a continuum between completely child-directed activities (free play) and entirely teacher-directed work (non-play), with a range of activities in-between, categorised as guided play and games. This continuum, depicted below in figure 1, was seen to align with previous research in the field of education (Dewey, 1916a), music education (Wright, 2016), and playful music learning. Consequently, it was to become central to the present research.

Figure 1: Playful Learning Activities Along a Continuum of Child and Adult Ownership (Zosh et al., 2017, p. 13).



The above figure illustrates that playful or play-based learning can be entirely child-led in free play, involve a degree of adult scaffolding in guided play or manifest

in a range of adult-designed or scaffolded games, which involve a diminution in the degree of ownership of play for the pupils. Indicating a need for teachers to adopt increasingly supportive rather than directive roles, allied with a sense of child agency, this is seen to allow for “a wider range of experiences that are adult-scaffolded but remain playful in essence” (Zosh et al., 2018, p. 3). Building upon previous research (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015), Zosh et al. (2017, p. 16) have suggested that, regardless of where along the continuum of learning it resides, “optimal learning through play” occurs within joyful, meaningful, engaging, iterative and socially interactive activities.

The Zosh et al. (2018) framework was seen to effectively illuminate playful learning across a continuum, which aligned with previous research inspiring the present study (Dewey, 1916a; Wright, 2016). While it did not shape the initial conceptualisation of musical play existing across a continuum, it was to play a role in guiding ongoing engagement with the data towards the development of a specific framework for playful music learning to support playful music education practices for the Irish context. This framework is presented in Chapter 4 of the thesis.

Having presented the guiding definitions of play and playful pedagogy underpinning this research, next is an exploration of the policy context surrounding play and playful learning.

The Policy Context

While play is evidenced across myriad policies and cultures around the world, this has not always led to changes to practices on the ground in the educational sphere. Policies informing the present research include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 2010, p. 29), The Action Plan for Education 2019 (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2019), Aistear: The Early Childhood Education Framework (NCCA, 2009a) and The Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life

Strategy (DES, 2011). Each is discussed briefly to further contextualise the use of play-based pedagogies to support learning in primary schools. These explorations of policy are then considered in relation to the Primary School Music Curriculum (NCCA, 1999a) and music education in the Irish primary classroom.

A key document underlining the importance and value of play for children in particular is the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Interestingly, play here is connected to the arts. This is discussed in the next section.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 2010, p. 29), pertaining to, ‘Leisure, recreation and cultural activities’, suggests that:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity. (p. 29)

This article places an onus on governments to respect children’s right to play and ensure they are afforded the opportunity to participate in a range of artistic activities. Renowned arts educator Eisner (1990), reflecting on connections between play and art, has suggested that:

Both art and play, like imagination and fantasy, are not regarded as part of the serious business of schooling. To be serious requires clear goals, a well thought out plan for achieving them and, perhaps most of all, hard work. Neither play nor art is associated with work. On the contrary play is considered the antithesis. (p. 43)

Interestingly, potentially alluding to such an enduring tension in the rhetoric between play and serious, hard work, Article 31 has actually become known as the ‘forgotten article of the Convention’ (IPA (International Play Association), 2012, para.

12). Given such suggestion, it is perhaps unsurprising to see commentators alluding to an ongoing failure to prioritise implementation of this article across a range of key areas (Voce, 2011). This is noted within tendencies to squeeze play out of education systems “from beyond the early years” (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010, p. 98), replaced instead by “method, grind and education by instruction” more aligned with work (Hall, 2013, p. 135).

Broad tensions pertaining to the notions of work, play and learning for primary school children are further evidenced in educator remarks that “time spent on play activities should decrease with the age of the children” and that “where ‘play’ ...take[s] place with the older age-group it [would] always [be] referred to as ‘not work’” indicating that “learning...[is] not taking place during the activity” (Eyles, 1993, p. 45). This may reflect a perception on the part of some educators that play is either unnecessary or unsuitable for supporting children in the learning process after the earliest stages (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010) underpinning a lack of prioritisation of play as part of the broader culture within primary schools.

In contrast, in relation to the Action Plan for Education within the Irish context, which espouses hopes that education should support pupils in the development of key 21st century skills and competencies, we encounter suggestions that playful pedagogies might be prioritised to aid in this learning process.

Action Plan for Education – Curriculum, 21st Century Learning and Skill Development

The Action Plan for Education (DES, 2019) aims to support quality 21st century teaching and learning in Irish classrooms. This report highlights the importance of collaboration, Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) development, creativity and inclusion for those with special educational needs (SEN). In addition to

this, the report emphasises hopes to manage “workforce development” to ensure that the education system meets “the skills needs of students, society and the economy” with emphasis on “critical thinking, adaptability, innovation, resilience and wellbeing” (DES, 2019, p. 12). Emphasis on these and other skills associated with 21st century learning and development is notable in its aim to implement the ‘National Skills Strategy 2025’ (DES, 2015, p. 77) which seeks to “implement a multi-annual programme of curriculum reform to ensure that the pre-school and school curriculum are continuously improved and remains relevant to the needs of individuals, society and the economy”.

As a means of addressing some of these skills in tandem with overall well-being, Hammond & Foster (2018, p. 4) have suggested that “play and playful approaches to teaching and learning are [likely to become] more prevalent” in new curriculum plans in Ireland “increasing children’s opportunities for the kind of creative and artistic activity referred to in *Aistear* and in the Primary School Curriculum”. In addition to this, they have noted that “the relevance and importance of the arts has increased in recent years as curriculum developments internationally underscore the importance of generic key skills, alongside deeper subject knowledge, in 21st century learning” (Hammond & Foster, 2018, p. 2). This provides rationale for exploring and applying play-based approaches to primary school practices at present in the Irish context, suggesting too, that the arts, and by extension music education, may be increasingly important for 21st century learners. Fadel (2008) has suggested that these learners require skills across three separate domains: Learning and Innovation, Information, Media & Technology, and Life and Career skills.

The next section considers such a perspective with reference to Irish education policies *Aistear* (2009) and the Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life Strategy

(2011), before reflecting on the relevance and implications for playful pedagogy in relation to music education in the primary school context.

Aistear

Aistear is a policy “curriculum framework for children from birth to six years [of age] in Ireland” (NCCA, 2009a, p. 6). One of Aistear’s twelve key principles is that “children learn and develop [through] play” (NCCA, 2009a, p. 7). Within these documents, play is aligned with hands-on experiences to help children to “manage their feelings, develop as thinkers and language users, develop socially, be creative and imaginative, and lay the foundations for becoming effective communicators and learners” (NCCA, 2009a, p. 11).

The Aistear curriculum documents include a range of playful sample learning opportunities to underpin pedagogical practices and suggest that all children in the early years of primary school should be afforded a range of opportunities to engage in playful learning activities. However, despite emphasis on play within the policy document, research has demonstrated that Irish educators feel underprepared to utilise play-based approaches to learning in their classroom practices as part of Aistear (Gray & Ryan, 2016). This may suggest a need for further examples to support practice and indeed, professional learning opportunities for educators. The suggestion that Irish educators are experiencing difficulties realising play-based practices in their everyday teaching, brings to mind guidance from Mardell et al. (2019) that for playful pedagogy to work in schools, “Attitudes about the nature of learning must change. And educators must take on practices that create cultures of playful learning”. Yet, with the less formal and more integrated approach to learning outlined in the Aistear framework, seen by teachers in Concannon-Gibney’s (2018) study to conflict with aspects of the current emphasis on achievement in literacy and numeracy over and above other areas within the Irish

context, educators are placed in a difficult position. This prioritisation of subjects is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life Strategy

Emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the Irish primary educational context aligns with the Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life Strategy (DES, 2011) that altered prioritisation of subjects within what initially emerged as an holistic curriculum in 1999. This occurred in response to the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)-“shock” from a drop in standardised assessments in these curricular areas in comparison with other OECD countries (Breakspear, 2012). In altering prioritisation of subjects, this strategy, and its more recently updated successor, has encouraged teachers to provide for integration of literacy and numeracy insofar as is practicable (DES, 2017). Placing substantial focus on literacy and numeracy (DES, 2011) has been seen to negatively impact scope for educators’ teaching of music and the arts (O’Flynn, 2011) and via play-based methods and approaches in Irish classrooms (Concannon-Gibney, 2018). This has been defended with statements that there is a need “to ensure the most efficient use possible of available resources and in many instances re-prioritise spending away from desirable but ultimately less important activities” than literacy and numeracy (DES, 2011, p. 15).

The shift between what were initially fundamentally holistic educational goals in Ireland towards prioritisation of certain curricular areas and approaches based on value judgements may to some extent be seen as indicative of an Irish manifestation of the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). Sahlberg (2011, p. 99) defined GERM as being “not a formal global policy program, but rather an unofficial agenda that relies on a certain set of assumptions to improve education systems”. One of these key assumptions is “increased focus on core subjects such as literacy and numeracy”

with “subjects, such as science, the arts, and health education...neglected and not seen as important” (Wasmuth & Nitecki, 2017, p. 2). It is outside the scope of the present study to provide an in-depth overview into the underlying theoretical underpinnings of GERM. However, it is important to consider it as a potential influence upon tendencies to prioritise more formal educational practices towards specific and measurable learning outcomes and emphases on literacy and numeracy over other areas (Wasmuth & Nitecki, 2017). This may indicate an increased need for researchers to explore scope for playful pedagogy, and arts education, to contribute to children’s overall development in addition to that of literacy and numeracy, where applicable.

Having provided an overview of a number of policies underpinning and contextualising the use of playful practices in Irish classrooms and outlined some underlying tensions in this area, next it is prudent to explore this with particular focus on music education in the Irish context, integral to the current study.

Music Education in Irish Primary Schools

In Ireland, music is one of three subjects bracketed under the title of Arts Education within the primary school curriculum, alongside visual arts and drama. Although dance and literature are recognised as important elements of arts education, they are dealt with within Physical Education and language curricula respectively. The music curriculum was published in 1999 as a successor to previous curricula that had been deemed to foreground the role of product as opposed to process in the realm of music-making (Stakelum, 2008) indicating a move towards increasingly informal and experiential music learning. As part of the holistic 1999 curriculum, the revised music curriculum (NCCA, 1999a, 1999b) documents were developed with the goal of supporting the holistic, aesthetic, creative and musical development of Irish primary school pupils. The documents consist of a curriculum statement and accompanying

guidelines for teachers, with illustrated examples, based on a curriculum of three interrelated strands: listening and responding, performing and composing. Within these documents there is an implicit understanding that teachers bring with them a range of personal capacities, skills and knowledge in relation to music, and thus, are capable of making personal decisions in relation to music education practices “at the micro level of the classroom” (Stakelum, 2008, p. 287).

Aligning with literature on play, the work of Dewey, Kodály and constructivist theories, there is mention of playful activities in the curriculum with an expectation that pupils should be afforded, “Active participation in musical games and in other pleasurable musical experiences” as they move from the “known to the unknown” in terms of their understanding of music (NCCA, 1999a, p. 8). In addition to this, there is a suggestion that pupils should be led “towards showing their understanding [at an early age, before] reach[ing] a more conscious understanding of musical concepts” as they move through the school (NCCA, 1999a, p. 7). However, whilst the document aligns with the Kodály philosophy of music education in many respects, with use of Curwen hand-signs, tonic solfa and emphasis on song-singing, there are limited examples of playful strategies for supporting teachers in identifying increasingly active, engaging, and informal means of developing musical understanding. Given that those utilising the curriculum are generalist teachers, many of whom with little confidence or competence in the realm of music, there is certainly scope for increased detail as to how this might be defined and what it might look like in practice for the Irish context (Benson, 1979; Heneghan, 2001; Herron, 1985; Kelly, 2001; Kerin, 2019).

Rationale for the Present Research

Despite recent increase in prominence of play and playful pedagogy in aforementioned policy and research around the world (Cassim, 2020; Hakkarainen, 1999; Mardell et al., 2019; Michnick Golinkoff et al., 2006; Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Trawick-Smith, 2012; Wood, 2008, 2010; Zosh et al., 2017, 2018), Mardell et al. (2019, p. 232) have suggested that “The reality is that playful learning is not available in school for many, perhaps most children.” Instead, specifically within the Irish context, there are reports of emphasis on formal, table-top approaches to teaching and learning, suggesting that many children’s learning experiences are highly structured and didactic even from the earliest stages (OECD Directorate of Education, 2004, p. 54). Seeking to provide for increased playful learning opportunities, it has been posited that:

For schools to become places where children learn through play, not just in early childhood or out at recess, but in primary, middle and high school and throughout the school day, policies that promote playful learning need to be adopted. Attitudes about the nature of learning must change. And educators must take on practices that create cultures of playful learning (Mardell et al., 2019, pp. 232–233).

There is indeed a discrepancy between policy and practice of playful pedagogy in many respects across curricular areas. Specifically in the realm of music education, there has been limited empirical research into the practicalities of play-based music education beyond the early years, which has sought to place focus primarily on child-led play (Littleton, 1998; Morin, 2001; Nieuwmeijer, 2013; Niland, 2009; Sarrazin, 2016a). Tendencies to emphasise increased levels of child ownership within musical play aligns with work of key scholars including Marsh and Young (2006) and Shehan-Campbell (2010) and mirrors the broader play literature.

The present research seeks to consider how playful pedagogy might inform the practice of music education in Irish primary school contexts, underseen by generalist

teachers. For the present study, and aligning with the broader field of music education, a generalist teacher was seen to represent a teacher who is responsible for teaching all curricular areas in the primary classroom (Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012). This is further explored in the literature review and methodology chapters.

Playful pedagogical practices can incorporate “varying levels of adult involvement that can support the teaching of academic skills in a playful manner...[which] does not need to be emphasized as fundamentally child directed” (Pyle & Danniels, 2017, p. 286). With this in mind, the aforementioned Zosh et al. (2017) framework is important to consider within the present thesis, where traditional understandings of musical play (Marsh, 2006) are conceptualised as fundamentally aligning with completely child-directed, free play (Marsh & Young, 2006).

The work of Klára Kokas is viewed as a fundamentally guided form of playful music learning for children, which can be used to extend conceptualisation of musical play into the primary school context. This can be seen to build upon aspects of the predominantly child-led play explored previously in relation to child-led musical play in early years’ contexts (Littleton, 1998; Morin, 2001) and work by Niland (2009) seeking to explore wholly child-centred, play-based music education for young children. In addition to this, aspects of Kodály’s work may inform another form of playful music learning for primary school pupils, this time through games involving increased adult scaffolding and direction towards musical skill development. By extending musical play along such a continuum it is possible to gain increased understanding of how play can be channelled across the curriculum to inform generalist teachers’ practices of music education in the Irish primary school context.

However, researchers have suggested that:

In order to support educators in creating cultures of playful learning in their classrooms and schools, we need: (a) a clear definition of what learning through play in school involves, and (b) a method for educators to understand how to bring play and school together

(Mardell et al., 2019, pp. 232–233).

To these ends, based upon the Zosh et al. (2017) framework, the broader literature and informed by teachers' playful practices within this study, a framework for expanding musical play across a broader continuum of playful music learning is presented in chapter 4. Having provided an overview of the broader context surrounding the present study, next it is important to outline key features the research design.

Research Design

Research Problem

The primary problem underpinning the research is that in the realm of education, children are not being afforded sufficient opportunities to play as they move through the primary school despite aforementioned research (Allee-Herndon & Killingsworth Roberts, 2021; Froebel, 1967; Mardell et al., 2019; NCCA, 2009b; Vygotsky, 1967) and policy (Hammond & Foster, 2018; IPA (International Play Association), 2012; United Nations, 2010) suggesting that this is of importance for their learning and well-being. With this in mind, the present research hones in on one subject area and considers the potential of supporting and scaffolding musical development through playful pedagogies. By seeking to support and scaffold any form of learning and development through play (in the case of this research, musical learning and development) it is suggested that play can be channelled to enhance the educational process and does not need to be constrained to entirely free activities (Mardell et al.,

2019; Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Pyle, DeLuca & Danniels, 2017). This brings us to the second problem underpinning the present study.

In music education, perhaps aligned with a perception of play aligned with freedom (Gray, 2008), there has been a dearth of research into broadening conceptualisations of musical play in the literature outside those that are predominantly free, child-led and designed with younger children in mind (Morin, 2001; Niland, 2009). Thus, while there has been increased focus on how educational practices can incorporate play along a continuum more generally (Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Zosh et al., 2017, 2018), our understandings of how playful music education practices might be perceived to exist across such a continuum are more limited. Yet, in the field of music education, aligning with such tendencies in the broader educational sphere, commentators have begun to define music learning more generally as existing across “mixed polarities” pertaining to “educational situation”, “learning style”, “intention” and “ownership”, with various learning experiences moving “in and out of formal and informal modes” (Wright, 2016, pp. 211-212). Moreover, it has been suggested that educators should strive to be, “aware of this shifting ground” and “willing to adopt the most relevant teaching mode in the best learning interests [of the students]” (Wright, 2016, pp. 211-212).

Focused specifically on playful music educational practices, along a continuum of ownership, singing games (whilst not entirely free and child-led at all times) were viewed as examples of playful music educational practices for older children already existent in the work of key music education theorists (Houlahan, 2000; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). With singing games informing the practices of music education specialists, this arts subject is seen to lend itself very well to the ongoing movement towards playful learning in primary schools around the world. However, in the Irish

context, since playful music pedagogy supports and activity ideas are not overtly presented in curricula for Irish generalist teachers to utilise outside brief mentions of singing games, there was an inherent challenge in relation to if and how generalist teachers might succeed in allying music and play in their practices. Coupled with this, was a suggested need for examples of what works in relation to practices of playful music pedagogy within primary school curricula for generalist teachers in the Irish context.

Research Aims

Following steps taken in the field of play more generally to understand a range of different applications of play to support the learning process, this research sought to gain increased understanding as to what might constitute a framework for playful music pedagogy for Irish primary school contexts.

The present research was designed to address three interrelated goals grounded in the literature around playful pedagogy and music education.

1. It seeks to expand the researcher's understandings of musical play across a continuum of ownership to inform a framework for playful music learning for across the Irish primary school context.
2. It aims to explore if and how playful music learning might be realised in generalist teachers' classroom practices across all stages of the primary school in Ireland.
3. It hopes to consider Irish generalist primary school teachers' perceptions of the value of playful music pedagogy for primary schools.

In addition to this, it is hoped to explore if and how playful music pedagogy might be practicable by teachers in Irish primary schools to support pupils' musical development throughout the primary school. Identified and generated from previous research and literature in the fields of music education, play and playful pedagogy more

generally, it was suggested that strategies should include musical games-play and guided musical play. Games with teacher direction, scaffolding and structure were thought to align with the Kodály method (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Ittész, 2004; Kodály, 1974c, 1974b; Szirányi, 2014), whilst increasingly child-centred, guided musical play would draw primarily from the work of Klára Kokas (Hawbaker, 2000; Kokas, 1999, 2013) in seeking to support primary school pupils' musical, academic and holistic development.

When combined as part of a broader, playful framework, it was hypothesised that elements of the Kodály and Kokas approaches, with requisite supports, may allow for increasingly effective, engaging and active music education practices by generalist teachers in Irish classrooms (Susanne Garvis & Pendergast, 2012; Henley, 2017; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2013) though teacher professional development (PD) and self-efficacy were not fundamental research foci for the present study.

Having delineated the aims of the research, the next section provides a more substantive outline of the study.

Outline of the Study

A multiple case study approach was adopted where units of analysis referred to teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy in their primary school classrooms. Consequently, the research necessitated development of a broad framework of play-based music education, which teachers could utilise creatively towards the goals of the Irish music curriculum. This required extensive literature review, concentrating on theory, play, play-based pedagogy, musical play and music education in addition to alignment of the work of Kodály and Kokas to playful teaching and learning in relation to the Zosh et al. (2017) framework for playful learning.

Given the paucity of playful music education strategies and examples within the Irish primary school music curriculum and guidelines, provision of professional development (PD) for participating teachers was deemed necessary. Following review of the literature (Desimone, 2009; de Vries, 2014; Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2013), it was decided to incorporate two forms of PD into the research, particularly important considering the fact that teachers have traditionally experienced difficulties in relation to music education provision in Irish primary schools (Kerin, 2019; Russell-Bowie, 2009). The first PD, in workshop format, sought to enable teachers to become acquainted with related playful music pedagogical strategies relevant for classroom practices (Kennedy, 2014; Kokas, 1999). The second, in professional learning community (PLC) format, encouraged generalist Irish primary school teachers of junior and senior classes to implement and reflect on their practice of playful music pedagogy in their classrooms. It also provided an opportunity for teachers to share practices with peers, taking ownership of the playful music pedagogy being explored. Notes of activities presented by teachers in these sessions were shared among participants, and meetings were video recorded and transcribed as part of the data gathering process.

It was essential that there would be a means of documenting teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy in their classrooms. A reflective template was developed, which teachers utilised following lessons implementing strategies associated with a playful approach to music education with their classes. This template asked for details around the types of strategies that were utilised and teachers' perceptions of the learning that occurred. It also called for photographic evidence of the lesson, providing visual representations of pupils' engagement with the different strategies. Following a six-week period of facilitating playful music practices in their classrooms, participating

teachers were interviewed individually. Here they gave personal accounts of their practices and experiences, and perceptions of the learning that occurred.

Focusing on the problem related to limited scope for play in classrooms, and seeing potential in the realm of music education in this area, the present project sought to explore what playful music pedagogy might look like in practice in the Irish primary school context (Gray & Ryan, 2016; Mardell et al., 2019). It did so whilst remaining open to considering how traditional conceptions of what constitutes true or free “[musical] play might have to change” in practice (Hall & Abbott, 1991, p. 4). In seeking to solve a problem pertaining to limited playful experiences for pupils in primary schools in a way that would also be useful to generalist practitioners, this research was situated within the pragmatic paradigm (Feilzer, 2010). Guided by the purpose of the research within this paradigm, a qualitative research design was utilised (Feilzer, 2010) to address the following research questions.

Research Questions

Seeking to shed light on and expand upon the present conceptualisation of playful pedagogy for Irish primary schools, following initial PD, and in exploring playful music pedagogy as part of a PLC, the initial research question guiding the study was:

1. How can playful music pedagogy become part of Irish primary school teachers’ classroom practices?

Exploration of how playful music pedagogy can be integrated into teachers’ practices was integral to this research. This was seen to represent just one step in exploring the notion of playful music pedagogy and so, the study did not involve formal measurement of the wider impact of this pedagogy. However, it was perceived that providing some insight into the broad contributions teachers believed these practices

made to pupils' learning would be important for understanding this pedagogy in practice. Thus, contributions to teaching and learning more generally, through teachers' perceptions, were explored. This led to the generation of a second research question with three inter-related sub-questions developed from the research pertaining to contributions of play and playful pedagogy (Pyle, DeLuca & Danniels, 2017) and Kodály and Kokas music education to pupils' learning (Goopy, 2013).

2. How do Irish primary school teachers perceive playful music pedagogical practices to contribute to pupils' musical, and wider learning and development?
 - a. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' understanding of musical elements and concepts?
 - b. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' learning across other areas of the curriculum e.g. literacy and numeracy?
 - a. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' broader skill development e.g. social/emotional, motor skills?

Having provided an outline of the present study, next it is important to consider the scope and delimitations associated with the research.

Scope and Delimitations

Although "there is very little research on children's musical play", much of what has been conducted has focused predominantly on child-led, free, musical engagement (Sarrazin, 2016a, p. 209), which tends to either be differentiated from those which occur within structured, educational settings (Marsh & Young, 2006; Sarrazin, 2016a), or focused specifically on early years' environments (Littleton, 1998). For this reason, when seeking to encourage increased opportunities for play within Irish primary school music education practices, it was deemed important to focus attention on guided musical play and musical games, which allow for a degree of teacher structure. Focusing attention on these forms of musical play and pedagogical implications, the

bulk of this dissertation explores musical play in relation to the work of Kodály and Kokas, and extending this across a continuum of ownership and playful learning.

There were a number of approaches to music education that could have been selected for the purpose of framing a play-based approach to music education. The Kodály and Kokas music education approaches and philosophies were selected over those of other potentially relevant music education commentators and theorists. These included Orff (1963) and Dalcroze (Bachmann, 1993), Marsh (2006), who has explored children's musical play in self-directed singing games, Shehan Campbell (2010) who has advocated for child-directed music education, and Green (2008) who has sought for increased emphasis on informal music education through the Musical Futures programme based upon how pop musicians learn. While work by Niland (2009) informed some of the work around free, constructive musical play, the breadth of ideas within Kokas' work was such that it was deemed prudent to focus attention here.

In-depth exploration of the aforementioned commentators and pedagogues was ultimately concluded to be outside the scope of the present research and focusing on the work of Kodály and Kokas was deemed particularly appropriate given their complementary nature, with Kokas designing her method to supplement Kodály's approach. Moreover, the span of related musical play activities evidenced in their work seen to transfers across the continuum of ownership to support pupils' musical and holistic development was perceived to provide concrete examples for supporting practices in Irish primary schools. In addition to this, their focus on singing was seen to resonate with the context of music education in Irish primary schools in terms of current practices and curricula (Inspectorate, 2002; Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009; NCCA, 1999a). Finally, the researcher's personal experiences of

these approaches and belief in their potential to facilitate playful music making were also key factors in deciding to align focus here.

The present research was situated within the field of music education in Ireland hoping to demonstrate the capacity of generalist teachers to implement playful music education in their classrooms. This aligned with Kodály's (1974b, p. 124) assertion that we might begin to "look at the question of teachers with certain optimistic expectation...[and consider that] there might be some undiscovered aptitude concealed in those more modestly trained". It also related to the researcher's initial generalist teacher training.

In the Irish context, primary school teachers' capacity to adopt teacher-directed, structured play-based strategies to scaffold pupils' musical development in line with a play-based approach to music education was thought to require a number of considerations. These included: an understanding of music literacy and musical concepts at least partially above that of their students, an understanding of an underlying sequence for teaching musical concepts (Kodály, 1974a), and a bank of relevant resources and structured play-based teaching strategies that could be used.

Choice to focus on generalist teaching of music diverges somewhat from increased focus that has been afforded to arts-in-education (Department of Arts & Department of Education and Skills, 2012) in the Irish context more recently. Evidenced within arts-in-education initiatives including Musical Futures (Moore, 2019) and Music Generation (Flynn & Johnston, 2016; Loughran, 2016; Music Generation, n.d.), this has often involved external specialists entering school environments to provide tutelage in the realm of music education. However, this is not practicable throughout all primary schools in the Irish context where generalist teachers play the predominant role in music education. By focusing on the Irish context, the dissertation

also diverges from practices across the globe where specialist music educators represent the norm for many pupils at primary level (Russell-Bowie, 2009) and active, playful practices represent inherent, if also implicit, elements of quality active teaching and learning in music.

Significance

The significance of this research is related to the notion of play-based learning and musical play across Irish primary school contexts. The research extends a playful learning framework to incorporate specifics around music learning drawing from the music education literature in the work of Kodály and Kokas, in addition to that around play and playful pedagogies.

In exploring teachers' practices of this form of playful music pedagogy, the research offers increased insight into what playful music learning, which incorporates increased levels of adult guidance and scaffolding to traditional conceptualisations of musical play, might look like across the primary school in selected teachers' classroom practices.

With new curricular developments underway at present in Ireland within the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), where play is being afforded an increasingly high status, particularly in the early years of primary school, it is hoped that this research will offer an example of the channelling of play as a methodology when designing future music education curricula.

In sum, the research findings are relevant to scholars interested in music education, Kodály and Kokas music education, play-based learning and the use of musical play in educational contexts to support the learning process. In addition to this, findings offer examples of concrete activities associated with playful music pedagogy that can support Irish primary school teachers' practices in the Irish context.

Having provided an outline of the study and considered its scope, delimitations and potential significance, next it is important to share the organisation of the thesis document.

Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into six separate chapters aligned with the guidelines from Dublin City University Academic Council (2019) regulations. This initial chapter has selectively explored selected policy documents as a means of contextualising the notion of playful music pedagogy for primary schools. It has situated the purpose of the study as conceptualising and exploring playful music pedagogy (drawing upon work of Kodály and Kokas) for primary schools to extend traditional understandings of free musical play to allow for increased opportunities for facilitating playful music learning in the primary school. In addition to this, the chapter has listed the questions guiding the research, delineated the nature and scope of the study and identified potential research significance.

Next, the literature review outlines further rationale for the use of play to support pupils' music learning in primary schools. It delves into research pertaining to play, playful pedagogy, musical play, music education and generalist music education, and sheds light on a number of relevant studies carried out in recent years. Offering a potential framework of playful music strategies associated with playful teaching and learning or a playful music pedagogy, it draws on the work of both Kodály and Kokas. It also considers the PD context reflecting on how the present case study can allow us to shed light on Irish primary school teachers' potential to realise such an approach within their classroom practices.

Chapter 3 provides in-depth discussion of the methodological approach undertaken in the present research, in seeking to gain increased understanding across a

continuum of playful music learning and how this might be realised within Irish primary school teachers' classroom practices as part of a pedagogical approach to support pupils' musical development. In doing so, the chapter outlines the conceptual framework for the research in addition to the rationale for adopting a multiple case-study approach (Yazan, 2015). The methodology chapter also describes the forms of analysis followed in order to best address the research questions, through deductive-inductive content analysis and cross-case constant comparative analysis utilised. It also provides in-depth discussion about steps taken within the study to ensure its robustness in terms of ethics, reflexivity and trustworthiness of the data gathered.

Analysis and discussion are dealt with within two sections. Chapter 4 commences by presenting the framework for playful music learning developed within the present study. Following on from this, and with reference to the different forms of musical play along the aforementioned framework, chapter 4 provides an outline of the results of the within-case analysis, describing the play-based practices of each of the six participating teachers. This sheds light on how playful music pedagogy became part of the music teaching in their unique contexts as they navigated this study based on their own individual skills, beliefs, values and experiences, and considers how it relates to pupils' learning and the broader literature. Identifying three key themes, Chapter 5 builds upon the previous chapter by offering an overview of the cross-case analysis of teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy. These too, are discussed with reference to the data collected and the broader literature.

Finally, Chapter 6 offers a conclusion to the research, exploring the research questions in light of the findings in the previous chapters and discussing key points emerging from the study. Cognisant that this research represents one contribution to conceptualising understanding of practices of playful music pedagogy for primary

schools in Ireland, the thesis concludes by making recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the introduction a rationale for the exploration of playful music pedagogy was presented. In addition to this, a key goal of the present study was outlined as to researching a framework for playful music pedagogy (drawing upon the work of Kodály and Kokas) for Irish primary schools. This sought to extend traditional understandings of the role generalist teachers can take to facilitate active, engaging and playful music learning in the primary school and shed light on potential classroom practices of playful music pedagogy. At this point, it is necessary to outline exactly what might be meant by playful music pedagogy based on the literature. To these ends, the present chapter provides a more in-depth overview of relevant theory and contextual information pertaining to play and playful pedagogical practices (musical and otherwise).

Firstly, within this chapter, building upon the framework of playful learning shown in Figure 1, different manifestations of play and playful pedagogy are discussed with reference to the broader literature. Following this, focus is narrowed to an exploration of Kodály music education (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Ittzés, 2004; Kodály, 1974b, 1974f) and Kokas Pedagogy (Kokas, 1999, 2013), which are related back to this same playful learning framework (Zosh et al., 2017) given their differing levels of teacher scaffolding and pupil ownership. Bearing this in mind, key elements of the current conceptualisation of a playful music pedagogy based on the work of Kokas, Kodály and other key commentators, are discussed, and an overview of potential activities associated with playful music education drawing from the literature is provided. The chapter concludes by referencing the literature around the teaching of music in Ireland and abroad and by exploring considerations pertaining to effective PD for teachers.

Section 1: Play, Learning and Playful Pedagogy

Theoretical Underpinning for Play, Learning and Education

A conception of play as an inherent part of the learning process may be seen to have roots within the constructivist theories of Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) and Jerome Bruner (1915-2016). Vygotsky (1978) believed that play facilitated learning within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and that child-led play could bolster young children's capabilities through social engagement, with the support and guidance of an adult or more capable peer. He posited that "in play it is as though the child were trying to jump above the level of his normal [age and] behaviour" (Vygotsky, 1967, p. 16). Focused on young children's development in socio-dramatic and child-directed play, Bruner (1983, p. 69) believed that play provided young children with a unique "opportunity to have the courage to think, to talk, and perhaps even to be [themselves]" likewise supporting their ongoing social, linguistic and creative development (Frost et al., 2012).

Although constructivist and developmental theorists' assertions of the value of play for young children have succeeded in increasing academic respectability for play in education systems around the world (Sugrue, 1997), Bruner (1986, p. 22) has also alluded to tendencies for these theories to be used to justify "policy toward children". Such justifications tend to be aligned with underlying value judgements pertaining to "cultural acceptability" (Bruner, 1986, p. 24). With this in mind, diminished acceptance of play as children move beyond the early years, could potentially be grounded more upon "cultural (educational) presumptions" than "developmental needs or characteristics" (Van Oers, 2013, p. 247). Seeking to explore the role of playful pedagogy outside the early years where it has been aligned specifically with children's

development, and instead throughout the primary school, requires an openness to considering its potential and applicability more broadly in the realm of education.

Another area of relevance to consider when exploring playful pedagogy throughout the primary school, is the notion of formal, informal learning and ownership in underpinning participation in education. Purely informal learning may be seen to “incorporate very diverse kinds of learning, learning styles and learning arrangements” (McGivney, 1999, p. 1) which, can be seen as existing on a opposite end of a spectrum to formal learning (Golding, Brown & Foley, 2009, Wright, 2016). Informal learning has been suggested to occur in alternative “learning environment[s]”, arise “from the activities and interests of individuals or group” and to potentially “not be recognized as learning (learning by doing, listening, observing, interacting with others, and so on)” (McGivney, 1999, pp. 1-2). Researchers have been advised to consider, “*attributes of informality and formality* as present in all situations”, with The UK Learning and Skills Research Centre (2003, p. vii) reflecting that alterations in balance pertaining to “location/setting, process, purposes, and content” can modify the nature of learning.

Dewey (1916a, para. 20) argued that informal and “vicarious” learning like that through play is “personal and vital” to the child, whilst lamenting the narrow range of associated available learning opportunities available to children. Moreover, he believed that formal instruction, “easily becomes remote and dead” (Dewey, 1916a, para. 20) and ultimately posited that educationalists should strive to keep “a proper balance between the informal and the formal [...] modes of education” (Dewey, 1916a, para. 22). Such suggestion relates to Dewey’s assertion that optimal education exists at a median point between two polarised, yet flawed approaches to education; the first approach with children afforded perpetual freedom with no boundaries and the second in possession of no freedom at all (Tiles, 1988). This aligns with Golding, Power &

Foley's (2009) suggestion that power relations between actors are key markers for the identification of in/formality in learning. Ultimately, Dewey suggested that educators should strive for balance between formal and informal methods, whilst offering contextual experiences for learning new subject matter, indicating that all pedagogical methods across subject and age boundaries should involve three steps planned for by the teacher in question. Mirroring those utilised by Kodály educators around the world (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015), these include:

1. Subconscious preparation,
2. Presentation of new subject matter, and
3. Application (Dewey, 1916b, para. 3).

A play-based approach to education taking these three steps into account may allow for preparation through playful activities and games, before presenting relevant subject matter and applying in a range of playful contexts. Such a perspective aligns with the suggestion that teachers might be advised to adopt, “A combination of play (to encourage confidence and creativity) alongside teaching/modeling (to introduce and develop new concepts and skills)” as a means of creating the “best possible pedagogical environment” to support pupils’ academic and holistic learning and development in the primary school (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010, p. 105; Danniels & Pyle, 2018; Yogman et al., 2018).

Having briefly alluded to theoretical underpinnings for play in education, next it is important to consider how playful practices might exist along a continuum of ownership consistent with the work of Dewey (1916a; Tiles, 1998), Wright (2016) and with the playful learning framework explored within the previous chapter (Zosh et al., 2017).

Playful Practices and Ownership

Viewing playful educational practices along a continuum of child to adult ownership resonates with Dewey's call for a need for balance in educational contexts and with the notion of playful learning as explored previously. From this perspective, at both ends of the continuum, playful learning can be noted within entirely child-directed play and within entirely adult-directed, non-play-based teaching. The former requires a lack of adult intervention, difficult to reconcile with formal primary teaching contexts. Indeed, once a teacher seeks to channel children's play for the purpose of academic learning, particularly as they move past their initial educational years, there is a need for structure, guidance, teacher-provided resources, contexts, opportunities and supports (Bruner, 1983; Kokas, 1999, Zosh et al., 2017; 2018). Conversely, the latter does not allow for playful engagement in the learning process.

Avoiding assumptions with regard to the superiority of free play for children's learning over that which occurs with teacher intervention, support and guidance or of a need for more serious work, between free play and non-play there is deemed to be a middle ground (Wood, 2014). Within this middle ground we can see different manifestations of playful practices along a continuum of ownership from guided play (child-led, adult scaffolded) to games play (adult designed/scaffolded with set rules and constraints for play) existing in a middle ground between formal and informal learning (Dewey, 2016a) that can be utilised as part of a play-based pedagogy (Zosh et al., 2017).

Before moving on to explore guided play and games play in increased detail, it is first important to consider positionality of teachers in relation to this continuum of ownership for playful learning.

Pyle & Danniels (2017) conducted research into play-based learning within fifteen kindergarten classrooms in Ontario, Canada. Although the researchers could have been more explicit about how specific schools were selected, it appears that purposive sampling was utilised to achieve diversity across three districts in the region.

Pyle and Danniels' (2017) research was carried out in two phases over three years and involved between 56 and 70 hours of initial observational data collection (Field notes, photographs and video) in three kindergarten classes. Further data collection in this vein was to follow, within an additional twelve classes over shorter periods of time with no less than 10 hours of observation per class.

When analysing the data, the researchers focused “on the classroom environment, instructional periods; and periods of play, whether child led or teacher directed” (Pyle & Danniels, 2017, pp. 277-278). In tandem with this, they afforded participating teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives on the role, value and possibility of channelling play to support learning within their context within semi-structured interviews analysed via the constant comparative method.

Importantly, within their research, Pyle & Danniels (2017, p. 286) found that some of the sampled kindergarten teachers “almost exclusively demonstrated one type of play within their classrooms: free play”. Perhaps aligning with broader cultural acceptance of the value and importance of free play for children’s development in the early years, incorporating playful pedagogical practices with increased levels of teacher-scaffolding was seen to involve significant adjustment for teachers (Pyle & Danniels, 2017). Adjustment was also required in relation to providing a degree of balance along a continuum of ownership within teachers’ practices. Indeed, Pyle & Danniels (2017) suggested a difficulty in relation to “the integration of play-based pedagogy, not because [teachers] did not value play but because they struggled to

negotiate a balance between the child-directed play they felt was essential, and the mandated academic standards” of the curriculum, which they found difficult to address (p. 280).

Ultimately, these researchers called for “increased training in a broader interpretation of play-based learning and practical methods” to benefit educators moving forward (Pyle & Danniels, 2017, p. 287). An important implication for the present research is the suggested requirement for cognisance for, “expand[ing] beyond the concept of free play and examin[ing] the ways in which teachers can direct, collaborate with, or extend the child’s lead during times of play in the classroom in order to facilitate academic learning” (p. 286). Pyle and Danniels (2018) research provides an interesting backdrop for the present study in its focus on playful pedagogy, teachers’ practices and perceptions of the value of the methods in question. However, given documented tendencies for decreased levels of free play as children move through the primary school, it was not hypothesised that similar emphases would be placed on free play by teachers in this research.

Having explored the notion of play along a continuum of ownership, the next sections explore guided and games play with increased levels of teacher scaffolding to gain increased understanding of how this might inform the implementation of playful pedagogy.

(Child-led, Adult-Scaffolded) Guided play

Guided play represents one form of playful learning, which emphasises child ownership and agency for activities, whilst also allowing for adults to guide or scaffold learning towards curricular goals. Guided play has been suggested to enable teachers to “take advantage of children’s natural ability to learn through play by allowing them to express their autonomy within a prepared environment and with adult scaffolding”

(Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 177). This has been suggested to “harness the qualities of play” by combining “the benefits of adult-directed and child-directed activities” (Wood, 2010, p. 20). In facilitating guided play, teachers maintain elements of free-play such as affording children opportunities to learn that are grounded in self-directed exploration, freedom and autonomy (Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016).

Critically, although the literature in relation to guided play emphasises that the child must maintain ownership of the activities in question, there are suggestions that this can become increasingly complex as children get older (Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016). This has implications for those seeking to incorporate guided play into practices as children progress through the primary school, particularly with indications that “the balance between adult scaffolding and self-direction can and should shift depending on the learners’ abilities and the learning goals” (Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 179).

While the literature provides a bedrock upon which, guided play and adult-scaffolding might become increasingly accepted and incorporated within curricula and practice at primary level, there is arguably also a need for increased clarity as to what this might look like in schools (Mardell et al., 2019). Thus, having provided an initial overview of guided play, next it is prudent to explore examples of this form of child-directed, adult-scaffolded play, which has become associated with holistic practices of playful pedagogy in a number of countries around the world.

In countries of the Nordic tradition, emphasis at early childhood level is placed on “children’s play and social development with an emphasis on children’s agency” (Kangas et al., 2020, p. 2). In the Finnish system where their pedagogic tradition is associated with Nordic values, and with sociocultural theories building on the work of Vygotsky (Kangas, 2019; Kangas et al., 2019), playful learning is emphasised within learning contexts from curriculum-based kindergarten (pre-primary education), which

commences when children are 6-years of age (Hyvonen, 2011; von Suchodoletz et al., 2020). Thought to be “essential” for “adapting” educational “cultures to face the challenges of the future” (Kangas, 2019, para. 1), this playful approach to teaching and learning continues when children commence primary school at 7-years of age, with curriculum principles that the learning process should be grounded upon “playing, exploration and concrete activities (taking into account children’s need for learning through imagination and playing)” (Hyvonen, 2011, p. 28).

Within a documentary research study, which focused on early childhood education policy in Finland and Brazil, Kangas et al. (2020) conducted qualitative content analysis upon curricular documents. The rationale for choosing these two countries as foci for the research was suggested to align with recent publication of new curricula for initial educational stages (from 0-5 years) and similar emphasis placed on play and playful pedagogy in each context.

The study by Kangas et al. (2020) indicated tendencies to leave playful learning practices as “vague” and ill-defined (p. 10), which they suggested had the potential to result in an array of interpretations in varying contexts within the two countries. Interestingly, within this paper, the researchers have claimed that “play and playful learning will have multidimensional and dynamic definitions located in contexts and cultures” and may have the potential to enculturate children into broader societal expectations, which they have stated requires further exploration within the field (Kangas et al. 2020, p. 10).

Considering the importance of cultural factors pertaining to educational contexts, Kangas et al. (2020) have suggested:

...in an education system that acknowledges the importance of play in the child's holistic well-being, learning and development, the pedagogy can be based on factors that restrict opportunities for play and simultaneously strive to develop play-friendly practices and learning environments (see McInnes et al., 2011; Moyles et al., 2001). (p. 10)

This too is indicative of broader cultural influences underpinning the capacity for play to thrive within different contexts, which should be considered. With children not being introduced into formal schooling until 7-years of age in Finland where they are encouraged to engage with exploratory, playful pedagogies, the cultural and societal norms and expectations of the role of school for young children certainly differ to that in “Ireland, the UK and the USA”, where focus from an early age may be viewed to rest instead on “cognitive goals and ‘readiness for school’” (Kangas et al., 2020, p. 2). Given their suggestions that Ireland, the UK and USA place focus on different goals for early childhood education, Kangas et al.'s (2020) study might have been enhanced by exploring one of these countries' early childhood education policies in addition to that of Finland and Brazil. Indeed, such exploration may have shed increased light on societal and cultural expectations in the Irish context, given the importance of play within early childhood education documents in tandem with documented difficulties associated with implementation of Aistear as children enter the primary school (Gray & Ryan, 2016).

A potential implication for the Irish context, Kangas et al.'s (2020) study highlights the importance of clarity in relation to how playful learning and pedagogy might be construed within curricula. As such, while there are examples of such

elements within Aistear and new primary language curriculum documents, similar to the contexts explored within Kangas et al (2020), there is indeed potential that educators could benefit from increased clarity in these areas.

A specific example of playful learning that has been seen to work well within the Finnish context is the notion of Playful Learning Environments (PLEs). These are key features within Finnish schoolyards, created to increase scope for pupils to learn through play in embodied ways as part of a “curriculum-based education” (Hyvonen, 2011, p. 49). Here, as in much of the Finnish education system, play is primarily guided. However, recent research has suggested Finnish schools might consider means of encouraging “peer-to-peer engagement” through play in addition to engagement with teachers in play-practices, as a means of developing “better quality of play as learning” (Kangas et al., 2019, p. 10).

Of relevance to the Irish context, renowned educationalist, Sahlberg (2017, paras 14–15) has suggested that Ireland too should seek to give children “more time to play in and out of schools” and strive to help “teachers to collaborate, experiment with new ideas and learning from one another” whilst prioritising “equity” for curricular areas.

Having provided an outline into the theory and practice surrounding the notion of guided play as existing on the Zosh et al. (2017) framework for playful learning, next attention is afforded to games play. This is viewed as an increasingly structured form of play that can be utilised in educational settings to support pupils’ academic learning and development. Games involve adult design and scaffolding, setting rules and constraints for pupils’ play.

(Adult-Scaffolded) Games Play

The use of games in educational settings to support pupils' learning is not a new phenomenon and this, alongside and including more informal approaches to learning, has been advocated by individuals including Froebel (1967), Bruce (2015) and in the field of music education, Zoltán Kodály (1974b, 1974c). In addition to child-led play, an element of the Froebelian approach involves incorporation of adult-directed, outdoor circle games, movement games, singing games and in the very early years, mother songs to support children's learning and development (Froebel, 1967; Bruce, 2015). All of these learning contexts involve social, structured incidences of play utilised as a scaffold towards specific learning goals.

A specific iteration of games learning that has emerged in recent years is known as gamification or game-based learning. Gamification offers teachers the opportunity to develop games aligned with curricular content. Such content involves use of games and game-based elements such as competition and problem-solving to provide motivation and to achieve specific learning objectives (Alsawaier, 2018; Kapp, 2012). In addition to providing opportunities for pupils to reach certain learning objectives, research has suggested that play associated with game-based learning can also result in the development of 21st century skills and competencies such as “collaboration, communication and creativity” (Roberts, 2018, p. 17), though this has often focused on computer-based games (Qian & Clark, 2016).

Qian & Clark (2016) conducted a research study to examine empirical evidence pertaining to “the effects of game-based learning on 21st century skills” (p. 52). This involved an online keyword search to identify relevant scholarly literature over the five-year period from 2010-2014 in the field. Ultimately, 137 studies published within 6 journals were chosen for analysis, which met inclusion criteria that they: a) included

some form of evidence into “digital technology enhanced learning environments”, b) included “quantitative statistics” and c) were published within the aforementioned period (Qian & Clarke, 2016, p. 52).

Findings of Qian & Clark’s (2016) meta-analysis suggested tendencies for game-based learning to focus primarily on the development of critical thinking skills within their quantitative measurements of pupils’ 21st century skill development with little emphasis placed on communication and creativity. This was viewed as surprising by the researchers considering the fact that “creativity, collaboration and communication play equally important roles in students’ development” and that “creativity [...] has been emphasised in curricular frameworks around the world” (Qian & Clarke, 2016, p. 56). This led Qian & Clarke (2016, p. 56) to suggest a need for future studies to explore how educational games might “foster students’ 21st century skill development in terms of communication and creativity” and for targeting collaboration as a learning outcome.

These researchers have alluded to the lack of qualitative studies analysed within their study as a specific limitation. In addition to this, they might have considered or indeed, referenced the long-documented difficulties associated with the measurement of creativity (Metwaly, Van den Noortgate & Kyndt, 2017) as an important area for comment and contextualisation of their findings. It would have been interesting had they explored whether there was increased reference to the development of creativity, collaboration and communication within the body of qualitative research.

Whilst pedagogical games require greater adult direction than guided play does, a key benefit is thought to reside in their provision of opportunities to motivate, encourage and enthuse players who may not have been otherwise motivated to participate in more formal learning activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Walsh, 2017).

However, aligned with constructivist theory, it is suggested that pedagogical games should be structured and developed in a way that pupils can experience the fun, flow experiences and success associated with “total involvement with tasks” that are within their ZPD (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 136).

Bruckman (1999) suggested a need to approach the use of games as a means of making the process of learning more fun with caution, comparing it to the process of dipping broccoli in chocolate. Indeed such a perspective suggests that in these instances work is merely masquerading as play. The notion that work might be masquerading as play is an important consideration and indeed, represents a challenge to the adoption of game-based approaches to learning. If teachers’ focus is predominantly on utilisation of playful approaches to exert control upon pupils, there could be potential implications for pupils’ motivation (Fei-Yin Ng, Kenny-Benson & Pomerantz, 2004), and sense of self as learners (Ball, 2019). Arguably, therefore, there is a need for gaining increased understanding of the realities of and motivations towards, playful learning within classroom contexts. This is particularly necessary if we consider potential that our practices might ultimately maintain implicit cultural norms and expectations of how children should behave (Ball, 2019; Bruner, 1986; Kangas et al., 2020).

Others have argued that whilst generic use of gamification or game-based elements to engage learners has been criticised in the literature as “usually a bad idea”, it can open doors for pupils to engage in the learning process who usually would not due to cultural or social pressures or even identity issues (Disalvo, 2015, p. 1). Disalvo (2015) has suggested that this may relate to gender norms pertaining to participation in specific subject areas, or indeed academic learning more generally. It has also been suggested that the use of even the most poorly designed educational games can offer “a powerful justification for students who are afraid to seem interested in learning” and

that “the posture of competitiveness” may in such instances allow students to “save face” in relation to dealing with commonly held stereotypes (Disalvo, 2015, pp. 1–6).

All such educational games can be digital or otherwise. Such is the emphasis placed on games-based learning in Jamaica, that the Ministry for Education published a document outlining the value of educational games for supporting pupils’ holistic and academic learning in the early years (Coley-Agard, 2016). This document was developed following a previous Harvard Graduate School of Education collaboration with the Ministry in Jamaica (Silva & Awofisayo, 2012). The UNICEF representative cited within the resource document suggested that “Games not only encourage individual development but teach valuable life skills such as cooperation, team work, turn-taking, patience and tolerance” (Coley-Agard, 2016, p. 9). The purpose was to provide an aide to teachers in supporting curricula and core subject matter, to facilitate increasingly child-centred and interactive learning in schools. Specifically, there is a greater emphasis on the role of the teacher in taking and implementing specific lessons in this context than in those previously outlined. Although this suggests increased scope for uniformity or rigid and inflexible implementation, the document offers curriculum game-based activities, suggests that teachers and students would engage with it creatively to extend lessons based on their specific contexts and allow for indoor and outdoor play experiences (Coley-Agard, 2016).

Practical Implications for Teaching and Learning

As demonstrated by the aforementioned examples, play-based pedagogy in primary schools can be associated with varying contexts and organisational structures. It leads to the consideration of play-based pedagogy as a process of teaching, which can involve scaffolded, adult-directed structured games to aid children in working within

their ZPD or opportunities for guided play to support learning across the continuum of play (Yogman et al., 2018; Zosh et al., 2017).

However, practical realisation of policies surrounding play-based learning can be varied. In recent years, Scotland and Wales have seen exploration of play-based curricula to enhance practices of teaching and learning in schools (Martlew et al., 2011; Wainwright et al., 2016). Exploring the realities of this in practice, a study by Martlew et al. (2011) found that the way teachers dealt with playful learning in their classrooms could vary substantially. In some cases, it would involve independent play with no teacher direction, in others, whole-class activities, which were seen to be “more traditional” but with “active participation” and finally, small-group activities, which it was suggested, could be classified as existing within a play-based approach (Martlew et al., 2011, p. 77).

This leads to consideration of reported benefits of play and playful pedagogy for children’s learning. Elucidating upon the benefits of such pedagogies for pupils’ learning, Pyle & Danniels (2017) have suggested that by integrating between different forms of play along a continuum, there is scope to develop social/emotional and broader holistic skills in tandem with increasingly academic skills for children.

Focusing on increasingly child-led forms of play, myriad researchers have outlined potential for playful learning to support young children’s broader development in relation to self-regulation (Bodrova & Leong, 2003), turn-taking and social skills (Liu, Karp & Davis, 2010), motor-development (Whitebread, Neale, Jensen, Liu, Solis, Hopkins, Hirsh-Pasek & Zosh, 2017), imagination and cognition (Fleer, 2011). Outside of the early years, and in practices involving increased scaffolding and direction, engagement with play and playful pedagogies has been indicated to support areas like emotional-regulation, creativity (Bergan & Pronin Fromberg, 2009; Cassim, 2020),

critical thinking (Qian & Clarke, 2016), communication (Roberts, 2018) and social skills (Coley-Agard, 2016; Zhang, 2020).

Incorporation of play within the learning process has also been demonstrated to increase children's motivation and enthusiasm to participate in learning activities (Alsawaier, 2018; Disalvo, 2015; Martlew et al., 2011; Walsh, 2007). This can be seen to align with other researchers' suggestions that children's engagement appears to be at least somewhat related to the degree of "active involvement, autonomy and the opportunity for choice" (Stephen, Cope, Oberski & Shand, 2008). Research by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) and in the field of inclusive education, has pointed to the notion of a play zone, again with scope for pupil choice and autonomy, as a key feature of an increasingly inclusive pedagogical approach for pupils in primary schools. This suggests that active play can encourage engagement and participation from all learners and create environments where children and teachers can learn together (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

Unsurprisingly, given the suggestion that such approaches can increase pupils' involvement in the learning process, in addition to the holistic, social, emotional and developmental skills listed above, research has indicated particular scope for playful learning approaches to provide a unique means of supporting pupils in their academic endeavours (Pyle, DeLuca & Danniels, 2017; Whitebread et al., 2017). Studies tend to primarily focus on learning in literacy and numeracy though some have explored academic learning through playful pedagogies in other areas (Kapp, 2012; Pyle, DeLuca & Danniels, 2017). In the Irish context, in their report on mathematics in early childhood and primary education, Dooley, Dunphy, Shiel, Butler, Corcoran, Farrell, NicMhuirí, O'Connor, Travers & Perry (2014) have suggested that "play is a rich context for the promotion of mathematical language and concepts" (p. 24). Reiterating

this suggestion and alluding to a need for balance, Anthony & Walshaw (2007, p. 2) have suggested that “the most effective settings provide a balance between opportunities for children to benefit from teacher-initiated group work and freely chosen, yet potentially instructive, play activities”.

Interestingly, authors also allude to an important link between mathematics and music, with the latter offering scope to develop children’s mathematical language and concepts (Dooley et al., 2014, p. 55). Moving on from exploring different conceptualisations of play within the literature and suggested benefits for pupils’ learning, it is important to consider pedagogical implications for the realm of music education. To these ends, the next section explores playful music education and the work of Kodály and Kokas, as related to musical exemplars of games play and guided play for scaffolding pupils’ learning via a playful music pedagogy.

Section 2: Exploring Playful Music Education

Making reference to two key theories of music education by Swanwick (2005), this section outlines examples of traditional, teacher-directed, structured forms of musical play, represented by singing games and gamification from the literature, with particular focus on the Kodály approach. This is followed by examples of child-led, guided musical play, with specific reference to Kokas pedagogy. Following this, activities associated with play-based music education for teachers, incorporating elements of each of the above, are presented in tabular form along a continuum of ownership, (Wright, 2016; Zosh et al., 2017), providing a range of examples of both adult-led and child-led activities grounded upon the literature. This represented a key initial step for conceptualising playful music learning along a continuum for Irish primary schools.

Traditional Music Education Theory and Musical Games-Play

Traditional theory of music education emphasises formal, traditional values, perceived to be important for access to a range of musical experiences and practices (Swanwick, 2005). Swanwick (2005) has suggested that music education practices influenced by traditional theory tend to prioritise academic learning in the development of musical literacy, instrumental performance and familiarity with the canon of western classical music. Associated with the Kodály method, traditional music education practices have been credited with facilitating pupils' musical development (Gault, 2016), though Swanwick (2005, p. 13) observes that it must be coupled with "active music-making" and/or "music-taking relating to experience outside of school" to be truly successful. Aligned with the goals of a traditional theory of music education, teachers may be enabled to support pupils' musical and holistic development through structured and scaffolded, adult-directed musical play or games, referring back to the framework given by Zosh et al. (2017). Aspects of Kodály approach to music education could be particularly suitable for this with focus on teacher-led singing games and playful methods to scaffold pupils' musical development (Szirányi, 2018).

The next section explores the Kodály approach to music education making particular reference to two classifications of musical games-play: singing games and musical gamification. In doing so, it zones in on means of using structured play-based activities to develop pupils' confidence, motivation and academic understanding (related to musical concepts and skills) through a scaffolded approach building on the work of Dewey, Bruner and Vygotsky discussed previously (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010).

Kodály Music Education and Musical Games-Play

The Kodály concept of music education stems from the work of twentieth-century Hungarian composer, musician, ethnomusicologist and educator Zoltán Kodály. Kodály dedicated his early career to exploring, collecting and recording the folk songs and traditions of people from across Hungary before focusing his attention on the realm of music education (Ittész, 2004). Elements associated with Kodály music education are evident in the Irish revised primary school music curriculum (NCCA, 1999a). These include song-singing as a specific strand unit within the performing strand, as well as use of a spiral curriculum and guidelines for teaching music literacy through a sequential and scaffolded manner with use of tonic solfa (NCCA, 1999a, 1999b).

The Kodály approach to music education has become synonymous with:

1. Universal music education
2. Singing as the basis of music education
3. ‘High-quality’ musical material with folk songs providing the basis for teaching musical elements
4. Highly trained music educators
5. Sequencing and scaffolding
6. Music literacy taught based on solfa (movable do) and rhythm syllables and through a range of joyful experiences

(Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Ittész, 2004; Kodály, 1974d)

Humanistic music pedagogue, Zoltán Kodály (1974i, p. 199) viewed music as an integral part of the human spirit and believed individuals who open music to “as many people as possible” to be “benefactor[s] of humanity”. Kodály (1974b, p. 120) emphasised that educators should teach music and singing in schools “in such a way that is not a torture but a joy for the pupils...instil[ling] a thirst for finer music...which will last a lifetime”. He deemed it integral that highly-trained teachers should facilitate music lessons in ways that excite, motivate and encourage children to look forward to

their next lesson (Kodály, 1974h). Szirányi (2014) has suggested that pupils should be encouraged to approach challenges in music education in ways that evoke joy and delight.

Whilst Kodály acknowledged that pupils experience more joy from activities where they have increased personal ownership, he believed there was a need for educators to scaffold pupils' musical development in the same way one would language literacy and development (Kodály, 1974f). He disputed the idea that children should only sing their own improvised compositions, suggesting this was as the same as allowing them to create their own languages. This approach might be associated with increasingly child-directed conceptions of musical play. Instead, he felt an individual's concept of music needed to be informed by concrete, 'quality' musical experiences (Kodály, 1974f) scaffolded by his/her teacher.

Kodály viewed the role of the teacher as a sequential presenter of activities related to repertoire being studied, enabling students to experience and discover the musical concepts behind the elements in question (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). Thus, advocates of the Kodály approach today suggest the use of a staged, scaffolded and sequential approach to music education. While specifics can vary slightly depending on commentators, the bulk of Kodály educators adopt a structure aligned with that of Dewey (1916b) and echoing the work of Bruner (1983) as discussed previously.

This is based on four steps:

1. Prepare
 2. Make conscious (or presentation)
 3. Reinforce (or practice)
 4. Assess
- (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, pp. 204–205)

Kodály suggested folk songs were best suited to children’s holistic needs, deeming them of comparative quality to the finest of art music and so it was from their authentic material that Kodály would strive to “teach most of the musical elements, rhythmic and melodic motives” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Kokas, 1969, p. 125). Thus, from these songs, the Kodály approach prioritises the academic goals of music literacy with exploration of specific rhythmic and melodic elements as well as developing students’ reading and writing skills. However, Kodály (1974e, p. 206) emphasised that, “If one were to attempt to express the essence of this education in one word, it could only be – singing”.

Kodály’s prioritisation of singing was evidenced in his suggestions that to attempt specific instrumental teaching without structured, sequential preparatory “singing, reading and dictating to the highest level along with playing [was] to build upon sand” (Kodály, 1974i, p. 196). The scaffolded musical learning sequence he advocated was aligned with key elements of Hungarian folksongs, commencing with pulse, crotchet and quaver rhythms and the minor third interval, proceeding to the pentatonic scale before arriving to any minor seconds associated with the diatonic scale (Kodály, 1974a). He acknowledged that “Nobody wants to stop at pentatony. But, indeed, the beginnings must be made there; on the one hand in this way the biogenetical development is natural and, on the other, this is what is demanded by a rational pedagogical sequence” (Kodály, 1974a, p. 161). This biogenetical development referred to the positioning of these musical elements as key within the Hungarian folk tradition, which is an integral part of the Kodály philosophy.

Australian music educator and researcher, deVries (2001), conducted research on the use of Kodály-inspired techniques within the primary classroom context. In doing so, he referred to some positives associated with Kodály-based practices for

music education, renowned for its potential to offer highly successful music education for pupils. He emphasised scope for enhancing “children’s singing [and sense of] pitch” significantly improving “rhythmic skills [...], music literacy” and sense of texture through Kodály-based practices (deVries, 2001, p. 24). In tandem with supporting children’s music development, deVries, (2001, p. 25) has also referred to potential for “positive outcomes outside music” in terms of overall “functioning [...] intellectual development [...] concept formation and motor skills” in addition to contributing to other curricular learning.

Such assertions are not unique, with others having commented on the possibility for Kodály music education to contribute to children’s broader learning, growth and development (Bridges, 1979; Goopy, 2013; Kokas, 1986). Indeed, within a review of the literature Goopy (2013, p. 72) suggested that “music education programs founded on Kodály’s philosophy nourishes the learning of skills and ways of thinking that correlate to other areas of learning” with a range of literature providing a “firm foundation to advocate the ‘extra-musical effects’ and benefits of Kodály music education”.

However, much of the empirical research in this area was conducted in the late 20th century, suggesting a need for further research to demonstrate the value, relevance and potential of Kodály music education for teaching and learning in the 21st century.

In addition to the benefits of Kodály music education, there have been a number of critiques in relation to key tenets of how the approach has been interpreted by practitioners (deVries, 2001). These tend to rest on the degree of structure and teacher direction towards method and skill development over and above emphasis on pupil engagement and involvement (Abril & Gault, 2016; DeVries, 2001; Polyák & Bodnar, 2021), and specific use of folk music and western art music instead of examples from

across the broader musical repertoire, and emphasis on singing over and above instrumental playing (deVries, 2001; Lai, 2013).

Engaging with these criticisms, the importance of placing emphasis on affording pupils the opportunity to engage and enjoy practical music-making in tandem with any skill development is evident. Playful music pedagogy drawing upon the work of Kodály and Kokas was seen to offer an interesting opportunity for promoting such engagement where children could be encouraged to participate in enjoyable musical experiences with quality folk music and western art music. In the Irish context, the historical emphasis that has been placed on singing within schools, means that this is something already part of the overarching culture for music education (Benson, 1979).

Having explored the Kodály approach as an example of a traditional music educational approach, the next section explores games as teacher-directed, structured musical play activities associated with Kodály music education that could potentially be utilised by generalist teachers in the Irish context.

Playful elements associated with the Kodály method tend to focus on the development of children's musical literacy. These include use of the "bird-language" of tonic solfa, which was deemed entertaining for pupils whilst also providing a "basis for musical thinking in a playful way" (Kodály, 1974g, p. 221) and the use of singing games (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). In addition to the use of singing games, Kodály educators emphasise potential to use a range of other musical games-play to support pupils' music literacy development (Brumfield, 2014; Goeghegan, 2017; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Vajda, 2008). The following section discusses each of these as forms of musical playful learning which, involves increased levels of teacher direction, seen to relate to the games-play aspect of the Zosh et al. (2017) framework.

Singing Games

Singing games have been described as a form of musical play by a range of key commentators including Marsh and Young (2006). Unsurprisingly, given Kodály's (1974c, pp. 46–47) perception of the value of “singing connected with movement and action as a much more ancient and at the same time, more complex phenomenon than a simple song”, there is great emphasis on the use of singing games in a Kodály-inspired philosophy for music education. However, utilisation of singing games towards pedagogical aims can often involve increased adult intervention than would be often associated with singing games in free musical play for children outside the formal educational sphere (Marsh & Young, 2006). Relatedly, certain commentators have suggested that use of singing games in such a context detracts from their value, in terms of the degree of ownership children possess in the activity (Marsh, 2006).

Conversely, with singing games utilised for pedagogical purposes in many Kodály-inspired classrooms, pupils are encouraged to engage in singing and movement aligned with either the meaning of the song in question or a musical element of interest with focus often placed on scaffolding pupils' musical understanding (Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014). Singing games can occur in a range of classroom settings from paired, to group-work or within a circle and can be useful in challenging pupils and “supporting the teaching of music according to the principles of Zoltán Kodály” (Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014, p. 9). In this context, singing games offer important benefits for pupils' learning in the music classroom. They are seen to encourage enjoyment, eagerness for repetition, and an opportunity for pupils to develop musical and holistic skills (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Vajda, 2008), in addition to increasing interest and engagement, particularly when there is scope for lots of movement (Roberts, 2015).

According to Vajda (2008) who adapted the Kodály philosophy for the British context, musical skills developed by participation in singing games range from the rhythmic and aural to intonation, memory and overall musical thinking. Others have also commented on the suitability of singing games for supporting pupils in developing their “social, emotional, and kinaesthetic skills and abilities” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 120; Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014). This aligns with the research on benefits of Kodály music education in general (Goopy, 2013; DeVries, 2001), which is perhaps not surprising given the focus placed on active music making and singing games by Kodály music educators (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 120; Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014).

While singing games offer interesting scope for engagement, skills development, musical and holistic learning, there are considerations in relation to the transfer of what is often perceived to be a predominantly child-led form of play to the classroom where the teacher takes an increased level of ownership (Roberts, 2017). Drawing upon work by Harwood & Marsh (2012), and focusing on singing games as primarily child-led activities, Roberts (2017, p. 12) has suggested a need for educators to be increasingly mindful in relation to “the size and composition of groups, pedagogical practices, and roles of players in the groups” when incorporating singing games in the classroom. Of note, commentators have suggested that singing games taught in the classroom cannot allow for natural differentiation as would be practiced in children’s free participation in singing games given the change of context (Roberts, 2018). However, there is certainly a gap in the literature within primary school contexts and practices, which explores if and how teachers might seek to differentiate and include pupils when incorporating singing games into their pedagogical practices.

Other means of supporting musical development via scaffolded, teacher-directed, musical games-play include a music specific form of gamification or game-

based learning, which has not been specifically alluded to in the literature around music education previously, though researchers in the University of Girona are currently exploring the use of game-based learning with music teacher educators. If we are to explore playful music learning via games, a distinction should be made between singing games and other musical games learning. While there is currently no specific word to describe the type of play we might associate with music learning through games and with game-like elements, the term *musical gamification* was adopted for use in the present study to differentiate between it and singing games.

Musical Gamification

This type of playful musical games-play tends to involve experiential learning, movement and scaffolding towards enhanced musical understanding and is very much associated with the Kodály approach to music education. Sziráni (2018) has been carrying out research in the Hungarian context, exploring the benefits of integrating movement within more structured forms of music education as a means of enhancing pupils' experiences and learning in primary schools. This involves the use of games such as the conductor game (where pupils sit in a circle and follow a conductor who makes a range of actions whilst keeping a steady beat), representing rhythms through acting out the role of different note values, mathematical games and further rhythm games to support and scaffold pupils' musical development (Szirányi, 2018). Such teaching and learning may be seen as grounded on the use of musical gamification as a means of "reinforc[ing] musical concepts and skills" (Brumfield, 2014, p. 37). Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate and develop their understanding of musical elements in an informal, experiential learning environment, where the process is foregrounded and there are opportunities for motivating the children with competition and enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Indeed, based on the literature around games' potential to

encourage increased engagement for pupils who may otherwise be reluctant to participate in academic learning, it is possible that such games could provide an opportunity for inclusion in music learning for increased numbers of pupils (Disalvo, 2015).

Much of the alignment between Kodály music education and playful learning exists within more scaffolded, teacher-directed, structured singing games and musical gamification. This corresponds with the scaffolded, teacher-directed games associated with playful learning along the (Zosh et al., 2017) framework, and foregrounding of music literacy skill development for pupils. Niland (2009, p. 19) has suggested that the Kodály approach strives “to use play within a teacher-led curriculum”, which in her work pertaining to early years music education, she argues is not necessarily sufficient to meet children’s needs in the broadest sense. Such a perspective can indeed be seen to align with some practices of Kodály-inspired music education, and indicates a need for cognisance on the part of educators as to the types of power dynamics being emphasised in the classroom. Increased awareness of such dynamics, should be met with understanding of the continuum of ownership associated with activities (Roberts, 2018; Wright, 2016) and emphasis should be placed on affording pupils positive opportunities to engage meaningfully within music-making activities (deVries, 2001; Wright, 2016).

It was hypothesised that by envisioning the practice of music education along a continuum of playful music learning, there may also be scope for educators to begin supplementing increasingly teacher-scaffolded forms of musical play with those led by children to a greater extent. This leads us to consider more child-centred, guided approaches that can be incorporated within the music education context for primary schools. One means of achieving this is to include the work of a music education

theorist whose approach was not so different to that of Kodály but sought to supplement associated methods within an increasingly creative, kinaesthetic child-centred approach to music education. This is addressed in the next section with reference to the work of Klára Kokas.

Child-Centred: Child-led, Guided Musical Play

Guided musical play may be conceptualised as involving a range of increasingly informal, free musical experiences drawing from the literature around musical play for younger pupils. This may be seen to include free response to music (Niland, 2009), exploration of music with improvisation (Littleton, 1998; Niland, 2009) and dramatic musical play (Littleton, 1998). As discussed previously in relation to play, although it may be referred to as child-led musical play, in educational settings a degree of teacher input has been considered to be both unavoidable and required to support pupils (Nieuwmeijer, 2013). The next section focuses on how guided musical play-based activities aligning with the Zosh et al., (2017) framework may be realised in the realm of music education. In particular, it explores the Kokas pedagogy of music education with reference to: Free response to music – Free Kinaesthetic, Dramatic musical play and Free, Exploratory/Constructive musical play, whilst also drawing from the literature around musical play more generally. This aligns with the second theory of music education outlined by Swanwick (2005) in placing the child at the centre of the music-making process. Advocates of such a theory are known for emphasising improvisation and musical imagination over notation and instrumental teaching, requiring teachers to adopt a more facilitative role in supporting pupils in experiencing and expressing themselves through music.

Kokas Pedagogy and Child-led, Guided Musical Play

Klára Kokas was a psychologist, musician, music educator and student of Zoltán Kodály. Thus, much of her background in music education was grounded upon Kodály's "principles and concepts" (Houlahan, 2000, p. 46). Following her undergraduate study with Kodály, Kokas completed a master's degree in educational psychology before conducting doctoral research on the "Development of Learning Ability through Music Education" (Houlahan, 2000, p. 46). Kokas spent a period of time in the United States teaching music and continued to expand her horizons and understanding of what she believed to be the integral role and purpose of music education.

Although she was an advocate of the traditional Kodály approach, Kokas felt that there could be an element lacking within the routine and structure that were often associated with teaching of music, one of the criticisms previously discussed. Whilst admitting it went against everything she had been taught in her childhood and education, she was to discover that "freely improvised movements could enable us to get closer to music" (Kokas, 2013, p. 16). It was also characteristic of an approach to education in which the "teacher surrenders pedagogical control to the selected music and the movement experience" (Deszpot, 2013, p. 11). Ensuring that she stripped herself of all airs of "*adult superiority*" often held by teachers, in a way that encouraged playful interactions, creativity and understanding, Kokas (1999, p. 17) hoped to increase levels of autonomy on the part of her pupils in a child-centred approach to music education, with some ties to traditional theories in the emphasis placed on 'high-quality' folk and classical music (Swanwick, 2005).

Her experiences in the United States were important in shaping Kokas' development of a unique pedagogical approach grounded upon a similar humanistic

understanding of music education to that of Kodály (Houlahan, 2000). Despite taking steps towards a new approach, Kokas was also a strong advocate for the Kodály method and completed research focused on the transfer effect of music education on pupils' broader social and academic learning (Kokas, 1969). Like her mentor, she wished to open up music to everyone and believed in offering children a range of experiences to give them “the joy of creative reception” in relation to ‘quality’ art music from a range of composers from within the canon and the Hungarian context (Kokas, 1999, p. 23). Yet, Kokas was particularly interested in supporting individuals in special, often difficult circumstances, dedicating much of her time to working with children in orphanages or with a range of physical, special educational and behavioural difficulties (Kokas, 2013). This was important for her since she, like Kodály, believed music also offered a chance to develop holistically, which should not be missed by anyone. Her suggestion was that the point is not necessarily always to teach music, but to “teach children” and to “inspire, help, encourage, and strengthen with music” (Kokas, 1999, p. 86).

Although there have been increasing numbers of researchers exploring Kokas pedagogy in recent years (Tiszai, 2016; Vass, 2011, 2019; Vass & Deszpot, 2017), her approach to music education still remains relatively unknown within the broader field.

Elements associated with Kokas Pedagogy may be deemed to include:

1. Western classical art music
2. Singing
3. Cultivating a joyful, child-centered environment for pupils' holistic development
4. Playful interactions with high levels of pupil autonomy
5. Movement and creative response
6. Interpersonal relationships
7. Supporting and guiding pupils in music listening and a range of different responses
8. Freedom, improvisation and creativity

(Hawbaker, 2000; Kokas, 1999, 2013; Luca, 2018; Székely, 2021)

Rather than outlining each of the above areas in detail, it is deemed prudent to consider what playful music education practices inspired by the work of Klára Kokas might look like. It becomes clear through reading her work, that Kokas (1999, p. 45) indeed, wished to take steps to replace what she perceived to be “*teacher-centred* with *child-centred* music education”. In doing this she ended up leaving the “trodden paths of teaching, the methods generally used and taught” (Kokas, 1999, p. 15). Kokas (1999, 2013) sought to create an environment in her lessons where children and adults alike could blossom and enjoy the spirit of shared creation with one another.

For those inspired by the Kokas' approach, there is suggestion that one should make playful use of language and music by rephrasing folk-song “texts to make them more intimate, to make them address participants personally” (Kokas, 1999, p. 19). In her work studying adults' participation in Kokas sessions, Vass (2019) has suggested that key elements associated with participation include movement/play at different stages, without and with musical focus, with the latter bringing participants closer to experiences of flow and creative presence in music. This free movement is an integral

aspect of Kokas pedagogy (Székely, 2021) where the role of the teacher as likened to that of “an excellent conductor” in a position to help, support and ask “stimulating questions” (Kokas, 1999, p. 35).

Through kinaesthetic, imaginative, dramatic and constructive forms of musical play, Kokas “forbid little and [tried] to make learning a joy” and allowed pupils’ opinions to impact her teaching (Kokas, 1999, p. 13). Her lessons were guided by two rules as a means of offering freedom within certain limitations. The first was not to injure or interrupt any person and the second was not to interrupt the music (Hawbaker, 2000).

A key element associated with Kokas pedagogy, was that she encouraged teachers to adopt a flexible framework, hence alignment of her approach with guided musical play, to support pupils’ music listening and response to instrumental music. Such response can involve pupils “acting out [...] movement composition[s ...], setting improvisational dance and motion to music [and] visualisation: drawing the story” (Székely, 2021, p. 3) in a way which, strives to facilitate a “deep musical understanding” and joyful appreciation of music (Tiszai, 2018, p. 86).

There has, as of yet, been limited research into applications of Kokas pedagogy within primary schools, which suggest there is a definite need for further research in this area. Literature that describes application of the Kokas approach with groups of adults and children, indicates scope for encouraging increased understanding and perception of “more complex musical patterns [through movement, than participants] would [...] be able to express and reflect [orally]” (Tiszai, 2018, p. 92). Based on Hungarian writings by Pásztor (2003, 2016), pertaining to qualitative study of learning and engagement based on video recordings of pupils participating in Kokas lessons, Tiszai (2018, p. 92) suggested that another benefit of the approach is that it enables

children to demonstrate understanding of “timing, harmony, form, structure [and] timbre”. Moreover, Kokas pedagogy has also been said to allow students to develop musical memory, creative improvisation, a sense of rhythm and an overall deeper understanding of musical structures” (Tiszai, 2018, p. 94; Deszpot, 2011; Kokas, 1984, 2003; Pasztór, 2003, 2016).

Székely (2020) has suggested that the Kokas method depends on a positive relationship between teacher and child which is difficult to make concrete, conceptualise and teach. In the introduction to Kokas’ recordings of her work, Vékony (2013, p. 7) emphasised Kokas’ wish to create a “uniquely warm and intimate atmosphere” in her lessons. Moving away from standardisation, this called for an “environment where judgment, classification, comparison, measuring up, or competition were unknown concepts” (Kokas, 2013, p. 24). In the Irish context at present, with emphasis on standardised assessment for primary school pupils, thought to make pupils feel “extremely anxious” (O’Leary, Lysaght, NicCraith & Scully, 2020, p. 6), perhaps cultivation of such an environment and relationship is a particularly worthy, if not necessarily easily-achieved, aspiration.

Having explored Kokas Pedagogy as an example of a child-centred approach to music education, the next section considers related activities that could potentially be utilised by generalist teachers within the context of guided musical play.

Free, Exploratory/ Constructive musical play

Kokas (1999) also used singing in the classroom, though this would manifest as part of circle games, greetings, and partings. These activities involved exploratory and constructive musical play in that pupils were encouraged to “rephrase the texts to make them more intimate, to make them address participants personally” (Kokas, 1999, p. 19). Here children would also be guided in improvisation based on underlying (usually

pentatonic) folksong where they could “change pitch, in an adventurous spirit... play with rhythm... express emotions...[and] find out new tempo and dynamic variations” (Kokas, 1999, p. 19). The playful, creative and personal manipulation of music seen above in relation to Kokas pedagogy was above and beyond the levels of freedom one would associate with the Kodály method, which uses songs to deal with specific melodic or rhythmic elements sequentially. Here although the song remains important to the music education process, children are encouraged to make it their own and develop their own versions of the song itself. Other commentators have provided similar examples of musical play in young children’s active and playful response to songs related to their interests (Niland, 2009). With echoes of suggestions by Zosh et al. (2017), Niland has suggested that repetition of these songs and related improvisations are integral for supporting young pupils’ development of understanding related to musical elements of tempo, pulse, rhythm, structure and pitch (Niland, 2009).

Having explored the notion of free, exploratory/constructive musical play as a form of guided musical play to facilitate pupils’ musical learning and development, next it is important to look to musical play grounded in free response to music. This is explored in relation to what is called free, constructive musical play and dramatic musical play (Littleton, 1998; Niland, 2009).

Free response to music – Free Kinaesthetic, Dramatic musical play

While children are encouraged to improvise musical material based on song material, Kokas (1999, p. 19) suggested that they should be enabled to move in response to these materials and to “act out different things in their own metamorphoses in the middle of the ring”. She felt that the interaction of music and drama in this instance was fundamentally dependent on the music and that the integration of drama was a means of supporting the musical experience (Kokas, 1999). Kokas sought to

interact with pupils at their own level, whilst encouraging the use of “completely unrestricted, free movements that facilitate emotional responses to music in children as they discover musical values with their own bodies” (Deszpot, 2013, p. 9). Whilst these included elements of dramatisation, another example of the Kokas approach to music education incorporating free movement and socio-dramatic musical play is shown below. The below excerpt demonstrates how Kokas sought to encourage players to be transformed through music and to allow music to take them to new places.

The door behind us is the entrance to a place of refuge... We've left the bustling town behind and arrived in this peaceful citadel raised up around herself by Klári in her world which most miraculously fuses order and freedom... Klári is already seated in the middle of the floor on the carpet... And then we'll play. We'll have a game of make-believe lifted up by the sound of music, we are out at sea lying on our backs with eyes closed, in complete silence. We feel how we are surrounded by the enormous mass of water. How have we gotten here? By what means have we traveled? (sic) Are we a huge coral reef or an enormous octopus?... There are thousands of possibilities but overwhelmed by the effect of music I eventually find the small sea creature I am right now. How peaceful it is to get lost in the image, to get lost in the music – Bach or Mozart, Beethoven or Bartók... And now we stir, stand up or sit up, or simply move while lying on our backs. We dance – our arms, heads, legs lifting and swaying to the music. The first hesitant motions- shaped by the recurrent phrases of the music – assuming meaningful direction. And now the music starts all over again, and according to what's come up in us, we play at being starfish, fish, water. The game has a magic effect. Slowly, pairs and groups form groups, which are already playing and dancing together in blissful abandonment... And then Klári asks: “Who would like to show us what he or she has invented?” There is always someone who would – often enough, several of them... Klári thanks the children for the present they have given us. Would they perhaps tell us what their dance was about? If they would, we all listen to the story with great attention... They trust each other...

(Beothy, 1999, pp. 7–9)

Free response to music may involve kinaesthetic movements such as dance, visual arts or even dramatic role play in response to music (Niland, 2009). Looking at the quote above, from a participant of Kokas pedagogy (Beothy, 1999) who reflected on her experience with her own child and a range of other parents and children, it becomes clear that music can be integrated with dance and drama in a way that allows pupils' increased freedom and scope to express themselves and develop holistically (Bresler,

1995). According to Bresler (1995, p. 7), these open-ended activities, with teachers offering very little in the way of “direct, explicit instruction” tended to be found within young children’s classrooms, whilst Kokas pedagogy has been utilised across a range of ages with adults and children.

The work of Klára Kokas may be seen to strive for supporting pupils’ holistic and musical development in a more informal manner than that of her mentor, Zoltán Kodály. With echoes of Dewey’s (1916) thoughts on this area, this was arguably with a view to balancing the structured, academic teachings associated with the Kodály method, synonymous with the Hungarian music education system at the time and to afford pupils the opportunity to be creative, express themselves and experience high-quality music (Hawbaker, 2000). As demonstrated above, this is seen to align with a more child-led, guided (Zosh et al., 2017) approach to musical play with emphasis on free movement in constructive and dramatic musical play activities.

Towards a playful music pedagogy framework for primary schools

Based on the aforementioned literature, playful music learning throughout the primary school was suggested to consist of increasingly teacher-directed games play, which can be coupled with increasingly child-led, guided musical play activities. This draws upon the work of Kodály and Kokas in particular, in addition to educational theories from Dewey, Froebel, Vygotsky and Bruner, as well as the current literature around musical play, music education and playful pedagogy.

Following engagement with the literature, it was believed that increasingly teacher-directed musical play could be seen include singing games and musical gamification with a view to scaffolding pupils’ musical development in line with the Kodály approach to music education. Such practices were seen to be positively supplemented with increasingly child-led and guided musical play in exploratory,

dramatic and constructive activities as a means of enhancing pupils' musical experiences offering increased opportunities for self-expression and creativity such as those associated with the work of Kokas.

Extending this across a continuum, Table 1 provides a list of potential activities that can be associated with playful music pedagogy drawing upon the aforementioned literature pertaining to the Kodály and Kokas approaches. A sub-section of these activities, which were utilised within the PD workshop, are discussed in further detail within the methodology chapter. A more specific framework developed throughout the course of the present study is presented in Chapter 4, drawing from the key literature and the results of the present study.

Table 1: Potential Activities Associated with Playful Music Pedagogy

Increasingly child-led musical play activities primarily associated with the work of Klára Kokas		Increasingly adult-led musical play activities primarily associated with the work of Zoltán Kodály	
Free Exploratory/ Constructive Musical Play	Dramatic Musical Play	Singing Games	Gamification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collective singing and circle games altered through pupils' improvisation - Rephrasing texts - Painting, drawing or sculpting - Creating poems - Demonstration for others - Pupils develop/improvise their own movements and games - Pupils develop/improvise their own rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drama games, role play and activities - Make-believe play based on musical extracts - Dramatised circle games - Freedom of movement - Non-verbal communication - Emotional responses to music - Creating movements, scenes, stories, dances, and pictures to music - Acting out (Singing games) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circle games and collective singing with repetition and free dramatization - Acting out - Wind-up - Circle - Choosing - Chase - Jump-rope games - Clapping games - Partner - Double circle - Single line - Square games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drama Games and activities - Funny games - Games to perform rhythms - Rhythm games e.g. Poison rhythm - Flash cards - Guess the song - Singing piano - Find the composer - Rhythm race - Melody detective - Motivic alteration - Notation puzzles - Reverse reading - Quick change

(Brumfield, 2014; Geoghegan, 2017; Hawbaker, 2000; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Kodály, 1974f, 1974b; Kokas, 1999; Luca, 2018; Niland, 2009; Szirányi, 2018; Vajda, 2008; Vass, 2019).

This section has contextualised elements deemed of relevance to a playful form of music pedagogy for Irish primary schools drawing mainly on the music educational philosophies of Zoltán Kodály (1954, 1974b, 1974d) and Klára Kokas (1969, 1999, 2013).

Having outlined and discussed examples of teacher-directed, structured and child-led, guided play-based music education activities, it is now prudent to consider scope for

generalist teachers to use them within increasingly playful music education practices in Irish primary schools. This also requires reference to the PD context.

Section 3: Generalist Teaching of Play-Based Music Education in Irish Primary Schools and Professional Development

Given that the Kodály approach and Kokas pedagogy tend to be primarily associated with highly-trained musicians and music educators, with requisite understanding of music literacy and theory, it is important to consider if and how primary school, generalist teachers responsible for teaching all curricular areas, such as those in Irish schools, might be enabled to incorporate play-based elements of these approaches in their classroom practices. A broad framework of playful music pedagogy for Irish primary schools based on Kodály and Kokas, was deemed to provide scope to use singing games and gamification in addition to increasingly child-led free, exploratory/constructive and dramatic musical play. Related practices were thought to resonate with Dewey's suggestion of a need for balance between informal and formal approaches and degrees of freedom in the classroom and Wright's (2016) work on increasingly informal music learning. Given the grounding of this research in the practices of generalist teachers, who despite having some interest in music and music education, were not qualified to the extent generally expected for a specialist music educator, one must consider its relevance and applicability to these educators.

Generalist Teaching of Music Education

To date, much of the research has focused on generalist music education from a deficit perspective (Bresler, 1994; de Vries, 2014; Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; Russell-Bowie, 2009). Recalling Kodály's (1974f) question 'How can we teach what we do not know ourselves?', it was important to consider the fact that some generalist primary school teachers are responsible for navigating and

mediating music curricula without necessarily possessing sufficient training and or personal music experiences (Bresler, 1994; de Vries, 2014; Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; Russell-Bowie, 2009).

Aligned with traditional music education theory and the work of Kodály, Houlahan and Tacka (2015, p. 41) have suggested that “A primary task for music educators [is the teaching of] basic rhythmic and melodic elements”. From such a perspective, the ability to scaffold learners’ musical development, requires at least a basic understanding of music literacy on the part of educators. This is a task above the current level of competency for many generalist teachers in Ireland, tied up within a culture where “musical illiteracy extend[s] through the whole spectrum” of music education (Heneghan, 2001, p. 227).

However, Kerin’s (2019) recent research has demonstrated that generalist primary school teachers possess a pedagogical knowledge that is of importance for facilitating music education. In addition to this, generalists have an in-depth knowledge of the children they work with, and Jeanneret and DeGraffenreid (2012, p. 400) have argued that “Classroom teachers’ knowledge of their students and their interests that arise from daily interaction within the class can allow the teachers to catch and capitalise on children’s spontaneous and ongoing musical play throughout the day”.

Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid (2012, p. 410) have suggested that generalist music educators are positioned to facilitate effective music education practices when they possess “musical knowledge and confidence” alongside “a best-practice pedagogy that is learner-centred and mindful of the multiple ways children learn and what each child brings to the classroom”. This necessitated three key elements: child-centredness, increasingly collaborative and democratic, social engagement and

cognitivist/constructivist underpinning (Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012, p. 404) thought to be evidenced in relation to playful music pedagogy.

It was with this in mind that the current research sought to explore primary school teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy in the Irish context combining elements of Kodály and Kokas music education.

Supports for Generalist Music Educators in Ireland

Despite the fact that most music education is taught by generalist teachers in Irish primary schools, who bring with them a range of musical and pedagogical knowledge and understanding of the pupils in their care, there are little in the way of supports and resources available for these teachers. This was something that would be amplified for teachers seeking to engage with a novel form of playful music pedagogy and thus, required consideration within the present study (Mardell et al., 2019).

There are minimal resources available within the current music curriculum and guidelines from which teachers can be supported to engage with a playful music pedagogy inspired by Kodály and Kokas (NCCA, 1999a, 1999b). Those present include a sequence for teaching music literacy (See Appendix A and B) and scant examples of singing games (See Appendix C) and gamification (See Appendix D). In terms of more guided forms of musical play, the curriculum guidelines offer some examples of constructive musical play, mostly connected to the composing strand (See Appendix E for one example of this). Other reference is made to the possibility of integrating visual arts with music in listening and responding activities. However, there is a general tendency to prioritise quite structured, teacher-directed activities for activities involving integration and overall, sparse reference to the potential to integrate music with drama within these curricular documents. References made, advocate that teachers would

consider “composing and presenting music that tells a story” (NCCA, 1999a, 1999b, p. 17), yet connections to drama here may be slightly overestimated.

More examples were deemed necessary to ensure that teachers were cognisant of what these practices might entail (Mardell et al., 2019; Sahlberg, 2017), in a position to facilitate pupils’ participation in play-based activities within the ZPD and to support them in further development. Further resources are notable within materials, such as those by Goeghegan and Nemes (2014), and within textbooks and programmes like O’Connell (2013) *Music is Fun!* developed in Ireland. Even with these resources, in light of the context around many generalist teachers’ limited musical knowledge and confidence, PD was deemed essential for supporting teachers in this area.

Professional Development

Given focus on Irish primary school teachers’ practices of a new concept of playful music pedagogy, there was a requirement for a degree of PD within the present study. The current section seeks to contextualise this PD within the broader context. It explores different models and characteristics of PD more generally before honing in on research in the area of music education and relevant considerations.

Professional Development in Ireland

PD is an integral element of the teaching profession in the Irish context. This was particularly highlighted in 2016 with the publication of the *Cosán* framework emphasising the importance of ongoing engagement in PD for Irish educators (The Teaching Council, 2016). The *Cosán* framework represented a key step in striving to “foster a culture of “powerful professional learning” [within the teaching profession in Ireland] based on teachers’ active engagement in their own learning, for their benefit and that of their students” (The Teaching Council, 2016, p. 3). Standards to guide teachers’ engagement within PD in this context are “quality teaching and learning” and

“continued professional growth for enhanced pedagogical practices” (The Teaching Council, 2016, p. 22). Although it is clear from the literature that PD can take on a range of different forms (Desimone, 2009; Kennedy, 2014, The Teaching Council, 2016), The Teaching Council (2016) suggests the need to prioritise teacher reflection and learning in relation to each model.

Models of Professional Development

Given that the primary focus of this research was on exploring playful pedagogies for music education, it was deemed to be outside the scope of the present study to provide a substantive overview of all of the different models of PD. However, it was important to consider the model and forms of PD applied within the research and how they rest within the broader context.

Interestingly, as noted previously in relation to playful pedagogy, different models of PD have been suggested to exist across a spectrum related to the associate degree of “autonomy” and “agency” afforded to participants (Kennedy, 2014, p. 349). “Transmissive” models are deemed to offer the least, and “transformative” models the most autonomy, with the former focusing on transmitting information to teachers and the latter, transforming practices through critical engagement. “Transitional” models represent a middle-zone, having “the capacity to support underlying agendas compatible with either of these two purposes of CPD” (Kennedy, 2014, p. 349).

Despite the limited scope for participant ownership and agency within transmissive models of PD, it is generally accepted that these models such as stand-alone seminars and lectures can be particularly useful for didactic teaching of skills and “knowledge acquisition” (Brennan, 2017; Murchan, Loxley & Johnston, 2009, p. 456). Although they have been shown not to necessarily transfer to classroom practices, transmissive models tend to represent the majority of opportunities for PD in the Irish

context (Brennan, 2017; Murchan et al., 2009). Conversely, transitional models of PD can provide opportunities for teachers to take increased ownership of their learning while transformative models supplement this agency by involving educators in a degree of research and critical inquiry (Kennedy, 2014). In addition to these models, there are a certain number of characteristics that have been associated with successful or effective PD, which are referred to in the next section.

Characteristics of Effective Professional Development

Researchers have alluded to a range of features and characteristics that tend to be found within successful PD (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002, 2003, 2014; Kervin, 2007, Webster-Wright, 2009). Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Suk Yoon (2001) and Desimone (2009) have referred to five elements of effective PD: content focus, active learning, coherence, duration and collective participation. These align with those characteristics described by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) more recently in many ways though the work of the latter researchers places increased emphasis on the potential for coaching, expert support and feedback to enhance PD opportunities.

Effective PD provides teachers with “specific, concrete and practical ideas” that relate to their everyday classroom practices (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Guskey, 2002, p. 382). Consequently, teachers are supported in gaining enhanced understanding of the content being taught in addition to the pedagogical implications (Guskey, 2003, p. 749). The provision of meaningful, active learning opportunities and alignment to curricular standards are integral to ensure overall coherence (Garet et al., 2001).

Another key aspect of effective PD rests in affording teachers the opportunity to collaborate with others (Guskey, 2014), receive feedback (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), critically reflect on their experiences and share examples of practices with

emphasis on professional dialogue (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kervin, 2007; Webster-Wright, 2009).

However, for all of these elements to work, facilitators need to be cognisant of teachers' baseline content knowledge pertaining to the subject in question, which should be "sufficient to support their learning of particular pedagogical strategies" (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 3). In terms of duration, it is generally accepted that effective PD is carried out over an extended period of time, since this allows teachers the opportunity to engage with the processes within their own classrooms and to discuss the work being explored in more detail (Garet et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009). One form of PD thought to offer a good deal of promise is the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model, which can "provide ongoing, [...contextual] learning that is active, collaborative, and reflective" and aligns with key characteristics of effective PD (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 17)

In seeking to design the PD for the present study it was important to be cognisant of this overarching context. Thus, these aforementioned elements were taken into account in tandem with research pertaining to PD in music education more specifically, discussed in the next section.

Professional Development in Music Education

The literature pertaining to effective PD for generalist music educators has mirrored that in the wider educational field. Key commentators in Ireland and around the world have emphasised the need for music education PD opportunities to provide scope for active learning, developing content and pedagogical knowledge for teachers (Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; O'Flynn, 2011). Affording teachers the chance to try out new approaches whilst in receipt of support, feedback and mentoring, and in collaboration with others has been suggested to represent an important avenue for

enhancing generalist music teaching (Sinclar, Watkins & Jeanneret, 2015; Holden & Button, 2016). In addition to this, the need for teachers to engage in discussion and critical reflection around their practices has been viewed as vitally important (Holden, 2016; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; O’Flynn, 2011; Sinclair et al., 2015).

Of particular relevance to this study, research carried out by Sinclair et al. (2015) in Australia explored the use of a combined approach to PD for generalist teachers facilitated by artists and academic specialists. Within this approach they combined two day-long seminars with sustained support in the arts, ranging from subsequent PD to in-school mentoring programs. Something that emerges from this article is a conceptualisation of the experience as “learning *with* teachers” as opposed to developing teachers’ practice in an overly transmissive sense (Sinclair et al., 2015, p. 73). This perspective aligns with the aims of the present research and with the broader field of PD. Thus, it was deemed important to consider in relation to the present study. However, something to consider is that these authors argued that participating artists were required to adopt a number of different roles in this process, from mentor and model to facilitator, translator and validator (Sinclair et al., 2015). This indicated a need for a great deal of reflexivity in relation to the current research project, which has certain parallels with the research design adopted by Sinclair et al. (2015).

In relation to the Irish context, suggesting the need to move away from provision of transmissive models of PD for music education, O’Flynn (2011, p. 5) has called for PD that involves “active learning strategies”, “interactive feedback and structured discussion, being mentored or participating in a committee or study group” to facilitate teachers’ embodied engagement.

Implications for the Present Study

Having explored the broader context in relation to the music education approaches of Kodály and Kokas, and the relevant playful pedagogy and PD literature, the decision was taken to create an opportunity for teachers to engage in transitional PD in the present study (Kennedy, 2014). An initial workshop offered scope for providing transmission of key elements associated with playful pedagogy pertaining to teacher-led and child-led forms of musical play (Kennedy, 2014). Aligned with Desimone's (2009) suggestions of requirements of effective PD, this predominantly tutor-led workshop involved active learning opportunities and high-levels of collective participation in playful activities to provide for meaningful engagement with the content. Relevant resources, activities and materials drawing from literature in tandem with Kodály folk-song and Western classical repertoire were included. Contextual coherence towards the primary school music curriculum was prioritised in tandem with development of baseline content knowledge pertaining to the musical elements of the curriculum.

However, one area that needed to be addressed in relation to Desimone's (2009) characteristics of effective PD was duration. For the purposes of this research, it was believed that an increased period of engagement with playful music pedagogy was necessary. This needed to offer teachers increased agency and scope for exploration of the approach in collaboration with others, whilst in a position to seek support if required (Sinclair, Watkins & Jeanneret, 2015; Holden & Button, 2016). This informed the facilitation of a subsequent PLC for teachers who wished to participate in the research as part of an increasingly, agentic, active and collaborative PD (Kennedy, 2014; Desmione, 2009; O'Flynn, 2011). The PD provided in the study is outlined in more detail in Chapter 3.

Summary

The first section of this literature review explored the theoretical and contextual underpinning of playful pedagogies making reference to examples of guided play and games play in Finland and Jamaica. This related to the continua of ownership drawing from work by Dewey (1916a), Wright (2016) and the Zosh et al. (2017) framework for playful learning. The second section of the chapter explored what a play-based approach to music education might look like, drawing upon the approaches of Kodály and Kokas in particular, in addition to that of a number of other music education researchers. Following this, an initial framework of activities thought associated with different forms of playful music pedagogy building on these two approaches was presented, outlined as consisting of teacher-scaffolded musical play activities, which could be coupled with increasingly child-led, guided musical play activities. Increasingly teacher-scaffolded activities were thought to include singing games and musical gamification with a view to scaffolding pupils' musical development in line with the Kodály approach to music education. Conversely, child-led, guided musical play was suggested to incorporate dramatic and exploratory/constructive musical play activities offering increased opportunities for self-expression and creativity such as those associated with the work of Kokas.

The final section of this chapter considered scope for teachers to implement a play-based approach to music education within the Irish primary school context in tandem with the PD context and implications for the present study. It was deemed integral that PD opportunities should provide teachers an opportunity to engage with playful music pedagogy through an effective PD approach (Desimone, 2009). Content of the PD aligned with a continuum of ownership for music education (Dewey, 1916a, Wright, 2016, Zosh et al., 2017) and built upon playful aspects of the Kodály and

Kokas approaches to music education. It was hoped that this form of playful music pedagogy could become part of teachers' classroom practices aligned with the music curriculum (Holden & Button, 2006; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012) and further inform the conceptualisation of playful music learning across a continuum of ownership. Thus, it was particularly important to explore teachers' practices of such a pedagogy within real classrooms. The next chapter provides an overview of the conceptual framework, research design and methodology underpinning the present study, which sought to shed light on teachers' practices and perceptions of play-based music education based on experiences in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

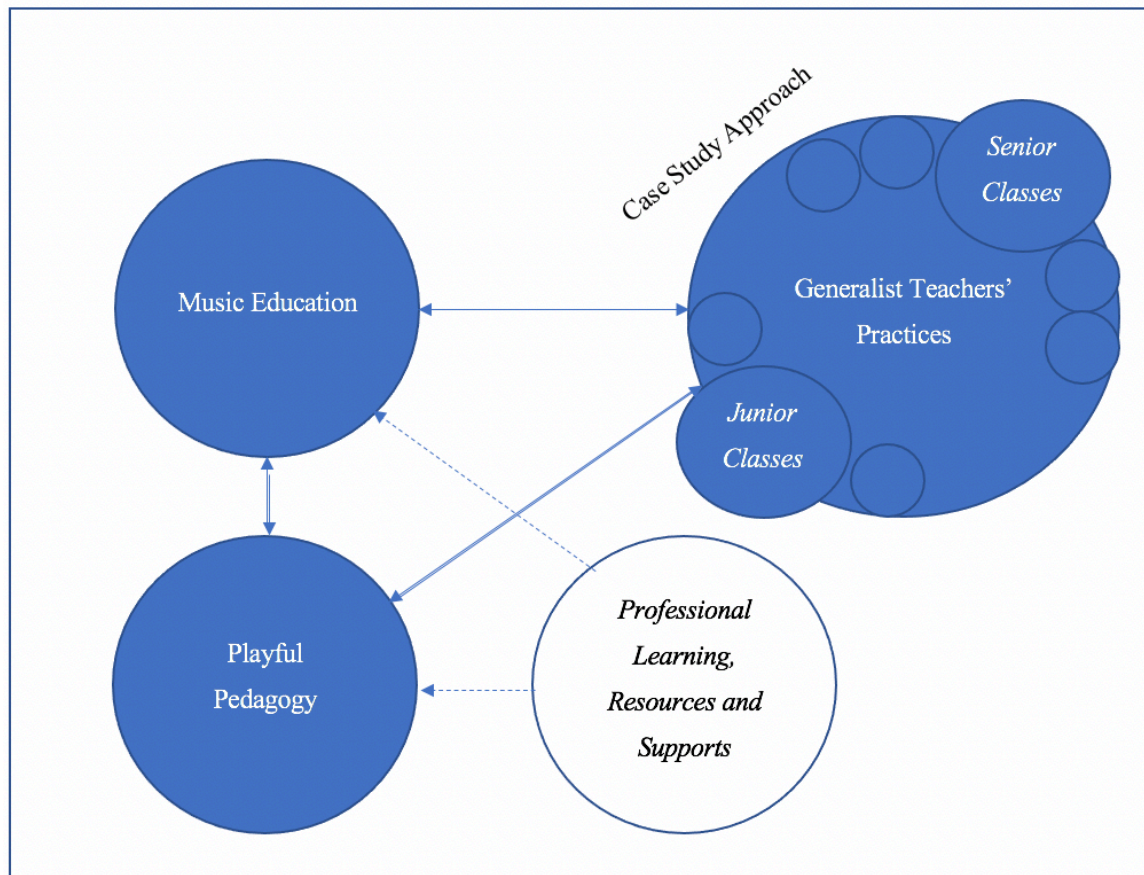
The introductory chapter set the scene for the research by referring to the policy context underpinning playful pedagogy as a rationale for its use within the Irish primary school system. Suggesting congruence between playful elements that can be associated with the work of music education theorists Kodály and Kokas, it outlined the aims of the present research to conceptualise and explore generalist teachers' practices of a form of playful music pedagogy in primary schools. Chapter 2 further explored practices of playful pedagogy and alignment between playful pedagogy literature and the work of Kodály and Kokas in singing games, learning music through games and guided musical play. It also provided an overview of the literature underpinning a play-based approach to music education. The present chapter explores the research design and qualitative case-study methodology underpinning the study. It commences with an initial overview of the conceptual framework before exploring key issues around ethical concerns, trustworthiness and limitations in relation to the research conducted. The chapter concludes by describing the analytical processes adopted.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework draws from the broader context surrounding a piece of research, as a means of fulfilling three specific purposes: Establishing an argument for the relevance of the research; Explaining assumed relationships, theories and assumptions implicit in the research design; and outlining the problems and research questions to be explored (Crawford, 2020; Maxwell, 2005). In addition to providing a rationale for the research, a conceptual framework can serve as a guide and a roadmap for ease of navigation through a study (Eisenhart, 1991; Grennan, 2017). This chapter provides an outline of the key area of focus in the present study building upon literature

explored previously in the dissertation: generalist teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Playful Music Pedagogy Guiding the Study



Overview of the Conceptual Framework

As we can see from the above conceptual framework, this research, in exploring generalist teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy as part of a qualitative case study, focused particularly on the realms of music education and playful pedagogy. It also involved a degree of professional learning, resources and supports for generalist teachers particular to the Irish context.

Although much of the literature related to practices of generalist music education has been written from a deficit perspective, outlining and ascertaining associate problems (Bresler, 1994; Hennessy, 2000; Russell-Bowie, 2009), others have

strived to explore alternate possibilities within their research (Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012). These authors have suggested that generalists need confidence, knowledge and best-practice, child-centred music education approaches in order to teach quality music lessons, while Holden & Button (2006, p. 36) suggest that they must be afforded the opportunity to “explore new approaches to teaching music in the context of their own classroom”. These latter perspectives were more intrinsic to the present research, which sought to explore practices of playful music pedagogy based upon a framework of playful music learning drawing upon the music education philosophies of Kodály, Kokas and work by Zosh et al. (2017) in generalist classrooms.

The Role of the Researcher

Qualitative researchers are particularly inclined to undertake research in areas that align with their prior experiences, passions, perceptions and interests (Crawford, 2020; Saldana, 2011). Such impetus towards an area of focus connects the researcher and the research in a way that should not be understated (Ratner, 2002). A researcher’s subjectivity “is intimately involved” in research and plays a role in guiding “everything from the choice of topic” to the formation of hypotheses, selection of methodologies, data analysis and interpretation, thus leading Ratner (2002, para. 1) to advise consideration around personal subjectivities, “values and objectives” brought to the research. Vitally, in doing so, it is possible to demonstrate how initial hypotheses, motivations and values were built upon with reference to key literature, instead of allowing them to negatively impact the research as part of a rigid personal agenda (Crawford, 2020; Maxwell, 2005; Saldana, 2011). Given that qualitative researchers play pivotal roles in designing, conceptualising, facilitating and analysing their research, it is important to acknowledge these personal experiences, values, subjectivities and interests. Such an account is provided below.

Growing up, the summation of my music educational experiences in primary school, aligning with the literature, involved limited engagement in song-singing and performing (See Benson, 1979; Henegan, 2001; Herron, 1985). Despite supplementing this education with participation in the school choir, I left primary school with limited understanding and confidence in relation to music. This was addressed years later in secondary school, when with the support of a passionate choral director and experienced music teacher, I began to re-engage with music. I believe that receiving this support for learning music in secondary school and being encouraged to participate in engaging and meaningful musical activities and performances, played an important role in my overall academic and personal development.

Teaching within a primary school as a generalist teacher with a keen interest in music that fuelled study for an MA in music, and some PD summer courses in Kodály music education, I felt I still had much to learn about how best to provide active and engaging music lessons for my pupils. Studying music education within the Kodály Institute, Kecskemét, Hungary, whilst on career break from my teaching position, allowed me to experience the Kodály Method of music education and Kokas pedagogy in context. I was particularly impressed with the breadth of musical knowledge and understanding young pupils demonstrated as they engaged with music in child-centred, fun and playful ways. Returning home, I was eager to explore if and how my increasingly specialised knowledge of these music educational pedagogies might be applied to the Irish context, and commenced doctoral study in this area.

I have a great interest in the realm of PD and have been involved in the development and provision of PD in education and music education, to newly qualified teachers, qualified teachers and educators over the last number of years. My

background experiences, knowledge and interest in relation to PD were important when designing and facilitating the PD elements within the present study.

Also, presently involved in teaching at third-level and primary level, a commonality within all of my pedagogical endeavours is that I strive to empower those I am working with to take ownership of learning/practices, to engage meaningfully, reflectively, creatively, collaboratively, and wherever possible, playfully in the educational process. In many ways, these personal attributes and tendencies have shaped my choices for the present research and indeed, provided me with key tools and resources to conduct this study.

My previous research experience involved qualitative content analysis and participation on the EdD programme meant that I had a good deal of targeted experience in educational research methods, methodologies and qualitative data analysis prior to commencing the present research.

Research Aims, Questions, Propositions and Key Concepts

The research aims and questions were developed from research influences around the researcher's experiences, the literature more generally and specific theories of education and development as discussed earlier in this document. Research was explored to allow for conceptualisation of a framework for playful music pedagogy for use by generalist primary school teachers as outlined in Chapter 2. The following, 'how-based', research questions underlying the research study were thought to align with a case-study methodology and allow for exploration of elements of this framework in practice (Yin, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Following initial PD, and in exploring playful music pedagogy as part of a professional learning community:

1. How can playful music pedagogy become part of Irish primary school teachers' classroom practices?

2. How do Irish primary school teachers perceive playful music pedagogical practices to contribute to pupils' musical, and wider learning and development?
 - a. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' understanding of musical elements and concepts?
 - b. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' learning across other areas of the curriculum e.g. literacy and numeracy?
 - c. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' broader skill development e.g. social/emotional, motor development?

As is typical for many case studies, two propositions underlying the present research were noted that are intrinsically related to the research questions. The first of these propositions was that generating a tentative framework for playful music pedagogy and providing PD supports for teachers would lead to teachers adopting a range of diverse playful music pedagogical practices involving teacher-led and guided forms of musical play within their classrooms. The second proposition was that adopting a playful pedagogical approach to music in classrooms would be seen by teachers to contribute in some recognisable way to pupils' learning and development. This second proposition aligned with literature explored previously in relation to the use of playful pedagogies and the music education approaches of Kodály (e.g. deVries, 2001; Goopy, 2013) and Kokas (e.g. Tiszai, 2016) more generally.

Based on these propositions and research questions, key areas for examination within the research were the specific lessons taught, which constituted playful music pedagogical practices in the different classes, and teachers' perceptions of how these practices contributed to the learning and development of their pupils.

Had a quantifiable instrument for measuring the specific areas in question been available, it may have been somewhat useful. However, despite myriad recent developments in the realm of assessment more generally, in music education this area

“continues to be problematic” (Murphy, 2007, p. 363). Elliot (1995, p. 282) has suggested that since “music is a multifaceted, progressive and situated form of knowledge, music educators require a multi-dimensional, progressive, and situated approach to assessment and evaluation”. With the literature indicating a wide range of different benefits to children’s learning, musical and otherwise, from the use of Kodály and Kokas methods (Bridges, 1979; deVries, 2001; Goopy, 2013; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, Kokas, 1986) and of playful learning and pedagogy (Bodrova & Leong, 2003; Fler, 2011; Liu et al., 2010; Martlew et al., 2011; Qian & Clarke, 2016; Roberts, 2018; Walsh, 2007; Whitebread et al., 2017; Zhang, 2020), the design of a specific tool seeking to measure children’s related learning, at the outset of the research, would have required substantial additional time and resources. For this reason, it was deemed to be outside the scope of the study to design a valid and reliable quantitative instrument for measuring the myriad potential contributions to children’s learning and development.

It was felt that teachers were more than qualified to provide comment on potential contributions to their pupils’ learning and development throughout the research process. This was owing to the depth of experience each participant had facilitating music education in primary school classrooms, with related pedagogical knowledge (Kerin, 2019), and personal experience and understanding of music teaching aligned with participants’ self-descriptions, as being for the most part, ‘confident’ music educators as outlined within Table 3, shown later in this chapter.

Having explored constituent elements of the conceptual framework guiding the present study, it is next integral to shed light on the research paradigm, within which it was situated: Pragmatism.

Research Paradigm

A research paradigm can be referred to as the researcher's 'worldview' or perspective and "beliefs about the world that s/he lives in and wants to live in" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 26; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined separate elements of a research paradigm, including ontology, epistemology and methodology. A paradigm is integral to a research project because it is composed of the implicit beliefs and principles held by a researcher, which shapes how s/he views and takes meaning from the world (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Indeed, this in turn impacts decisions made throughout the research process in terms of methodology and data analysis. The present research is situated within the pragmatic paradigm, taking inspiration from the work of William James and John Dewey in particular (Hassan Alghamdi & Li, 2013). Pragmatic philosophy sees human actions as related to past experiences and associated beliefs, linking thought to action (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). The next sections describe the ontology, epistemology and methodology undertaken in keeping with the pragmatic paradigm.

Ontology

Ontology refers to the assumptions an individual possesses regarding the nature of reality. Coming from a positivist perspective, a researcher's ontology aligns with the notion of there being one single, measurable and discoverable reality (Scotland, 2012). On the other hand, interpretivists believe that there is no one truth or reality but instead a range of different realities, which are "construct[s] of the human mind" (Bassey, 1999, p. 43). Resting between these two positions is the pragmatic paradigm. In this paradigm, reality is seen to be "constantly renegotiated, debated [and] interpreted" (Patel, 2019, para. 6). Pragmatists posit that there is little to be achieved by disputing others' ontological stances since very often they only differ on the means by which data

and theories can be measured and described in relation to epistemological factors (Lohse, 2016).

Epistemology

Epistemology relates to one's understanding of the constituent elements of knowledge, "its nature and norms, how it can be acquired, and...communicated" to others (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 6). From a positivist perspective, there is an understanding that reality can be measured through specific tools, whereas interpretivists believe reality is subject to interpretation (Cohen et al., 2011; Patel, 2019). Garrison (1995, p. 720) has suggested that a Deweyan-inspired epistemology "rejects theory/fact and fact/value dualisms" and allows for reference to "*inner states* and *intervening variables*", both of which are viewed as important sources of truth. Pragmatism is associated with seeking to solve problems and bring about positive change, in addition to the use of an array of tools, analysis or interpretations, as deemed appropriate for the research problems and questions at hand (Patel, 2019).

Epistemological assumptions lead researchers to make methodological choices aligned with how they believe the knowledge being sought can be discovered or established (Hassan Alghamdi & Li, 2013). As a means of addressing the identified research problem linked to limited scope for playful practices for pupils in schools and limited research exploring musical play along a continuum of playful learning that can be utilised as part of a framework by Irish primary school teachers, the present research sought to explore related practices in Irish classrooms, and consider teachers' perceptions of how this contributed to pupils' learning. This was thought to necessitate exploration of teachers' perceptions of this approach in tandem with specific, measurable characteristics pertaining to the quantity of different types of musical play occurrent within the lessons, resources utilised and classroom organisation. Each was

viewed as an important element of practice, which led to the adoption of a multiple-case study, outlined in the next section. It also led to the utilisation of two qualitative forms of analysis, namely constant comparative analysis and content analysis, developed upon later in this chapter.

Methodology

Research in education can be carried out for a variety of purposes as related to the researcher's personal experiences and worldview. Whereas positivist research tends to favour experimentation and constructivist research strives for interpretation, a researcher working within the pragmatic paradigm “embraces plurality of methods” as required to address the research problem, questions and goals of the research in question (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 2). In seeking to explore practices of playful music pedagogy in a number of different classrooms, a qualitative case-study approach was adopted. This has been described by Merriam (1988, p.21) as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit”. Conditions for use of case study research as described by Merriam (1998) and Yin (2003) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Alignment with Conditions for Use of a Case Study

Conditions for use of a case study	Present study?
How/Why Research Questions (Yin, 2003, p. 5).	Yes
Does not require control over actual behavioural events (Yin, 2003).	Yes
Focuses on contemporary as opposed to entirely historical events (Yin, 2003).	Yes
The research can “fence in” the specific case to be studied (Merriam, 1998, p. 27).	Yes
Particularistic: Focuses on a particular situation, event, program or phenomenon (Merriam, 1998).	Yes
Descriptive: End product is a “rich “thick” description of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29).	Yes
Heuristic: Wish to illuminate understanding of the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 1998).	Yes

In addressing the above areas, the present research can be described as: A descriptive multiple case study about classroom practices of playful music education that ensued over six weeks following an initial PD workshop, and in tandem with participation in a PLC. A descriptive case study was thought most appropriate for the present research as this seeks to present a detailed account of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). It has also been described as a useful means of “presenting basic information about areas of education where little research has been conducted. Innovative programs and practices are often the focus of descriptive case

studies in education” (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). Ultimately, this study sought to explore constituent and broad elements of practices of playful music pedagogy in six different primary classrooms and consider teachers’ perceptions of how this contributed to pupil learning. The next section explores alignment between this research and the work of Yin and Merriam on case study research design, whilst attending to the unique qualities of the study.

Research Design

Yin (2003, p. 19) has described research design as “The logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study”. Key areas to consider in case study research are the research questions and study propositions, discussed previously, and the case and units of analysis (Yin, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Following discussion around the case and units of analysis for this study, a more detailed overview in relation to the different steps taken in the research process is provided.

The Case and Units of Analysis

The case of interest for this research was the present conceptualisation of playful music pedagogy. With this in mind, and with respect to the underlying research questions, the units of analysis studied were generalist teachers’ classroom practices of playful music pedagogy over a six-week period, following an initial workshop and whilst participating in a professional learning community. Since 6 teachers participated in the study, each with their own classroom context, background and identifiable practices, it was necessary to develop a multiple-site case study for the research.

Research Overview

Prior to commencing the case study of teachers’ practices of playful music pedagogy, an in-depth analysis of the literature around music education, play, musical

play, play-based pedagogy and generalist music education was required, as outlined in Chapter 2. From this, a tentative framework associated with playful music pedagogy was developed drawing from the work of Kodály and Kokas, which could include use of singing games, musical gamification, constructive, exploratory musical play, and dramatic musical play. This was seen to align with work that has been ongoing in music education, playful pedagogy and learning more generally and also could be situated along a continuum of ownership for music learning (Dewey, 1916a; Wright, 2016; Zosh et al., 2018).

However, in order to address the research questions in relation to practices of playful music pedagogy, it was clear that any generalist teacher who would be asked to take ownership of this in practice, would need to be afforded relevant PD (Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012).

Cognisant of the broader literature in the field of PD more generally, it was opted to provide a day-long workshop to offer Irish primary school teachers the opportunity to learn about, engage with and reflect upon playful music pedagogical practices. To these ends, in October 2018, an initial, free, day-long PD workshop was held for Irish primary school teachers in the greater Dublin region. This was advertised via social media and national print to share information with as broad a group of primary school teachers as possible and encourage participation in professional learning in music education, an area of need for teachers (Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009). 31 individuals signed up to participate via EventBrite, of whom 12 primary school teachers (11 female, 1 male) completed the preliminary workshop. The workshop would allow for a degree of didactic teaching alongside active learning, discussion, collaboration and reflection. The PowerPoint utilised on the day is included in Appendix F and is described in some detail below.

Initial Professional Development Workshop

Following an initial welcome and introductions, an overview of the theory pertaining to play-based music education was provided to teachers. This included an overview of broader trends towards utilisation of increasingly playful approaches within primary schools in Ireland and abroad, connections to key music education approaches and a summary of how playful music education can be seen to exist along a continuum between teacher and child ownership. Attention was also given to exploring content knowledge pertaining to strands, strand units and musical elements within the primary school music curriculum and considering how play-based music education aligns with these to ensure overall coherence of the PD (Garet et al., 2001; Desimone, 2009). This section of the workshop demonstrated a degree of didactic teaching aligned with an increasingly transmissive model to provide teachers with the relevant context underpinning the notion of the continuum and related pedagogical content for play-based music education (Kennedy, 2014). The remainder of the day focused on affording teachers the opportunity to actively engage and participate in playful music education practices aligned with the concept of playful music pedagogy.

The content of the PD was aimed at providing teachers with “specific, concrete and practical ideas” for supporting musical play that could be related to their everyday classroom practices (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Guskey, 2002, p. 382). These ideas drew from some of those identified and listed within the literature review outlined previously in Table 1. Singing games and gamification were explored as teacher-directed forms of musical play. Participants took part in pedagogical singing games (Chase, clapping games, partner games, circle games and single line games) related to folk-songs selected from international Kodály repertoire and previously encountered by the researcher in the Kodály Institute. Materials were chosen to cater to a range of different

class levels given the span of ages within the primary school. In terms of gamification, teachers took part in rhythm games with cups, games to perform rhythms including rhythm BINGO and the Evolution game.

In addition to exploring teacher-led musical play, participants engaged with and discussed increasingly child-led forms of musical play. They explored potential frameworks for engaging with music listening that drew upon the work of Kokas (1999) in encouraging pupils to respond creatively with freedom of movement to demonstrate their understanding of the music in question. In particular, participants engaged in guided music listening to an excerpt from Grieg 'Holberg Suite for Strings, 3. Gavotte', which offered scope to explore the musical elements pulse, timbre and texture. Engaging with Kokas-inspired, dramatic musical play in response and movement to the Saint-Saëns 'Danse Macabre', which proved to be increasingly difficult for some of the teachers, who appeared unsure of the correctness of their responses at times. However, their engagement was guided by the researcher who encouraged individual and paired improvisation to the music. Scope for further expanding free response to music via artistic or other integration was discussed in addition to scope for engaging in free, constructive musical play through use of musical instruments or in improvising their own rhythms as an extension of engagement with folksongs.

Overall, rather than simply discussing games and teacher-led forms of musical play, teachers all engaged collectively and actively (Desimone, 2009) as would be the case for children taking part in such activities. Facilitated by the researcher, this involved "active learning experiences by modelling skills and teaching strategies" (Holden & Button, 2006, p. 36). In line with suggestions from the research literature, this active learning was an integral component of the PD and was followed up by critical discussions and reflections in relation to teaching implications and pupil

learning (O’Flynn, 2011; Desimone, 2009). It was hoped that the initial PD would support primary school teachers in learning about playful music pedagogy for the primary school, whilst getting hands-on experience of some exemplars, resources and activities that could be seen to supplement those within the present music curriculum in relation to playful music learning. Following their participation, teachers were asked to provide their email if they were interested in being contacted for further research purposes.

Exploring Playful Music Pedagogy in Teachers’ Practices

Of 12 initial workshop participants, 6 teachers opted to participate in the research study. Cognisant of the need for effective PD to extend over a longer duration, (Desimone, 2014; Holden & Button, 2006), it was viewed as important that this would be conducted over a longer period of time. Thus, participants engaged with playful music pedagogy within their own classroom context whilst engaging in ongoing reflection, receiving support and sharing practices as part of a PLC over a 6-week period, agreed with teachers prior to commencing the case study.

Given the context surrounding playful pedagogies and GERM, it is perhaps unsurprising that the chosen 6-week period aligned with a select block in the school term before teachers felt they would be under pressure to focus on preparations for standardised testing in literacy and numeracy.

Integral for case study research, creative agency was afforded to participants to adapt and use this form of playful music pedagogy to suit their individual knowledge, background, particular class groups and context as required. Thus, it was left entirely open to teachers how exactly they would go about implementing playful music pedagogy in their individual contexts and emphasis was placed on the fact that the research sought to explore their practices rather than change or assess them. Similar

practices had been carried out successfully within the researcher's own classroom previously but it was deemed important for the research to see if and how they might manifest within generalist teachers' classroom contexts in Irish primary schools. Classroom practices could incorporate elements covered within the initial workshop and related resources but this was not necessary and teachers were encouraged to be as creative as they wished.

During this phase, teachers provided written reflections on a template in relation to the play-based lessons they implemented. A copy of the reflective template first utilised is available in Appendix G. After an initial trial, this was modified for increased clarity and attention to specific practical and theoretical elements of playful music pedagogy (See Appendix H). To further scaffold and support teachers' ongoing practices and reflections, participating teachers were engaged as part of a PLC, discussed in the next section.

Professional Learning Community

The overarching goal of the PLC meetings was not for the researcher to transmit knowledge to teachers, but instead, within a supportive environment, to allow participants the space to share their experiences, ideas and resources and reflect on the realities of playful music pedagogy in practice. Carried out in tandem with teachers' ongoing classroom practices, the PLC met for between 45 minutes and an hour on three separate occasions. Unlike the initial workshop, which was deemed to necessitate a degree of increasingly formal, lecture-style, didactic teaching, towards the transmission of information pertaining to playful music pedagogy, the PLC was practice-based and seen to complement the initial workshop resonating with examples of effective music education PD from the literature (DeVries, 2014; Sinclair et al., 2015).

Demonstrating increased agency and ownership, teachers shared examples of their individual playful music classroom practices, and took responsibility for teaching, and sharing resources with the rest of the group. They were encouraged to engage in collective, active learning, and to engage in critical reflection and discussion around their perceptions and experiences of playful music pedagogy, and challenges they encountered (Desimone, 2009).

The role of the researcher within the PLC meetings was to scaffold and provide a structure for the sessions with time for sharing of practices, critical discussion and reflection. She sought to facilitate the PLC in a way which aligned with research pertaining to effective PD (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009). An example of the PowerPoint structure followed in these meetings is shown in Appendix I. Unlike in the initial PD workshop, the sharing of resources and facilitation of playful music pedagogical practices with the remainder of the group, was the responsibility of all in the PLC. This meant that, following initial sharing by the researcher, each individual shared examples of practices on one separate occasion, and encouraged by the researcher, engaged in open and critical discussion in relation to ongoing practices of playful music pedagogy.

It was hoped that the format the research took would enable teachers to critically reflect on, evaluate, learn from and share their classroom practices with others in keeping with examples of successful professional learning and teaching practices identified in the literature (Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2013; Sahlberg, 2017; Sinclair et al., 2015; Webster-Wright, 2009).

After the research period had concluded, teachers were interviewed to further reflect upon and evaluate their practices of playful music pedagogy throughout the period. These interviews were very useful for gaining insights from different

participants, whose individual practices represented separate units of analysis for the purposes of the research. Thus, it was believed that attention needed to be afforded to their unique contexts, drawing from their own perspectives and levels of knowledge and confidence as part of the research. The next paragraphs provide increased detail around the research participants.

Research Participants

Quantitative or experimental research seeks to generalise from a study to a broader population, which tends to necessitate large numbers, controls and the use of stratified random sampling processes (Cohen et al., 2011). The present research hoped to get an insight into selected primary school teachers' playful music pedagogical practices and perceptions of contributions to pupils' learning and development, which led to the adoption of a qualitative approach.

The data gathering phase of the research explored a purposive sample of Irish primary school teachers' practices and perceptions of implementing a play-based approach to music education in their classrooms. This meant that only teachers who had participated in the initial workshop and indicated interest in taking part in the follow-up research on a course evaluation form, were invited to participate. Participants and school principals were contacted following the course and 6 teachers opted to partake in the PLC commencing in February 2019.

Of the participating teachers, two possessed a basic understanding and experience of Kodály music education, having completed some short workshops in this area since graduating from university. These teachers, called Anita and Fearne for the purposes of the research, were also very competent musicians, and their stories are interesting to consider in light of tendencies for research to highlight difficulties experienced by generalists such as those in the Irish context, in navigating music

curricula. The others, referred to by the pseudonyms Ciara, Emma, Suzanne and Ruth, were also capable instrumentalists, who enjoyed teaching music. Suzanne and Ruth described themselves as being less confident teaching musical literacy than other areas of the curriculum. Ruth in particular felt that her limited understanding of formal music literacy, as a traditional Irish musician, made her less academically musical than her peers. This feeling of being different to the others may also have been partially accentuated by her position as the most senior participant in the study.

As we can see from Table 3, most of the classes who participated in playful music pedagogical practices were in the senior end of the primary school in this study. Teachers' openness to taking part in the research whilst implementing playful approaches in senior classes was interesting in itself given prior suggestions that play is not always perceived as appropriate as pupils mature in their education. Perhaps this openness stemmed from the fact that they were generalists with an interest in music already or that most had a good deal of experience with infant-teaching prior to participating in the study.

Table 3: Overview of Participants

Pseudonym	Experience (Years)	Class	School context	Experience with junior classes	Self-described as confident in music teaching?
Anita	7	Senior Infants & First Class	Girls' vertical school	Mostly taught junior classes in recent years	Y
Suzanne	12	Senior Infants	Mixed vertical school	Presently teaching and lots of experience	Y (<i>At infant level. Less so with notation.</i>)
Ciara	9	Fourth Class	Mixed senior school	Only on teaching practice during Initial Teacher Education	Y
Emma	9	Fourth Class	Mixed senior school	Most of teaching career	Y (<i>Less so with percussion instruments.</i>)
Ruth	38	Fifth Class	Mixed senior school	17 years teaching in junior school	Y (<i>With singing and tin-whistle. Less so with notation.</i>)
Fearne	8	Fifth Class	Girls' vertical school (DEIS 1)	Taught senior infants before on one occasion	Y

The above table provides a pseudonym for each of the participating teachers. Accurate at the time of the research, it lists teachers' years of experience teaching and the class and classification of the type of school in which, they were teaching. Teachers' experiences with junior classes was deemed potentially relevant given tendencies to prioritise playful learning and play more generally in early years contexts as outlined previously. Teachers were asked if they believed themselves to be confident teaching music and the final column provides an overview of their self-described responses.

All of the participating teachers were female, which may be seen to recall Odena's (2009) suggestion that musical behaviours can be associated with femininity and challenges to self-esteem in relation to music for boys from a young age. It may also reflect the gender imbalance of teachers in primary schools in Ireland at present. A recent statistic by the DES (n.d.) demonstrated that of 150,392 primary school teaching posts filled in the school years 14/15, 15/16, 16/17 and 17/18, just 22,286 or 14.8% went to men. With these considerations in mind, it is perhaps not surprising, though unfortunate nonetheless, that there were no male participants in the current study.

Having outlined the conceptual framework for the study, the research design and methodological approach utilised as well as participant sampling protocols, next it is important to outline the research methods that were employed to address the research goals and questions.

Research Methods

The methods utilised in research situated within the pragmatic paradigm are not necessarily associated with purely quantitative or qualitative data collection. There is often a tendency for use of mixed-methods as a means of gaining as broad and contextualised understanding of the research as possible (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). Methods utilised within this paradigm are guided fundamentally by the research questions (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Smaling, 1994). In the present case study, exploring practices and perceptions of playful music pedagogy in Irish primary school teachers' classrooms, the use of predominantly qualitative methods was deemed most appropriate. The research methods and data analysis techniques as related to the research questions are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held in the 6 to 8 weeks following teachers' exploration of playful music pedagogy within their classroom practices (Between May and June 2019). These interviews averaged between 45 minutes and an hour and allowed for reflections on practices of play-based music education in primary school classrooms and perceptions of resultant contribution of the approach to pupils' learning. Whilst assessment of such contribution may have lent itself particularly well to the use of quantitative tools for measurement, the structure of the present research, its research topic and fundamentally qualitative goals, were such that teachers' perspectives of these contributions were deemed appropriate. Semi-structured, qualitative interviews were viewed as "extended conversations" guided by the interviewer (Keenan, 2012, p. 94; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Use of this form of data collection allowed teachers the opportunity to reflect on their individual experiences of practices utilising the approach, how they would classify the approach following their practice, and what they believed it offered in terms of pupils' learning (Cohen et al., 2011). They also offered scope for teachers to discuss their thoughts on generalist teachers' use of playful music pedagogy in the broader Irish context. These semi-structured interviews were particularly important for gaining an increased, contextualised understanding of participants' practices and experiences (Grennan, 2017; Seidman, 1998). The document pertaining to interview protocol and questions is attached in Appendix J.

Interviews were held at a location and time of each participant's choosing. Some were held in participants' homes, and others in their classrooms. Before commencing the interview, a pilot was held to ensure technology and questions would run as smoothly as possible, and attempts were made to limit potential problems' occurrence in the interview situation. Based on the pilot, slight changes were made to the wording

and order of questions to encourage increasingly smooth transitions between topics and questions such that all attempts would be made to put participants at ease in the interviews (Cohen et al., 2011).

Allied with the notion of qualitative researchers as instruments within qualitative research, it was important to be cognisant of the potential for researcher bias when conducting the semi-structured interviews (Chenail, 2011). The researcher ensured the semi-structured interview schedule consisted of open, exploratory questions and was cognisant of the need to refrain from wording questions or probes in a way that emphasised personal thoughts or opinions but instead, sought to encourage participants to elaborate and elucidate on their experiences and perceptions of playful music pedagogy in their own contexts (Salazar, 1990). Participants were reminded that the purpose of the interview was exploratory and to get a picture of their individual perceptions and experiences of playful music pedagogy in line with the goals of the case study in question (Briggs, 1986). To support the reduction of bias, every attempt was made to cultivate a collegial atmosphere where interviewees could openly describe experiences, difficulties and concerns and positive aspects associated with practice of playful music pedagogy within their classrooms, as a means of minimising the risk of biasing responses (Cohen et al., 2011; Tuckman, 1999).

McCambridge, Witton & Elbourne (2014, p. 267) have explored the notion of the Hawthorne Effect, suggesting that “awareness of being studied” coupled with “beliefs about researcher expectations” can lead to “conformity and social desirability considerations” where participants can provide responses in line with hypothesised expectations. Researchers have indicated that tendencies for participants to provide socially desirable answers can be reduced by use of probing within semi-structured interviews in creating a sense of rapport between individuals (While, 1994).

Consequently, within the present study, the researcher used probing as one means of “ensuring reliability of the data” and made every attempt to make the participant feel comfortable in the interview and develop rapport (While, 1994, p. 331).

Reflections

A brief reflection was given by the teachers prior to commencing the research. These six initial reflections offered insight into teachers’ perceptions and classroom practices with regards to the play-based approach to music education in their unique contexts before starting. In addition to this, throughout the process, teachers were responsible for providing written reflections on their ongoing classroom practices whilst exploring aspects of the approach in their classrooms. Twenty-four written reflections were sent by teachers in relation to ongoing practice of play-based music education in their classrooms. These contained information about the types of musical play they were exploring, resources utilised, pupil learning, difficulties and their overall perceptions of such an approach. They also included photographs of the approach in action, discussed in more detail later in this section.

Professional Learning Community Interactions

As previously discussed, PD, collaboration and shared practice represented important elements of the research, as all participants worked to explore playful music pedagogy in their own unique contexts and in tandem with one another. Three PLC meetings were held in March and April 2019 as a means of allowing teachers to reflect on, learn from, and share their practices with others.

PLC gatherings were structured by the researcher with an agenda and space for sharing and reflection, referred to previously. Each meeting was recorded and notes were taken by the researcher on each teachers’ practices, which were sent to the participants as a means of sharing and documenting each other’s ideas (See Appendix K

for email correspondence of these notes). Transcriptions were made manually for analysis. The recordings and transcripts were useful for ascertaining teachers' general experiences and overall perceptions of the approach and answering the research questions.

Photographs

Whilst the use of reflections, PLC interactions and semi-structured interviews allowed for a variety of data, as the old adage goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. Photographs "carry meanings that words alone, be they spoken or written, cannot" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 529). For the present research, participating teachers were asked to take photographs to illustrate play-based music education practices in action in their contexts as one aspect of their reflection documents. Whilst these photographs could tell a story illustrating a form of play-based music education in teachers' classrooms, it was important to remember that photographs are selective with their focus decided by the photographer. For this reason, photographic data was used as just one element amongst a range of triangulated data within the research project (Cohen et al., 2011). Photographs were used to refer to and illustrate visual elements associated with structures of classroom practices of playful music pedagogy.

Ethical Considerations

Designing this research project required a number of ethical considerations. These included issues of beneficence and non-maleficence, as part of a costs/benefits ratio, access (informed consent/assent and gate-keeping) privacy and confidentiality (L. Cohen et al., 2011). Each of these was considered and maintained throughout the duration of the research in line with best-practice procedures for GDPR and child-protection, and as approved by the Dublin City University's ethics committee prior to commencing research (See Appendix L). Initial participation in the play-based music

education workshop was free and participants were provided with free resources on the day. Whilst time commitments for participation in the case study were not seen as overly substantial given the fact that all participants were already required to teach music every week, extra reflective elements, exploring the approach, and attending group gatherings and interviews required extra time on their part. It was deemed that the associated benefits related to the project in relation to professional learning opportunities, collaboration, creative practice and support would outweigh potential costs for participants (Cohen et al., 2011). However, every attempt was made to ensure minimal disruption to, and maximum value for participants. This involved holding group gatherings at a suitable time and venue, arranging interviews at places and times of their choosing, and supporting teachers' ongoing professional learning in music education

Informed Consent/Assent and Gate-keeping

Adopting a grassroots approach in many respects, following commitment by teachers who had already participated in the professional learning workshop, principals were contacted about the purposes of the research. As gatekeepers to the research being carried out in their schools, principals were given copies of all documentation pertaining to the research (Cohen et al., 2011). Principals of 5 separate schools in the greater Dublin area consented to the 6 teachers taking part in the PLC and utilising the approach to music education in their classrooms.

Since it was important to ensure all actively involved in the research were made aware of the purposes, goals and requirements of the research, Plain Language Statements and Informed Consent/Assent Documents were provided for all phases of the research. These documents were seen as integral, taking into account all participants' rights to "freedom and self-determination" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 77).

These are shown in Appendices M and N respectively. Teachers, pupils, and pupils' parents were offered the freedom to opt themselves/their children in or out of the research. Rights of pupils and parents of pupils who opted not to take part were "duly respected" and they could still participate as part of "a collectivity" in their music lessons without getting their photographs taken (Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 78–79).

Another key ethical consideration was the issue of confidentiality for participants. This is discussed in the next section.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

In respect of participants' "right to privacy", all were informed of their right to leave the research at any point, and should they choose to take part, all attempts would be made to keep their identities confidential (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 91). Workshop participants provided their email if they wished to be informed about the research. All 12 initial participants indicated initial interest, though 6 teachers signed up to partake in the case study and professional learning community, whilst exploring the approach in practice. The identities of the 6 teachers who participated in the professional learning community were kept confidential and pseudonyms were used to refer to participants when transcribing, analysing and writing up the data.

Although the research necessitated reference to school and broader contexts, attempts were made to keep these confidential by blurring out school crests in photographs and not referring to "identifiers" at any stage of the research (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 92; Frankfurt-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). As well as blurring out crests, the decision was made to blur out children's faces in photographs in line with child-protection and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines (General Data Protection Regulation, 2016).

Also important for data protection, hard copies of data were stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home to be destroyed within five years after completion of the research. Soft copies were stored on Google Drive's encrypted software and a password protected, encrypted computer. After editing photographs submitted to the researcher, original copies were deleted. All of the data was dealt with in line with GDPR regulations and DCU research ethics committee recommendations, and participants were advised of this (General Data Protection Regulation, 2016).

Having outlined conceptual, methodological and ethical considerations, it is also important to emphasise the lengths taken to collect and analyse data in a clear and unbiased manner with a view to maximising the trustworthiness of the research. This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Quality and Trustworthiness of the Research

Viewing the quality and trustworthiness of any research study as resting upon the rigour and clarity around research design, data collection and analysis, the present research strove for clarity in its underlying conceptual framework, research design, data gathering and analysis. This led to the selection of a multiple case design, use of thick description, adoption of a range of data collection methods and data analysis techniques to allow for triangulation and finally, clarity of purpose and goals in reflexivity demonstrated throughout. These are discussed in the following section.

Case studies are known to provide limited scope for generalisability (Brennan, 2017; Stake, 1995). However, the use of a multiple case study, with data gathering from a number of sites was thought to increase the trustworthiness of the present case study (Merriam, 1998). In addition to this, the use of rich, thick description and direct quotes from participants' reflections, interviews and contributions to PLC meetings was seen as important for allowing the readers to ascertain the degree to which, any results may

transfer to a similar case, rather than making claims for generalisability that rest outside the scope of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998).

Utilisation of a range of forms of data collection was deemed appropriate for the present research as a means of gathering a broad “spectrum of evidence and perspectives” as possible “to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness” of the analysis (Saldana, 2011, p. 41). This allowed for triangulation in the use of photographs, interviews, group discussions and reflections as a means of gaining insight into the phenomenon of play-based music education in classrooms through different viewpoints (Saldana, 2011).

Triangulation refers to the use of a range of approaches to answer research questions. By combining a variety of methods, analysis techniques and associated findings, triangulation allows for “a more comprehensive picture of the results than either approach could do alone” (Heale & Forbes, 2013, para. 1; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2003). The use of a number of data collection methods and analysis techniques in the present research was thought to bolster the trustworthiness of the research (Merriam, 1998).

As mentioned previously, research instruments were piloted and changes made to question order and format to enhance their validity and reliability within the present study. Moreover, cognisant of the ‘Hawthorne Effect’ (McCambridge, Witton & Elbourne, 2014), important for enhancing validity within semi-structured interviews, the researcher employed probing, established rapport and a positive atmosphere in attempts to ensure participants were comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences (Patton, 1990; While, 1994).

In addition to this, it was perceived that utilisation of DCA on teachers’ reflective documents, to provide insight into the overall context of playful music

pedagogy as part of the case study methodology (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), in tandem with primary analytical technique of CCM, allowed for an increasingly holistic picture of the practices of playful music pedagogy. This combination of deductive and inductive analysis was in keeping with the pragmatic paradigm in which the research was situated (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015).

Another essential element associated with the trustworthiness of this research was the requirement of reflexivity. Within qualitative research, it is often stated that the researcher is the instrument. With this in mind, it was important to maintain reflexivity across the project and keep records of practice and experiences. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 19) have described reflexivity as “the way in which all accounts of social settings – descriptions, analyses, criticism, etc. – and the social settings occasioning them are mutually independent”.

To these ends, and to ensure reliability of the study, the researcher needed to be as objective and critical as possible throughout the project and ensured to set out clearly assumptions, previous experiences from the outset. Similarly, to provide for transparency within the research, aims, design, key findings and rationale for conclusions reached are outlined clearly (Denscombe, 2003; Murphy, 2008).

Research Limitations

There are a range of limitations associated with the present research study, which are presented below:

1. The researcher played an integral role in encouraging participants to engage with this particular take on ‘Playful music pedagogy’ within the study. Participants may have been inclined to share reflections and responses they felt would be well-received by the researcher.
2. Although participants continued to engage with and learn from one another’s practices within the PLC, the researcher facilitated just one formal, day-long workshop pertaining to playful music pedagogy.
3. In focusing on teachers’ practices, perceptions and experiences of playful music pedagogy, pupils’ voices were not captured within this research and pupils’ learning was not formally assessed with a quantitative tool.
4. There was a small sample size within this study which meant that the study could not be seen as representative to a broader population. However, it allowed for in-depth discussion in relation to participants’ practices and perceptions.
5. The generalist teachers who participated in the present study all had an interest in music and confidence in teaching music, which means the group in question may not be seen as entirely representative of typical generalist teachers. However, this meant the teachers in the study were particularly well placed to creatively engage with this form of music pedagogy and to comment on their pupils’ learning and development in the study.
6. Folk music selected in the research was a selection from a range of different English-speaking countries rather than specifically from Ireland. These were chosen as they were simple and allowed the researcher to represent a range of different types of songs and pedagogical games for a range of age groups in a short period of time.

The next section discusses the data analysis techniques adopted in the research study: describing the underlying rationale and protocol used for both the directed context analysis and the constant comparative analysis undertaken.

Data Analysis

Given the pragmatic stance adopted in the current study and its fundamentally qualitative research aims, a number of decisions were made to ensure clear and unbiased collection of data in the first instance and judicious use of a combination of inductive and deductive analytical techniques. The specific techniques employed were Directed Content Analysis (DCA), which developed and amalgamated upon “key issues emerging across the individuals” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 537) and shed light on measurable features of playful music education practice in the six different contexts. This process was accompanied by Constant Comparative Method analysis (CCM) as part of within and cross-case analyses as a means of addressing the research questions. The next section provides an overview into the process of DCA initially carried out within the research before describing engagement with CCM in relation to the data.

Directed Content Analysis (DCA)

Content analysis is associated with both quantitative and qualitative research and relatedly, is often differentiated based on where it sits in relation to the positivist and interpretivist paradigm. As a means of shedding light on its potential uses within qualitative research, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) have outlined three contrasting methods of qualitative content analysis. These include conventional content analysis, directed content analysis and summative content analysis. The form utilised in the present research was directed content analysis, which sought to “refine, extend, and enrich” understanding around practices of play-based music education across the six different contexts (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). The process allowed for reference to practical considerations and contextualisation of practice. Content analysis was utilised as one means of answering the research question: Following initial PD, and in exploring playful music pedagogy as part of a professional learning community, how can this

form of music education manifest in generalist teachers' primary school classroom practice?

Directed content analysis includes a number of stages including:

1. Identify key concepts or variables as initial coding categories;
2. Code data with pre-determined codes;
3. Present findings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Steps followed within the present research are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Stage 1: Identify Initial Coding Categories

For the first stage of the content analysis, key concepts and variables related to the underlying framework for playful music pedagogy were identified. These centred around the different types of musical play - Singing games, Gamification, Dramatic musical play and Free, constructive musical play, with reference to predominantly teacher-directed vs child-led structures. This approach involved deductive analysis, specifically with a view to categorising the practices of playful music pedagogy utilised by teachers in the study.

Stage 2: Code Data with Pre-determined Codes

Once codes had been generated, it was necessary to begin exploring the data with these codes in mind. DCA was utilised on the reflection documents (including photographs) shared by the teachers as opposed to the interview and PLC data. In line with the inductive nature of qualitative data analysis, openness to other codes was maintained, which shed light on different learning contexts, resources utilised and teacher roles as relayed within the data. Any data that remained uncoded were reanalysed at a later stage, which led to the generation of new ideas around the research. Subcategories were created as necessary, where connections were found across categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Stage 3: Present Findings

The final stage of directed content analysis involves presentation of data in graph form as depicted within the dissertation alongside further discussion as a means of shedding light on the various practices of playful music pedagogy within the multiple case study. The findings of this analysis were seen to offer a clear and practical outline of teachers' practices, presented in tandem with the results of the constant comparative method of analysis.

Constant Comparative Method of Analysis (CCM)

Although the constant comparative method is often associated with grounded theory since its development by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, its basic strategy is notably "compatible with the inductive, concept-building orientation of all qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). CCA does not involve the use of pre-grouped categories but instead allows categories to emerge from the data in question.

The process of analysis through the CCM involves 4 stages:

1. Initial, inductive category coding into units of meaning
2. Integrating categories
3. Delimiting the theory/findings by exploring relationships and patterns across categories
4. Writing the findings

(Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Kolb, 2012; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Stage 1: Initial, Inductive Category Coding into Units of Meaning

The first stage of analysis via CCM involved reading through teachers' reflections a number of times. This was to become extremely familiar with each individual's account of the lessons and practices, whilst making notes about interesting and significant things that were said within annotations using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. Teachers' reflections were read and analysed separately from one

another though this was not possible for the PLC transcripts, which needed to be read in context. Data were read again, this time coding to individual units of meaning to represent the initial categories or nodes on the NVivo software. Aligned with the research questions, this was carried out as a means of categorising information regarding practices of playful music teaching and learning in classrooms and thoughts around its impact on pupils' learning. With a vast array of categories identified from this initial stage, a second stage commenced.

Stage 2: Integrating Categories

Having identified an emergent list of categories in relation to the reflections and PLC transcripts, the same process was carried out with the individual semi-structured interviews. This allowed the researcher to establish connections to and between nodes previously identified towards further refinement of categories within the analysis.

Stage 3: Delimiting the Theory/Findings by Exploring Relationships and Patterns Across Categories

The digital qualitative data analysis software allowed for quick comparison of nodes across the range of varying data, which supported the ordering and organisation of categories. This stage involved in-depth exploration of relationships between, and across categories, which also necessitated checking back over transcript material to ensure consistency in the analysis and required reflexivity (Kolb, 2012). In essence, stage 3 involved further honing in on the categories identified in stage 2 such that more specific categories and over-arching themes could be identified to portray the overall meaning. This stage led to generation of a number of themes, which were explored in more detail and written up within the final stage of the analysis.

Stage 4: Writing the Findings

The final stage of this analysis necessitated integration of all of the data to facilitate the write-up of the findings within a narrative account. This was written up in two separate chapters within the dissertation. A great deal of direct quotes from the participants were included to ensure their voices were evidenced within the work.

Writing up the Findings of Within-case and Cross-case Analysis

Both of the aforementioned data analysis procedures informed the write-up of the findings in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 shedding light on teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy in their classrooms both at an individual level as well as across all of the contexts. The approach offered a unique overview of practical, measurable elements associated with the practices including the number and types of lessons taught, for example, in tandem with broader themes identified.

Aligned with the goal of the research to explore manifestations of playful music pedagogy within teachers' practices, findings of the within-case analysis presented in Chapter 4, were strongly grounded within teachers' reflections on lessons taught as part of the study. This chapter was informed by practical elements associated with the DCA on teachers' reflections, including characterisations along the continuum of musical play, whilst also integrating to broader themes identified from across the data in the CCM.

The results of the cross case analysis presented in Chapter 5, whilst mostly based around findings from CCM, was also informed by the DCA with inclusion of graphs depicting measurable features of lessons facilitated. Results were presented with a number of quotations and pictures from across the data set.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the design of the present research study as a means of exploring practices of play-based music education by Irish teachers following and in the midst of PD, within their primary school classrooms. It has described the guiding multiple-case study methodology adopted in tandem with qualitative research methods, selected as a means of best addressing the goals and questions of interest, in keeping with the pragmatic research paradigm. Attention was afforded to providing a clear and concise overview of the underlying conceptual framework for the research, which represented a guide and roadmap for the study. In doing so, underlying experiences, assumptions and concepts related to the research were discussed alongside key literature and theories underpinning the study. In addition to this, key issues around ethical concerns and trustworthiness were explored before a detailed outline of the analytical processes used in the study was provided.

In keeping with the research design and methodology discussed in this chapter, the next two chapters shed increased light on the results of the research; the first in terms of the within case analysis, and the second in relation to the cross-case analysis.

CHAPTER 4: INTRODUCING A FRAMEWORK FOR PLAYFUL MUSIC

LEARNING AND EXPLORING PRACTICES OF PLAYFUL MUSIC

PEDAGOGY WITHIN INDIVIDUAL CLASSES

Identifying means of increasing opportunities for playful practices in primary school contexts in Ireland, thus far, this thesis has considered elements thought to be associated with a playful music pedagogy. It has selectively examined theories of education, play, playful pedagogy, musical play and music education, whilst also shedding light on the research methods used to explore six generalist teachers' playful practices within Irish primary classrooms in the present study. This was in line with the underlying goals of this study, to:

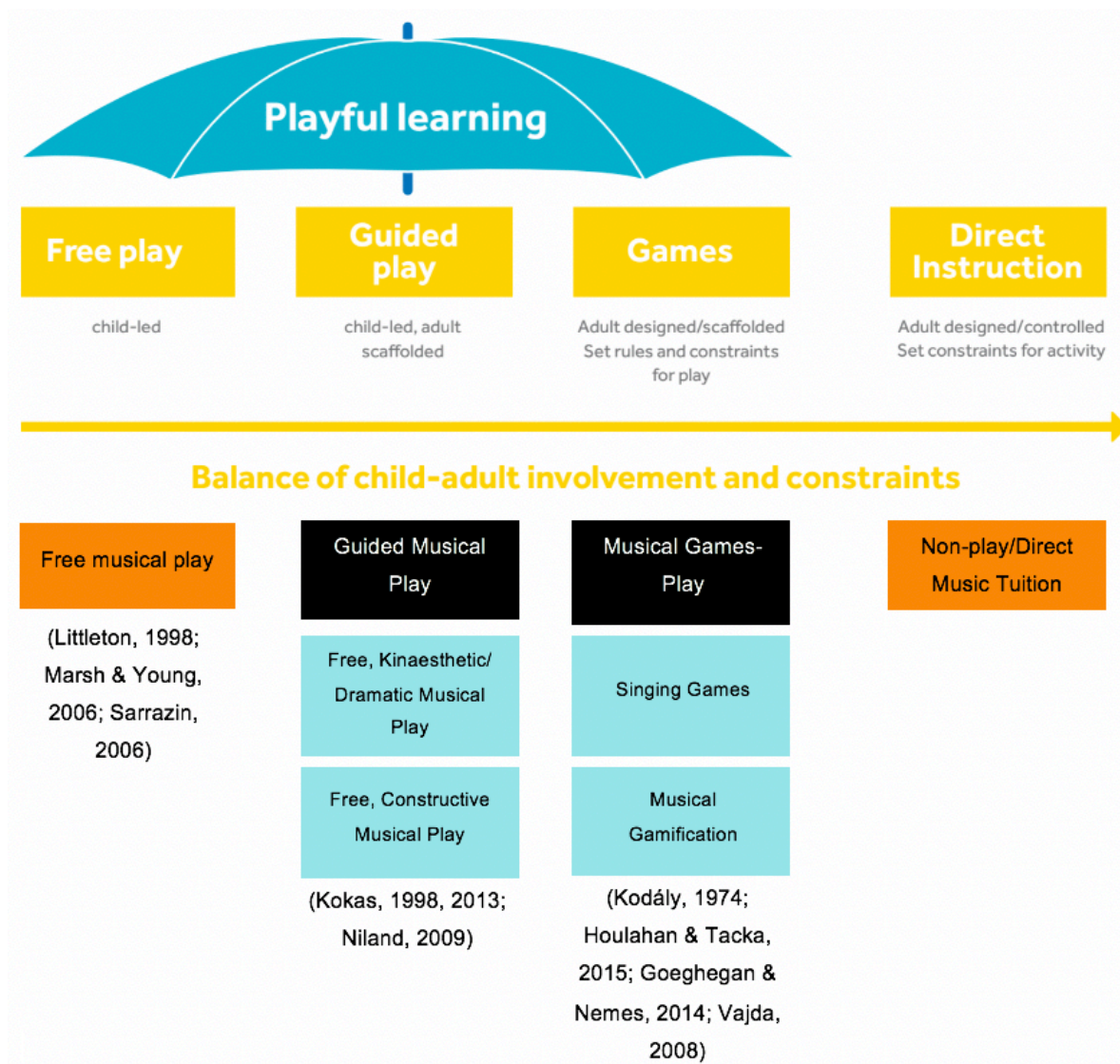
1. Expand the researcher's understandings of musical play across a continuum of ownership to inform a framework for playful music learning for across the Irish primary school context.
2. Explore if and how playful music learning might be realised in generalist teachers' classroom practices across all stages of the primary school in Ireland.
3. Consider Irish generalist primary school teachers' perceptions of the value of playful music pedagogy for primary schools.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section addresses the first goal of the study, presenting a framework for playful music learning in the primary school. The second section addresses goals two and three by exploring teachers' individual practices of playful music pedagogy within their 6 respective primary school classroom contexts, alluding to their perceptions of the value of this approach for pupil learning. In doing so, it makes reference to the wider literature pertaining to the area of study. These goals are further addressed within the next chapter, which provides an overview of the results of the cross case analysis, whilst making reference to the broader research literature.

Introducing a Framework for Playful Music Learning

The following framework for playful music learning has been generated following engagement with the literature in education (Dewey, 1916a; Vygotsky, 1974; Bruner, 1983, 1986), playful learning and pedagogy (e.g. Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Mardell et al., 2019; Zosh et al., 2017), musical play (e.g. Niland, 2009; Littleton, 1998; Marsh & Young, 2006) and music education (e.g. Houlihan & Tacka, 2015; Wright, 1916). However, critically, this framework (shown below in Figure 3) builds upon the music education philosophies of Zoltán Kodály and Klára Kokas, adapts the playful learning framework by Zosh et al (2017, p. 13) and has been refined to its present form cognisant of generalist teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy along a continuum of ownership within the present research.

Figure 3: Playful Music Learning (Adapted from Zosh et al. (2017, p. 13)



Within this framework, completely free, child-led play is deemed to be inherently connected to the literature surrounding free musical play that has tended to focus on early years' engagement with music (Littleton, 1998; Marsh & Young, 2006; Sarrazin, 2006). The area of study for this research, thought particularly relevant to primary school contexts, was on "expand[ing] beyond the concept of [this] free [musical] play and examin[ing] the ways in which teachers can direct, collaborate with, or extend the child's lead" in the classroom (Pyle & Danniels, 2017, p. 286). Thus,

moving along a continuum from entirely free play, with decreasing degrees of pupil ownership, guided musical play and musical games-play, are viewed as providing complementary, unique, engaging and playful opportunities for pupils to engage with music learning. Guided musical play, deemed to involve a degree of child agency and ownership (Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016), scaffolded by teachers, can be seen to consist of either free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play or free, constructive musical play. Following teachers' practices of guided musical play in the Irish context, it was deemed important to include the word free within both of these types of musical play to emphasise the increased levels of agency and creative freedom that should be afforded to pupils aligned with an increasingly 'child-centred' approach (Kokas, 1999). Noted within the present study, this was not always easy for educators to facilitate, as will be discussed later in this thesis.

Increasingly scaffolded, and particularly grounded on the music educational philosophy of Zoltán Kodály (1974), musical games-play can be classified as encompassing pedagogical singing games and the newly-coined term, musical gamification, created to distinguish from primarily computer-based gamification within the literature (Alsawaier, 2018).

Having expanded researcher's understandings of musical play within this research, it is hoped that extending musical play along such a continuum may offer increased clarity for supporting Irish generalist teachers in facilitating playful music practices across the primary school. Additionally, this framework provides an interesting frame for describing the results of the analysis of teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy in the present study.

Thus, having provided an overview and contextualisation for one possible framework for playful music learning, the remainder of this chapter outlines how

teachers' pedagogical practices sought to provide for increasingly playful music learning within this study. To these ends, teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy, represented within a range of lessons, strategies and games, reflected upon and shared over the course of this research, are presented and discussed. Reference is made to different forms of musical play indicated, in tandem with emergent themes and perceptions of contributions to pupils' learning.

Exploring Practices of Playful Music Pedagogy Within Individual Classes

Case 1: Classroom Practices in Suzanne's Context (Senior Infants)

Suzanne brought a good deal of musical experience with her to the present research. Coming from a musical family, she sang, and played a number of musical instruments when growing up. She also engaged in formal music education up to junior certificate level. These experiences provided Suzanne with a basic understanding of the fundamentals of music, which coupled with a love of music, may be seen to underpin her openness and enthusiasm for exploring new musical ideas to support her classroom practices. In addition to this, Suzanne felt her experience teaching in Australia for a number of her twelve years teaching, meant that she was particularly open to professional learning, sharing and collaboration, since it was an integral part of the culture in Australia.

Prior to participating in the research, Suzanne had had a good deal of experience channelling play to support teaching and learning in infant classes. She also tended to utilise different types of instrumental music with her class during the day and taught a lot of song-singing. While she was open to using books and programmes for music education, Suzanne also integrated music into a range of other curricular areas including literacy, Gaeilge and occasionally maths, history and geography. This integration tended to involve song-singing around specific themes related to the

subjects in question or thematic composition though she felt that her creativity was somewhat impacted by needing to “do what everyone else is doing as well” so that it would fit into a shared plan and monthly report with the other teachers in the same grade (Suzanne: Interview, 2019).

Whilst suggesting she has always been confident to an extent in relation to teaching music, Suzanne differentiated between the requirements for infant levels and senior classes. She suggested that prior to taking part in this research, despite having some background in music, she found it “a little bit trickier” given the extra “reading in music” required, to teach music to older children (Suzanne: Interview, 2019). However, she suggested that her perceptions had changed following her participation in the study. In her previous experiences teaching music at older grade levels, she “hadn’t obviously had that professional development and it was an awful lot of” following generic textbooks (Suzanne: Interview, 2019). After taking part in the research, and seeing “what the other teachers were doing in the group”, her perception was that “it actually is [...] so manageable and so easy to do” and that “it would be great to go up and do [...] all those [...] games.” (Suzanne: Interview, 2019).

We will see below that Suzanne’s approach to playful music pedagogy in her infant classroom may have been seen as aligned with the integrated Aistear framework for early childhood education in that it was thematic and cross-curricular with focus on musical learning in tandem with emphasis on literacy development.

Playful Music Pedagogy in Suzanne’s Classroom Practice - Integrated, Inclusive, Scaffolded Teaching and Learning Through Musical Play

Playful music practices associated with Suzanne’s classroom, which represented the first of the six cases in this research, pertain to a class of 31 senior infant boys and girls. This class was part of a large, mixed, vertical primary school in the Dublin

suburbs. Although the classroom itself was relatively small for the classroom community, which included the teacher and thirty one pupils, one of whom had a physical disability and needed assistance with mobility, it opened onto the playground, which was utilised as an extra space for facilitating practices in playful music pedagogy. Suzanne suggested that she was very lucky in that she was allocated time in the school hall as well, which meant she could also utilise that as a means of getting the space required for the lessons.

This leads to an exploration of exactly what playful music strategies manifested within Suzanne's classroom practices as part of the research, whilst considering contributions to pupil learning. Suzanne strived to implement a range of different forms of musical play along the continuum from guided musical play to games, which she thematised in relation to the musical element, tempo. For Suzanne, playful music pedagogy represented a unique opportunity for engaging all of the young pupils in fun and meaningful activities for music learning pertaining to this musical element, whilst also developing important, foundational literacy skills. Her practices shed light on scope for inclusion, thematic music teaching alongside integration between music and other curricular areas, and scaffolded teaching and learning practices.

Musical Games-Play: Singing Games and Musical Gamification

Suzanne commenced her classroom practices of playful music pedagogy by teaching the pupils the song 'See the Pony Galloping' with an associated singing game. Suzanne demonstrated an immediate creativity and openness to tailoring playful music pedagogy to suit her individual context within this lesson. This is noted in her utilisation, from the outset, of materials different to those provided within the initial workshop, whilst aligning with the notion of providing increased opportunity for pupils to engage playfully in singing games as part of the music lesson. Aligned with the

literature pertaining to the importance of scaffolding to enhance learning opportunities (Bruner, 1983), Suzanne scaffolded pupils' participation in this singing game by demonstrating herself, discussing, facilitating practice, group-work and then whole-class participation. The lesson involved is described in her own words below.

Figure 4: Singing Game - See the Pony Galloping (Thompson, 2017)



Today I introduced Tempo to the children using the song 'See the Pony Galloping'. I began by singing the song to the children, whilst galloping around the room. As the music got faster, so did the galloping. When the music got to 'all tired out', I slowed down and gradually stopped galloping. We discussed the music and the students talked about the music beginning fast, getting faster and then slowing down. The children were invited to listen and respond to the music by galloping with me. Once the children were clear on the tempo and how to gallop in response to the music, we galloped in groups. We went out to the playground and enjoyed a full class circle game as well as group circle games using the song.

The children loved this lesson! They continued to practice it throughout their lunch break and teach each other galloping actions (as well as singing the song fast and slow). I introduced the word tempo and the children were able to share their learning with each other using this terminology afterwards. The fact that they are asking to play the same circle game or similar games using tempo means that the children are already excited about the topic moving forward. I will continue to explore tempo in the coming weeks using a number of different movement activities and songs

(Suzanne, Reflection 1, 2019).

Meaningful, Inclusive Engagement

From the above extract it appears that Suzanne's class engaged meaningfully with the musical material in this lesson, going so far as to incorporating it into their free play during recess, taking ownership of the music experiences, and perhaps indeed, becoming "more musical" as a result of their engagement in structured games play (Shehan Campbell, 2010, p. 248). This meaningful engagement and enjoyment was echoed in future lessons where Suzanne's class "continued to ask to sing the [new] song and play the game during the day" and were "really looking forward" to the "next lesson" (Suzanne, Reflection 2, 2019). This recalls the key tenet of the Kodály philosophy that teachers should "teach music in such a way that is not a torture but a joy for the pupils" (1974b, p. 120).

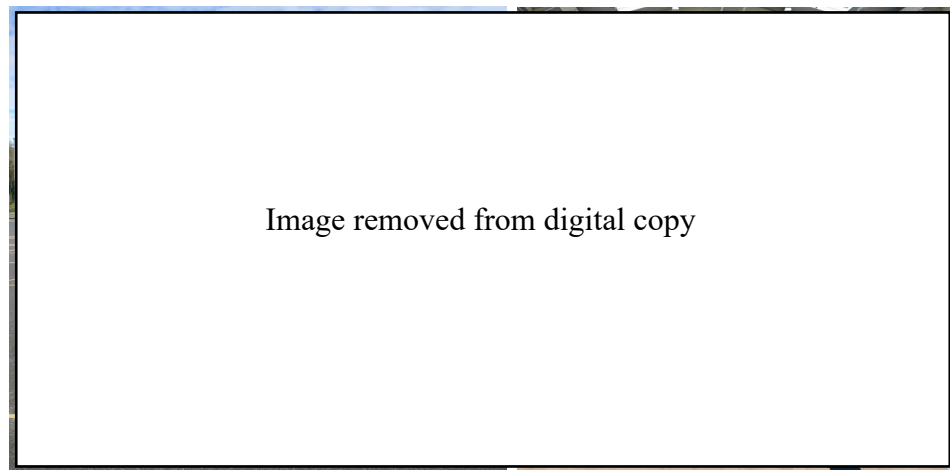
Interestingly, this enjoyment was also evidenced in pupils who were previously less likely to engage with schoolwork and activities, including those with SEN, suggesting a particularly inclusive environment associated with playful pedagogy in Suzanne's classroom practices. This recalls the literature suggesting the value of playful approaches on pupils' motivation to participate (Alsawaier, 2018; DiSalvo, 2015; Martlew et al., 2011; Walsh, 2007) and the value placed on outdoor play for children with additional needs in particular (Rose et al., 2015). This may be deemed to suggest scope for playful pedagogy to bridge a boundary on continua of intention between more formal 'work' and free 'play' within such classroom practices, recalling Wright's (2016) reflections on the adoption of increasingly informal music learning. With scope for playful experiences previously shown to allow pupils to 'save face' when opting to participate in educational contexts (DiSalvo, 2015, pp. 1–6), this is perhaps unsurprising. However, it is also highly unfortunate to see that certain pupils at such a young age are opting out of participation in education within the Irish system at present.

Integrated Teaching and Learning

In terms of implications for teaching and learning, Suzanne commented that the pupils really enjoyed the singing games played whilst also developing their oral language skills, and learning about and experiencing the musical element tempo. This may be seen indicative of an opportunity to connect between literacy goals and musical development in line with broader policy in the Irish context (DES, 2011b, 2017; NCCA, 2009a; Primary Developments et al., 2015). She also reflected on how pupils developed their motor and imaginative skills, whilst galloping as horses in the lesson (Suzanne, Reflection 1, 2019), which aligns with some of the literature previously discussed indicating scope for broader development through play (Fleer, 2011; Whitebread et al., 2017) and music education (Brumfield, 2014). These integrated elements were further noted in other singing games within Suzanne's classroom practices.

Interestingly, Suzanne moved her class to varying contexts within and outside the school building to allow pupils to engage fully with the activities. This is notable in the following pictures of her 'classroom' practices, extending the classroom to the playground and school hall with pupils participating in small groups and as a whole-class.

Figure 5: Teaching and Learning Contexts (Suzanne: Reflections 1 and 2, 2019).



The need for Suzanne to move her class to different contexts may be seen as indicative of a physical and cultural shift from traditional teaching and learning, which can occur within the standard classroom context, to increasingly informal, playful music pedagogy. While there was a need for increased space, in general Suzanne felt that a benefit of the singing games was that they allowed the children to build and consolidate their learning in and around the specific music element of tempo. Suzanne demonstrated a teacher-scaffolded approach to the lesson in question and more generally, viewing this as one step for building upon in future lessons for her young pupils' musical development. This is evidenced in her step-by-step introduction to the song, discussion, listening and responding before small-group play, followed by participation in whole-class circle games when all were confident. Another benefit rested in the fact that "limited resources" were needed (Suzanne, Reflection 1, 2019).

In addition to singing games, Suzanne implemented musical gamification and constructive, musical play as part of the research, with the former utilised as a means of scaffolding for the latter.

Scaffolding Music Learning

Musical Gamification: Hide the Tape

Suzanne utilised musical gamification with the game ‘Hide the Tape’ to further develop pupils’ experience of fast and slow tempi before they would be responsible for composing whilst paying heed to these areas in free, constructive musical play.

We played a game of hide the tape before the lesson so the children could practice changing tempo from slow to fast, etc.

(Suzanne, Reflection 3, 2019).

Hide the Tape had been discussed by one of the teachers in the PLC meetings and was adopted by a number of other teachers in the study. This game involves one person being tasked with being the ‘finder’ of the tape. When the finder’s eyes are covered, someone hides the tape. The class commences by keeping a steady beat on their laps while the finder starts looking for the tape. The closer the finder gets, the faster the tempo becomes and the further away he/she gets the slower the tempo becomes. This use of gamification to explore the foundations of tempo aligns with the music education aligns with Houlahan & Tacka’s (2015, p. 193) suggestion that students should move from ‘sound-to-symbol’ gaining “musical knowledge, understanding, comprehension, and mastery of the basic building blocks of music”. It also recalls suggestions that teachers might consider adopting, “A combination of play (to encourage confidence and creativity) alongside teaching/modeling (to introduce and develop new concepts and skills)” as a means of creating the “best possible pedagogical environment” (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010, p. 105) to support children’s academic and holistic learning and development (Danniels & Pyle, 2018; Yogman et al., 2018).

Guided Musical Play: Free, Constructive Musical Play

Following practice of key skills, Suzanne implemented free, constructive musical play in response to a story called ‘Tiptoe Joe’ (Foglesong Gibson, 2013) with

her class, displayed on the interactive whiteboard. This allowed her class to demonstrate their musical learning and also encouraged broader skill development.

Free, Constructive Musical Play: Tiptoe Joe

I began the lesson by reading the story ‘Tiptoe Joe’ to the children. There is a repeated phrase - “tiptoe fast, tiptoe slow” throughout the story. We then matched percussion to each character in the story. As Joe moves with his friends throughout the story, we play a steady beat on our percussion instruments both fast and slow!

The children really enjoyed the story! They loved then adding in instruments to represent the different animals in the story. Even those children who don’t often volunteer to come up in front of the class were eager to get involved. They’ve already chosen other stories from the library that we could add instruments to.

The use of a story was a great way to get the children excited! The visual representation of the animals and the language used (such as “tiptoe fast, tiptoe slow”) meant that it appealed to many different learning styles. The children were great at listening and responding to the story and to each other. They learned a lot from each other and helped each other out to change the tempo throughout.

(Suzanne, Reflection 3, 2019).

Consolidating Academic Learning and Broader Social Development

Suzanne’s class utilised a range of percussion instruments in addition to the interactive whiteboard for this lesson. She believed that this allowed for consolidation and application of learning around the musical element, tempo, from previous lessons and also demonstrated capacity for integrating playful music learning within the broader curriculum (DES, 2011b, 2017; NCCA, 2009a; Primary Developments et al., 2015). This notion of consolidating and applying learning aligns with the stages associated with Kodály music education (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

Having shed some light on practices of playful music pedagogy within Suzanne’s senior infant class, next practices within another junior class is explored.

Case 2: Anita's Classroom Practices (Senior Infants & 1st Class)

Anita described herself as being 'pretty musical', as an individual capable of playing more than one musical instrument, and singing in choirs and playing music on a regular basis. She differed from generalist teachers with little confidence or content knowledge in relation to music (Russell-Bowie, 2009). With solid background knowledge in music honed over years of participation and performance, her passion for music was evidenced in her enjoyment of classroom music teaching and engagement with music professional learning. Striving to reflect on her current practices, learn from and share with her peers, Anita was very excited at the prospect of beginning the present research (Anita: Pre-Reflection, 2019). In her seventh year of teaching, this would represent a new professional learning opportunity for her, moving on from her prior music specialism as part of her undergraduate teaching degree and past attendance at Kodály day-long and other short workshops.

Unsurprisingly, given her prior experience of the Kodály method, Anita's previous music education practices had included some singing games and elements of gamification. However, she lamented that she felt "guilty [for] using the music textbook from time to time as well", which she suggested was not nearly as valuable as playful music pedagogy, where pupils learn unbeknownst to themselves (Anita: Interview, 2019). Anita was eager to learn more playful elements to enhance her practices of music education as part of this study.

Playful Music Pedagogy in Anita's Classroom Practice: Scaffolding, 'Concrete' Learning, Comfort Zones & Preparation for Play

The context of Anita's classroom practice of playful music pedagogy, representing one of the six cases in this research, was within a composite class of senior infant and first class girls. This class was in a vertical girls' primary school in the

Dublin suburbs. An issue that emerged in relation to practice of play-based music education in this context was around a lack of “disposable room” in Anita’s classroom (Anita: Interview, 2019). Quite small for the classroom community, which included the teacher, twenty one pupils and a special needs assistant, this was seen as a drawback in terms of the practicalities of utilising play-based strategies with the pupils. Relatedly, a good deal of preparatory work was required in terms of “practical stuff [...] like [...] moving furniture” for young children. However, the teacher felt that it was “definitely worth” getting these things “under control” to be able to make use of these strategies (Anita: Interview, 2019).

Although she was working with very young children, Anita suggested that she was only in the beginning stages of getting to grips with the Aistear framework, discussed previously, which emphasises play-based learning for pupils in this age range (Anita: Interview, 2019). This aligned with the literature suggesting that Irish teachers are lacking in PD and confidence in relation to the implementation of the Aistear framework in their classrooms (Gray & Ryan, 2016). Lack of comfort with playful elements associated with Aistear may have contributed to apparent struggles Anita demonstrated in coming to terms with increasingly child-led forms of musical play in the study. Described later in this section, this was conceptualised as requiring a shift in dynamics along a continuum of ownership for the teacher and her pupils, which necessitated a move outside of Anita’s comfort zone.

Next, strategies along the continuum of musical play implemented as part of Anita’s classroom practice are considered, with reference to her perceptions of their overall contribution to children’s learning.

Musical Games-Play: Singing Games & Musical Gamification

Figure 6: *Singing Games - Doggie Doggie* (Geoghegan, 1999b, p. 38)

DOGGIE, DOGGIE

starting pitch G (so)

ALL
Dog - gie, dog - gie where's your bone?

DOG IN THE MIDDLE
Some - one stole it from my home.

ALL
Who stole your bone?

CHOSEN CHILD
I stole your bone.

Lesson 1

Played “Doggie, Doggie” (adaptation for younger classes-one “doggie” sits in the middle of the circle, covering her eyes and the bone is passed around throughout the song. When Doggie sings “Who’s got my bone?” the child with the bone makes a “Woof” sound, attempting to disguise their voice. Doggie has to guess who has the bone based on location of the “woof”, tone of voice, guilty faces etc.) While the class had played this game before, we had not passed the bone on the steady beat, so this was introduced this time.

The children were very engaged throughout the lesson. The activities were easy to manage from a teaching perspective and the children were able to perform the tasks with ease. Though not all children thoroughly understood the idea of “pulse”, they were still able to access the concept through the games, which is a building block towards understanding this musical concept. The use of this active/play-based approach allowed every child to experience this concept at either a conscious or unconscious level. This universal experience could not occur in a lesson where the concept was simply explained to the group.

For the following lessons I would like to introduce simple rhythms, draw attention to the solfa in the songs we have used and make use of percussion instruments to further develop the sense of pulse.

(Anita: Reflection 1, 2019)

Lesson 5

The focus of the lesson was performing a circle game. I took a song that the girls are familiar with and we performed actions to the pulse while singing the song. We tried these actions at a slow tempo without singing, and then performed them with the song.

This methodology [*Passing bowls on the steady beat*] was difficult for this class group. I think the objectives of this lesson would be more easily achieved with a more senior class. However, the girls did achieve the objectives after some practice and they were immensely proud of themselves when they did, and wanted to repeat them over and over again. I had to adapt mid-lesson and change from whole-class setting to small group games but the girls responded well to this and continued the activities with renewed enthusiasm. The activities involved concentration, team-work and patience in addition to all of the musical skills they have developed until now.

(Anita: Reflection 5, 2019)

Scaffolded Musical (and Extra-Musical) Understanding and Development

The previous extracts from Anita's reflections demonstrate how she utilised one song over a number of lessons with a view to developing the children's sense of pulse. Anita focused on the song 'Doggie Doggie' alongside different games, which she creatively adapted and extended from those explored in the initial workshop, with a view to developing the children's sense of pulse. The first singing game was a guessing game as to who stole the doggie's bone, a version of which had been played before with her class, but was extended in this case, to involve passing a bone around a circle on the steady beat after the pupils were increasingly confident with the musical material. Extending this further in the fifth lesson she taught, another singing game involved each child passing small bowls around a circle on the steady beat.

Anita's practice of singing games as part of the present research involved just one simple song with 3 notes, but with activities designed to scaffold pupils in the development of specific musical skills. She believed that aspects of these lessons were challenging for the pupils and put this down to the fact that they were quite young. However, she suggested that the repetition involved in the lessons in tandem with the

playful activities meant that the girls became increasingly familiar with the song without becoming bored and enabled them to achieve competency with both gross-motor and musical skills (Brumfield, 2014; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). While these were predominantly whole-class activities, reflecting on how the lesson was going in the moment, Anita flexibly altered her plans, which she believed was necessary to better facilitate pupils' learning. She also opted to utilise a range of resources and shifted from traditional classroom seating, to small groups and moved to the school hall for the second lesson.

In terms of musical learning, aligning with the Kodály staged approach to music education (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015), Anita suggested that the children were enabled to consolidate “the musical skills they have developed until now”, demonstrate that they could “accurately identify the pulse” of the song and experience enjoyment and engagement in music-making (Anita: Lesson 5, 2019). This engagement and enjoyment recalled findings from previous research literature pertaining to pupils' involvement in singing games and playful teaching and learning more generally. Outside of the realm of music learning, Anita believed that the “activities involved concentration, team-work and patience” aligning with connections to 21st century skill development discussed previously (DES, 2015; Roberts, 2018). However, interestingly, in adopting an increasingly teacher-led approach Anita did not reflect on pupils' development of “creativity” which have been described by Roberts (2018, p. 17) as developing through primarily child-directed singing games. This aligns with Qian & Clark's (2016) findings that these areas of learning are less likely than critical thinking to be associated with game-based learning in the literature. Such development may also have been impeded by the degree of teacher direction involved in singing games used for set pedagogical purposes as has been documented in the literature (Roberts, 2017/2018).

A scaffolding of pupils' musical understanding within classroom practices was also evidenced in Anita's use of a range of musical gamification activities. These included teacher-scaffolded games called 'Secret conductor' and 'Guess the instrument', the latter of which, she created to constitute a key step in affording pupils understanding of the timbre of musical instruments before they would be tasked with composing their own piece as part of an increasingly free musical play lesson.

Musical Gamification: Guess the Instrument

The focus of the lesson was timbre, specifically the timbre of different percussion instruments in the classroom. After introducing several percussion instruments by name and sound, the class played a game where one instrument was played out of sight and the children had to identify the instrument by sound. This was played initially on a whole-class level and later in groups of three. Children were encouraged to use the proper names for the instruments and to play them correctly. The activity was differentiated by beginning with just two instruments ("Is it a triangle or a drum?") and adding additional instrument options for groups who were initially successful, up to a total of five options. Teacher viewed each group asking, for example, "Why do you decide it was drum?" in order to encourage children to identify properties of instruments with responses such as "I knew it didn't sound like metal" etc.

(Anita: Reflection 2, 2019)

Anita felt the lesson provided an opportunity for children to develop their literacy skills, though arguably it also allowed for an introduction to working scientifically in relation to the sound strand unit within the primary school science curriculum (NCCA, 1999c). By allowing pupils the chance "to engage in discussion [...] and hand-on activities" in the realm of playful music pedagogy within this lesson, the teacher believed there was scope for pupils "to construct their own understandings" of the varying timbres of the instruments (Murphy, 2008, p. 61). In addition to this learning, as before, Anita felt that by experiencing success in the game, pupils were all enabled to build confidence in "their music skills", whilst also strengthening a range of

21st century skills including, “interpersonal skills [...] turn-taking, active listening and decision-making” (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019).

Enhanced Scope for ‘Concrete Learning’ with Implications for Management

Anita believed the musical gamification activity described previously offered the opportunity to scaffold pupils’ music learning in a way that avoids some of the messiness involved in free play with percussion instruments, where “not much concrete learning takes place” (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019). Such a perception brings to mind work by Davies (2000) in relation to the notion of risk-taking involved in creative teaching for teachers. In relation to the post-primary school context, Davies’ research has suggested that teachers can be reticent to “take any risks that might jeopardize learning and do their best to ensure that everyone learns something [...] with] constraints affect[ing] the extent to which teachers are prepared to trust students” (Davies, 2000, p. 22). What is particularly interesting in relation to Anita’s experience here is the notion that a need for measurable and concrete learning in music education is already prioritised, to the extent that it may also have impacted her confidence and trust in her young pupils.

The degree of freedom afforded to the pupils in this lesson, appeared to stretch the teacher slightly outside of her comfort zone. Anita suggested that while the children were very engaged in the small groups, the activity was “very noisy”, which meant “management was more difficult” and led her to consider that the “game may work better on a whole-class level only” (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019). It is interesting that this indicates a difficulty in relation to affording increased levels of freedom to pupils within teacher-scaffolded musical games play along the continuum of playful learning. Bearing in mind Anita’s tentativeness with the degree of noise and freedom associated

with even the more teacher-scaffolded forms of playful music learning, next it is important to consider how she adopted guided musical play activities requiring increased levels of pupil autonomy.

Guided Musical Play: Free, Constructive Musical Play & (Free, Kinaesthetic)/Dramatic Musical Play

Anita's classroom practice of guided musical play included opportunities for pupils to explore and compose music in relation to a given theme, in this case, Spring. Following on from the previous lesson, where pupils had been encouraged to explore the different timbres of a range of percussion instruments, Anita hoped that pupils would be enabled to build on their prior learning. Her objectives in teaching the lesson were that pupils would "improve their skills at playing percussion instruments, compose their own pieces of music, select appropriate sounds for the theme, listen actively to others and provide feedback" (Anita: Reflection 3, 2019). The lesson is outlined below.

Free, Constructive Musical Play: Composing

The focus of the lesson was composition. The children were encouraged to use what they had learned about our percussion instruments in the previous lesson to select some appropriate percussion instruments in small groups. They were given a loose theme of "Spring". They then had to compose, rehearse and perform their piece of music in small groups.

Some children found this idea of free composition easier than others. A few children struggled to participate in any manner other than simply playing an instruments (sic) when instructed to by the others in the group.

Equally, in some groups certain children dominated the planning and discussion, not allowing the other children to present their own ideas. In the future I would plan the groups very carefully to make sure all children could have equal input.

I needed to make use of some space outside of the classroom so that each group had a quiet space in which to prepare and rehearse

I certainly found this idea of free/constructive play to be more difficult for myself, both in planning the activity and then managing the children throughout the lesson. While most children achieved the lesson objectives, this was more

difficult to measure than in other, more controlled, teacher-led lessons. However, the children definitely enjoyed themselves and had the opportunity to listen and respond, perform, and compose all in one lesson, which doesn't always happen in some of the other lesson types. I think that, for this age- group at least, this type of lesson is best done only every so often. An older class might be more responsible and prepared for the freedom that this approach presents.

(Anita: Reflection 3, 2019).

Working Outside Teacher Comfort Zone & Preparation for Play Freedom

From the above extract, it is clear that Anita was cognisant of tendencies for some pupils to dominate and others to sit back within her classroom practice of free, constructive musical play. She also reflected that she found this form of musical play more difficult to facilitate than the “other, more controlled, teacher-led lessons” (Anita: Reflection 3, 2019) suggesting that this was for a number of reasons, related to the preparation, management of pupils within the lesson and general assessment of pupils’ learning. Interestingly, Anita (Reflection 3, 2019) felt that this form of play might be better suited to those in older classes who could be “more responsible and prepared for the freedom” presented, which goes against what one might expect in terms of the potential for young children to engage in free play more generally (Gray, 2008; NCCA, 2009a) and the value of increasingly free play for those in the early years. However, it recalls Swanwick’s (2005) assertion that imaginative play is one of the more difficult elements in terms of music education, this particular activity may have been overly complex for the children in this group, which may indeed, suggest a need for increased musical preparation and experiences that children could ultimately build upon within the more creative composing lessons (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). Conversely, it may have been a case that the teacher found that the way children responded to the freedom they were afforded was difficult to manage, which may be seen to resonate with work at early childhood level which, referred to tendencies towards the use of adult “rules, and

routines [... to protect] against the potential anarchy of the children” (Löfgren & Ehn, 2010, p. 84).

The final area of classroom practice of playful music pedagogy explored in Anita’s context is that of dramatic musical play. The next section provides an overview of a lesson taught within Anita’s class.

(Free, Kinaesthetic/)Dramatic Musical Play

The focus of the lesson was listening and responding to music using drama/mime. Several excerpts were played for the children. For the introduction a few short pieces were played and the children were encouraged to respond immediately on a whole-class basis. They could interact with each other but not speak. They were encouraged to “act” the part of a character inspired by the music not simply move or dance. For the main part of the lesson a longer excerpt was played and the children had to listen only and compile their own personal ideas. Then they were given a few minutes to prepare a scene to accompany the music in small groups. Then they performed these scenes for the other children. This was repeated with a contrasting excerpt.

- Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture (Love Theme)
- Elgar: March No. 1 (Pomp and Circumstance)
- Dvorak: Symphony N. 9 (4th Movt)
- Saint-Saens: Carnival of the Animals (The Swan)
- Greig: Peer Gynt Suite (In the Hall of the Mountain King)

I found it more difficult to assess their learning than in other lesson types. This is because all children were not responding effectively using role-play, particularly in the beginning of the lesson but it was difficult for me to decipher the reason. This may have been because

- They were not actively listening to the music.
- They could not decide how to respond to what they were hearing.
- They did not have the drama skills to demonstrate their response.

I think that the class needs to be very experienced in drama/role-play responses before attempting to include this in a music lesson. I do not feel that my class were ready for this methodology to be truly effective and, were I to use it in future, I would make sure the necessary preparation was done beforehand.

(Anita, Reflection 4, 2019)

As before in relation to free, constructive musical play, when it came to implementing practices of dramatic musical play in her classroom, Anita experienced some difficulties taking a step back in terms of the degree of freedom afforded to the

pupils. This manifested in her concerns that “all children were not responding effectively using role-play” and suggestions that this may have been related to one of the three reasons listed above (Anita: Reflection 4, 2019). The notion that the pupils were not responding effectively to the music suggests that the teacher was expecting a specific type of response, which may be seen to go against the notion of freedom for the pupils to “respond imaginatively” to the music in question, which was one of the initial objectives (Anita: Reflection 4, 2019). The teacher went on to suggest that “it took several attempts for some children to understand that they were being asked to respond through drama and to display behaviours and create a scene with each other” (Anita: Reflection 4, 2019).

While this lesson may have incorporated some elements associated with Kokas pedagogy, in reality the teacher played a much more dominant role than would be expected, no doubt impacting the pupils’ scope for creative expression in response to the music instead prioritising what the teacher deemed an appropriate response. The “completely unrestricted, free movements that facilitate emotional responses to music in children as they discover musical values with their own bodies” (Deszpot, 2013, p. 9) associated with Kokas pedagogy were certainly not evidenced in this example. This was deemed to be potentially connected to the language of ‘dramatic’ musical play associated with the tentative framework for playful music learning at the outset of this study. With this in mind, the updated framework presented at the beginning of this chapter utilises the term free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play. It also indicates a need for clarity in relation to the practice of this form musical play, pupil agency and expectations (or lack thereof).

Having explored Anita’s practices, next practices of playful music pedagogy within senior primary school classrooms are outlined. This commences with those in

Ciara's context, where reference is also made to teacher's perceptions of their overall contribution to children's learning.

Case 3: Ciara's Classroom Practices (4th Class)

Like the previous participants, Ciara also brought a wealth of musical expertise with her to the study. A musician herself, she was capable of playing tin-whistle, guitar and of singing. In addition to playing a range of musical instruments, Ciara also had some background in musical literacy, leadership and notation, studying music formally until leaving certificate level and was responsible for conducting the school choir and teaching the guitar outside of the school context. Having never taught in an infant setting outside of her initial teacher education, in Ciara's previous music lessons with senior classes she tended to focus on mostly structured tin-whistle, song-singing and listening and responding lessons from textbooks. She suggested that these more formal, teacher-led music lessons tended to look just like maths lessons in terms of pedagogical practices and classroom organisation and lamented feeling like she had become "lazy" with regards to music teaching (Ciara: Interview, 2019). This notion aligns in part with Wright's (2016, p. 209) understanding of increased informality in music education necessitating activities along a continuum of ownership and moving away from "traditional, didactic, teacher-led pedagogy [in music]", an approach associated with limited learner "participation" and even "potential boredom" (Banning, 2005, p. 202).

Considering herself to be one of the more confident teachers in her school at teaching music, and cognisant that some of her colleagues "don't do music" because of their own lack of confidence, Ciara suggested that this can sometimes place her under a "self-imposed pressure" in school (Ciara: Interview, 2019). Worsened by "time constraints" in the classroom, and a need to place emphasis on other curricular areas, Ciara lamented that "sometimes you just don't get an opportunity to do your one full

hour” of music per week (Ciara: Interview, 2019). She was concerned about this because, like Kodály and Kokas, believing there to be “music in everyone” she was of the opinion that music represented an opportunity for all children to enjoy school and experience success, regardless of any special educational needs or barriers to learning in other subjects (Ciara: Interview, 2019). Stating, “Everyone can participate in music education” it became clear that this generalist teacher was passionate about making sure music is open to all pupils, and providing as many opportunities as possible for “fun and enjoyable” music experiences (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

Playful Music Pedagogy in Ciara’s Classroom Practice: Engagement, Scaffolding & Different Class Structures

Ciara had nine years teaching experience and was teaching fourth class in a mixed senior school in the Dublin suburbs when she participated in this research project. Suggesting that one thing she was particularly looking forward to, was moving away from lessons where “the children [...are] stationary at their tables”, at the outset of the research, Ciara also expressed concern about how the children “would respond” to the new approach (Ciara: Pre-Reflection, 2019). Having played singing and action games before with infants whilst on teaching practice in ITE, she considered that practices higher up in the primary school may be impacted by tendencies to perceive that games are only suitable in certain subjects. Following participation in the research, Ciara noted that “games can be for **anyone** and for **any** age” and that “circle time sort of activities” outside of the more formal classroom structures bolstered pupils’ engagement and enjoyment of music (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

Ciara focused mostly on teacher-directed games as part of the present research, stating that the goals of her lessons were to develop an understanding of the various rhythms to scaffold pupils towards the process of composing “their own

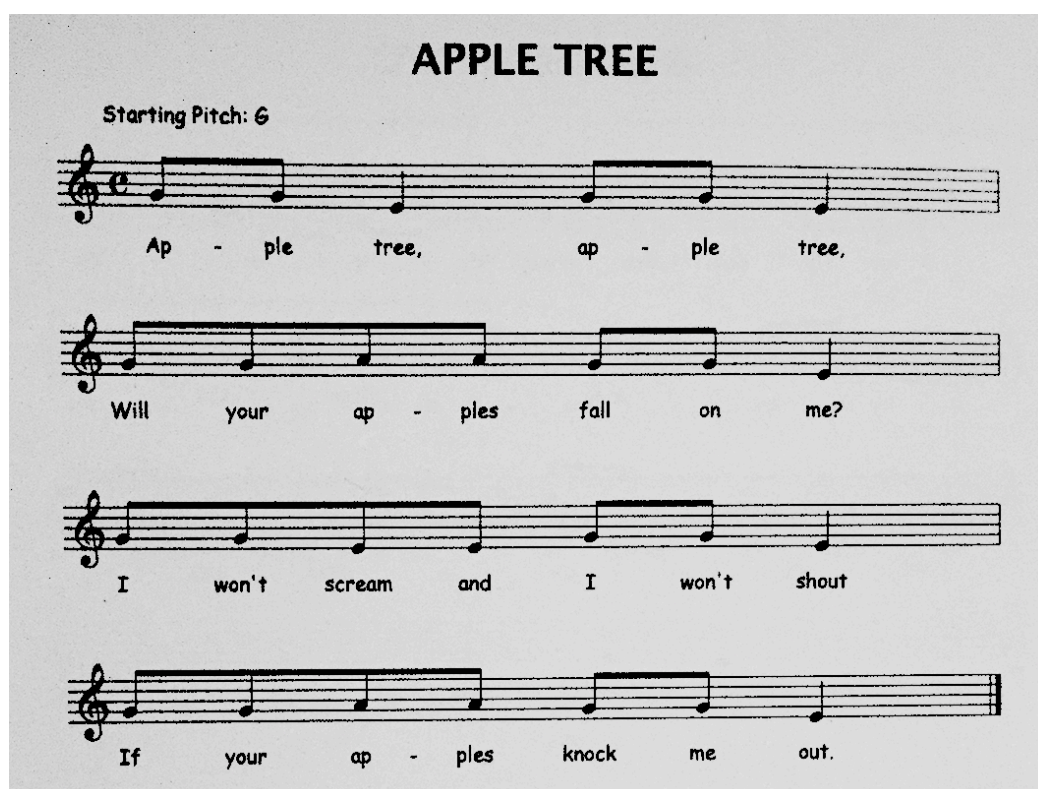
rhythms”(Ciara: Interview, 2019) . While she had “hoped to [...] move on to [...] the dramatic play [...and...] the free play” this was not something she explored as part of the research as she became increasingly aware of the musical experiences and expertise of the pupils in her class in terms of music literacy and opted to focus her attention on these areas (Ciara: Interview, 2019). She encouraged them to guide and support their peers in the lessons in hopes to give “more ownership” suggesting that “when you learn from someone your own age sometimes it’s [...] more meaningful” (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

The following sections provide an outline of what these activities looked like within Ciara’s classroom practices and .

Musical Games Play: Musical Gamification & Singing games

Ciara taught her 4th class pupils two of the songs and singing games explored as part of the initial professional learning workshop: ‘Apple Tree’ and ‘Pass One Window/Tideo’.

Figure 7: *Singing Game - Apple Tree* (Geoghegan, 2005)



For today's lesson, I introduced the lesson by saying my name while clapping the rhythm. I also added an action to go with this. The children repeated my name (with rhythm) and the action back to me. We then went around the circle with each child doing this. On the second round, we simply clapped the rhythm while trying to remember each of the accompanying actions.

I then introduced the song, Apple Tree. The children were sitting in a circle. I sang the song once and then the children repeated it back with me. We sang it line by line. I then demonstrated keeping a steady pulse to the song. The children began doing this also. We then began passing a ball around the circle. I suggested we try to pass it to the pulse of the song. After a short time, I introduced the idea of a game. We would pass the ball around, keeping the steady pulse, and if it landed on you, you were out. The children were really delighted with this game and loved playing it. By the end of the game, they were very familiar with the song and I was happy they could maintain a steady pulse

(Ciara: Reflection 1, 2019)

Differing Classroom Structures and Scaffolding Teaching and Learning

Ciara moved the tables back in her classroom in keeping with her initial goal to open up music lessons away from the formal structures she would have initially utilised

and associated more with maths lessons. She suggested that this lesson structure was beneficial because the children engaged really well with the lesson. They enjoyed playing the game and being in a circle as opposed to in their seats. In addition to this she felt that the game allowed children “to develop a sense of pulse yet in a fun way” (Ciara: Reflection 1, 2019). She indicated that although keeping/demonstrating the pulse was the key objective in the lesson, the children repeated the song numerous times and “also practised song singing but without knowing it” (Ciara: Reflection 1, 2019). This notion of practising song singing without realising is interesting and leads us to consider Bruckman’s (1999) comparison of dipping broccoli in chocolate to the use of games to make the learning process fun. Potentially, dependent on teachers’ motivations, this can be seen to involve a degree of concealed control and intention over children that should be considered. Such a perspective recalls Wright’s (2016, p. 212) suggestions that in striving to provide increasingly informal music lessons, there is a need for awareness of elements of control on the part of teachers, coupled with a willingness to flexibly “adapt” and “adopt” approaches to best suit pupils’ learning.

In the subsequent lesson, Ciara’s practices extended to encouraging each child to pass objects on the steady beat within small groups while singing another song, Pass One Window/Tideo. This lesson commenced with a review of previous material learned before moving onto a new task building upon prior learning.

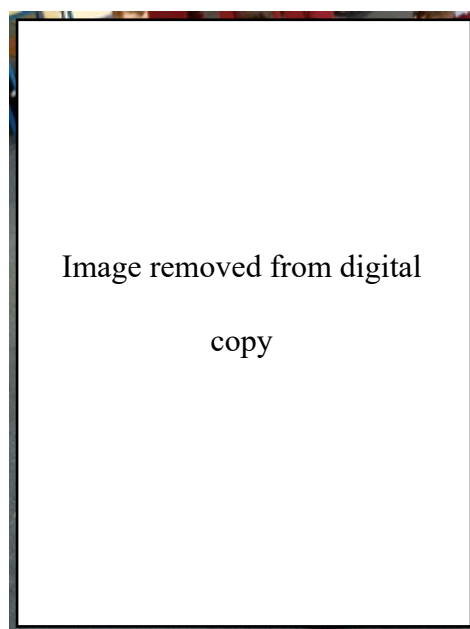
Figure 8: Singing Game - Tideo (Thompson, 2013)



We sang through the song [Apple Tree] once and then we played the game passing the ball around and keeping a steady pulse. After a few times, I then asked the children if we could clap the rhythm of each line of the song. This came quite easy to the class as they were now very familiar with the song. Initially we sang the song as well as clapping the rhythms however we were eventually able to do it with just the rhythm.

I then introduced the song 'Pass One Window'. We sang this and then began keeping a steady pulse. I then introduced cups and told the children we would be passing the cups around while keeping a steady pulse.
(Ciara: Reflection 2, 2019)

Figure 9: Tideo in Ciara's classroom (Ciara: Reflection 2, 2019)



In the photograph shown in Figure 9, Ciara encouraged the pupils to work in small groups, and allowed groups the opportunity to perform for their peers. She described this as a window “screenshot” into each group’s practices (Ciara: Professional Learning Community Meeting 3, 2019) recalling the drama activity ‘performance carousel’ (Baldwin, 2015) or indeed, that from Kokas’ sharing of practice (Kokas, 1999, 2013). The aforementioned practices are interesting because they suggest that teachers in senior classes in the primary school have scope to teach music through active, playful and engaging ways that scaffold pupils’ musical learning. They also indicate a willingness for pupils to participate in playful music lessons as a community of learners within a different type of, less formal, classroom structure and to perform for one another as part of the “ritual” of shared music-making (Kivy, 1991, p. 89).

Guided Musical Play: Free, Constructive Musical play - Lollipop Stick

Notation

Whilst Ciara did not provide a written lesson reflection for this taught activity, she discussed it in the professional learning community meeting and demonstrated it with and for the teachers in the group. Again, away from their desks the children were enabled to work in small groups to extend their musical knowledge and demonstrate their learning from the previous lessons, whilst scaffolded and supported by their teacher.

Then we [...] recapped on apple tree now singing it. [...] We clapped out like ‘Apple tree apple tree will your apple fall on me?’ And then we were thinking about then well what is that made up of? And we were thinking ok alright well that’s ti-ti ta so [...] we represented it using the lollipop sticks...

[...] they had already sort of seen it because I had Pass One Window on the board. They knew what a double bar line would be.

[...] I wanted the bar-line as well [...] So maybe to think of where the bar-line might be coming in.

So some of them [...]were missing this (***Crotchet**) so it actually was sort of like for them to see that there was a longer note in between them. And then when...some groups finished [...] I went over we sort of like checked it and they clapped it. And then after that we basically thought of different rhythms that we could have that have four beats [...] I said we could have a ta a ti-ti or a rest, a crotchet rest. And then so a lot of them then [...] made four big rhythms

(Ciara: Professional Learning Community 3, 2019).

Ciara had received this idea from a choral conducting PD workshop she had recently attended and felt that it fit along the playful music learning continuum and could be used in relation to the song her 4th class pupils were learning. Again, indicative of an overarching focus on scaffolding pupils' learning, Ciara suggested that a good next step might be to move onto something like rhythm bingo with the children. Ultimately, Ciara's practices revolved around application of activities previously experienced within PD. This differed from the approach adopted by Suzanne, who sourced her own materials and resources to suit her goals for the class. It was also different to Anita's approach, which involved flexibly modifying and creating her own playful music ideas inspired by the framework and activities provided in the initial PD and within her previous experiences of Kodály music education. While Ciara appeared to demonstrate less flexibility in relation to playful music pedagogy, this appeared to suit Ciara's personal style of teaching and perceived requirements based on the age and ability of the pupils.

Ciara's experience has some points of commonality with those evidenced within Emma's classroom practices and references to perceived contributions to pupils' learning in another 4th class context.

Case 4: Emma's Classroom Practices (4th Class)

Emma had a background in formal music education and practice prior to participating in the present research. She completed music study for junior certificate and leaving certificate, sang in choirs for her whole life, and played the piano. Emma graduated as a primary school teacher in 2010, having completed an elective in music education as part of her undergraduate degree, where she felt she had been introduced to aspects of a playful pedagogy previously, framed as active music teaching and learning. She suggested that this approach could be described as part of the 1999 primary school music curriculum though, in her opinion, it was not emphasised enough (Emma: Interview, 2019). Such strategies tended to be advocated for learning in the younger classes and Emma's many years' experience in younger classes meant that she had some understanding and knowledge around using playful pedagogies in general with younger classes. However, she believed that utilisation of a book or a scheme can sometimes detract from scope to incorporate active, and indeed playful activities with children.

Emma expressed concern that music tended to receive less priority than other curricular areas, with few opportunities for professional learning outside of STEM and literacy. She suggested that the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) may have a role to play in encouraging PD in other curricular areas like music to allow for a more holistic development for pupils (Emma: Interview, 2019). This mirrored Sahlberg's (2017) suggestion for the Irish schools to ensure equity across curricular areas.

Playful Music Pedagogy in Emma's Classroom Practice - Ownership, Meaningful Engagement & Learning, Flexibility of Approach

Emma had nine years teaching experience and was teaching fourth class in a mixed senior school in the Dublin suburbs when she participated in this research project. Emma's previous music lessons had tended to focus on mostly structured song-singing and listening and responding lessons from textbooks though she had experience implementing playful elements as part of an active approach to music learning previously, particularly in the younger classes. She suggested that lessons with percussion instruments tend to involve a good deal more preparation, in terms of finding the resources in her school, and thus, described herself as being less likely to utilise these in her music lessons.

In implementing play-based music education with her class, Emma reflected that sometimes it is not the most convenient thing to do, "as with everything else when you have thirty children in a class". However, she felt that "when you actually do it, it actually is the easiest way to teach" (Emma: Interview, 2019). Not only did she consider it to be easy to implement, she also felt that it opened up the music learning process to more pupils, particularly boys, who might feel embarrassed about participation in music with stereotypes that it is more of a "girls' subject" (Emma: Interview, 2019). This aligns with literature previously explored and may be seen to indicate scope for playful pedagogy to facilitate inclusion in the music learning process for boys in addition to those who are increasingly disengaged from education more generally (DiSalvo, 2015; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

Emma tried to implement as many different aspects of playful music pedagogy as possible within the six-week period. The next section explores her practices in some detail.

Musical Games Play - Singing Games & Musical Gamification

Emma taught four different songs over the six-week period. She taught a pop song ‘Don’t Let Me Down’ and the song ‘Cobbler Cobbler’ as a precursor to supporting pupils in developing their own songs using the so-mi minor third interval. The teaching of this interval can be deemed to align with the Kodály structure for music literacy development, and sound-before-symbol principle, as previously discussed (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015) with this discussed within the initial workshop. In addition to this, she taught ‘Apple Tree’ and ‘Tideo’, as discussed previously in relation to Ciara’s classroom practice. Given the similarities in classroom practice for both teachers’ implementation of these singing games, aligned with what had been covered within the initial PD workshop, it is not necessary to repeat what has been previously discussed. Emma’s practices of gamification manifested in games of Rhythm Bingo, the Evolution game, Secret conductor and Hunt the shape as part of the research.

Musical Gamification: Rhythm Bingo

I used resources from the workshop and my own ideas.

The lesson was split into standing and seated activities for variation: warmed up with name clapping and pass the clap, introducing apple tree song with the game and then moving onto more structured clapping of ta and ti-ti before consolidating with rhythm bingo. I like to draw attention to difference between rhythm and pulse and this needed to be included in structure.

The lesson went very well. I think this was because the children enjoyed the playful aspect, while also being aware that they were learning. The activities were varied and engaging and there wasn’t time for the children to get bored.

If I were to do the lesson again I would move the tables to allow for more competitive nature of the games which children enjoyed. They enjoyed the games more than I thought they would.

(Emma: Reflection 1, 2019).

Musical Gamification: Evolution Game

Evolution game to teach duration/ rhythm with a focus on minims (ta-a), crotchets (c), quavers (ti-ti) and semiquavers (tiri tiri).

The children practiced the rhythms before the game.

Each rhythm was assigned to an action:

Each rhythm was assigned to an action:

- ta-a=egg
- ta - dinosaur
- titi- chicken
- tiritiri- superman

The children start as an egg saying the name of rhythm pattern and moving in time and when they meet someone who is the same level they play rock paper scissors to move to the next level. If they lose they remain the same/ drop a level.

The children were all engaged. The children got practical experience of using the rhythms- there was a purpose to repeating the rhythm over and over, not just imitating me. They benefited from peer modelling as they walked around and met others who were practicing the same pattern

This is an excellent methodology as it incorporates movement (pe/music), playing with others (sphe), actions/ play (drama). It can be played at any time and doesn't need much preparation so it means that the children are practicing rhythm patterns over and over. It promotes a sense of fun and is a nice break from lessons but they are still learning about duration

For me, it made me add on the tiri-tiri (semiquaver) pattern which I probably would have left out in 4th class had it not been for the game but the children are well able for it and were motivated to use it because of the game. Maths was also promoted because of the fractions- value of notes

(Emma: Reflection 3, 2019).

Surprising Levels of Ownership, Meaningful Engagement & Learning

In her use of musical gamification as outlined above in relation to the Evolution game, Emma noted that the children were able to develop their musical understanding of the different rhythms by participating in meaningful and enjoyable activities, rather than simply repeating after the teacher, and were afforded increased ownership of the learning in question. She believed this allowed for increased engagement, whilst

integrating with a range of other curricular areas. Like Ciara, Emma felt that pupils were enabled to learn from one another and benefited from “peer modelling” (Emma: Reflection 3, 2019) as opposed to a formal and didactic approach to teaching and learning. Interestingly, Emma felt that the games she was implementing played a role in guiding her towards teaching increasingly complex musical concepts to the children, which she may not have otherwise taught to children at this age group. Indeed, in teaching the tiri-tiri (semi-quaver) rhythm, she pushed outside of the expectations of the primary school curriculum with a group of 4th class children. This cannot be seen to align with the Kodály approach more generally given the lack of contextual understanding and experience of the rhythm the children would have previously possessed in advance of making it conscious (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

However, Emma also suggested that as the children became more enthusiastic about the competitive aspect of the various musical play activities, there needed to be reminders to continue following the rules of the games. As has been common within much of the previous cases, one area in particular that offers us insight into Emma’s practice of these games in her fourth class, is the notion that all pupils were “highly motivated [, ...] engaged” and eager to participate in the games (Emma: Interview, 2019). This was the case even for those who had been reluctant to take part in music lessons previously with “children who often aren’t engaged in singing activities [...] much more motivated to participate on an active level rather than passive” (Emma: Interview, 2019). She felt that the pupils’ enjoyment was due to the playful and indeed, “competitive nature of the games” (Emma: Interview, 2019). Emma found this quite surprising at first, suggesting “They enjoyed the games more than [she] thought they would” and she felt they were particularly enthusiastic at the idea that their teacher was a participant in the games as well, and was equally likely to be knocked out (Emma:

Interview, 2019). This indicates that Emma initially perceived the 10-11 year old children in her class to be too old to participate in games as part of the learning process and was surprised that this was not necessarily the case. It also suggests that despite being sufficiently open to playful learning for older children to participate in the present research due to a theoretical interest in how this might work, this teacher's practical experience of teaching in the Irish context was such that games and play were to become decreasingly relevant for children. This perspective aligns with tendencies for the literature to focus on the relevance of play to young children as opposed to in middle childhood (Bergan & Pronin Fromberg, 2009; Zhang, 2020).

Flexibility of Approach

Given that Secret Conductor and Hunt the Shape (albeit with a different name), have been discussed previously, it is unnecessary to explore these in more detail. However, it is important to consider that the previous manifestations of these games were in junior classes, whereas this context was in relation to fourth class. This teacher differentiated these games to suit the pupils in her individual context. Whereas Suzanne's class saw Hunt the tape, with focus on tempo, Emma emphasised the need for pupils to maintain the same pulse whilst getting louder or softer, focusing on pulse and dynamics. Similarly, while Secret conductor had been used in a younger class, Emma felt it was equally appropriate in this context as a means of encouraging pupils to understand the concept of pulse. Emma suggested that "They are very adaptable games and could be used to teach many musical elements" and to facilitate teachers' assessment of pupils' grasp of these elements (Emma: Interview, 2019). Having explored gamification within Emma's classroom practices, next it is important to look at the more guided forms of musical play: namely dramatic musical play and free, constructive musical play, and consider how they manifested in her teaching.

Guided Musical Play: (Free, kinaesthetic)/Dramatic Musical Play and Free, Constructive Musical Play

Preparation for Freedom of Play

Similar to what we noted before with Anita, what Emma classified as dramatic musical play in her lesson reflections did not allow for a great deal of pupil freedom and was quite structured. Specific focus was afforded to encouraging pupils to understand the concept of higher and lower pitches in preparation for teaching the s-m minor third interval. Emma encouraged the pupils to use their bodies to demonstrate the higher and lower pitches from within the pieces, *The Elephant and Aviary*, from Saint-Saens *Carnival of the Animals*. It may be more suitable to consider this as representing a form of free/constructive guided musical play as they depicted high and low pitches through their movement. In her reflection, she suggested that, “The lesson was very active and the children definitely didn’t see it as work. They thought it was a very fun activity” (Emma: Reflection 5, 2019). She also reflected on the importance of setting “ground rules” for pupils’ behaviour in these lessons (Emma: Reflection 5, 2019). The degree of control and structure within this lesson seeking to focus on specific musical literacy learning in relation to pitch, may be seen to recall some of the concerns related to scope for Kodály music education: becoming overtly focused on skill development for music literacy potentially to the detriment of children’s creative engagement with music (Abril & Gault, 2016; DeVries, 2001; Polyák & Bodnar, 2021).

Integrated Musical Learning

Building on previous learning, Emma sought to encourage pupils to compose songs and/or song lyrics based on the s-m, minor third interval. Many of the pupils used the simple song ‘Cobbler Cobbler’ to help structure their compositions, whilst including more or fewer syllables.

Figure 10: *Cobbler Cobbler* (Geoghegan, 1999a)

COBBLER, COBBLER

starting pitch C (so)

Cob - bler, cob - bler mend my shoe

Have it done by half past two.

Half past two is much too late.

Have it done by half past eight.

Composing Songs/ Song Lyrics Based on Known Material

S-m using actions: We practiced the solfa of soh and me, following the previous lesson on pitch. We then sang *Cobbler, Cobbler Mend my Shoe* and used our hands to demonstrate the movement of soh-me. We had a short discussion but it was mainly active learning-singing with the hand signs. The children sang the song and sang the solfa. We compared the song to *Apple Tree*- the children were able to identify “*Apple Tree*”, as a song that sounded similar because it had the same notes.

The children then made up their own lyrics based on s-m. Most of the children used the structure of *Cobbler Cobbler Mend my shoe*, some using the same amount of syllables and others using more/less syllables.

This worked extremely well. The children really enjoyed making up their own compositions. It developed their sense of pitch, form and rhythm. It was also an opportunity to develop literacy skills such as rhyme and vocabulary. The standard of the compositions was high. One of the children wrote “Teacher ,Teacher I have no knowledge, I will never get to college”. We haven’t done a huge amount of poetry writing this year so I was unsure how this activity would go but I (sic) worked extremely well. It allowed the children to express themselves naturally. I would definitely recommend using mini-whiteboards for the activity as it allowed them to experiment and change their minds. They learned a lot from each other as well. I will definitely use this methodology again to expand their awareness of pitch using more notes e.g. songs with s,l,m,d.

We covered all strands of the music lesson in this activity.

(Emma: Reflection 6, 2019).

Interestingly, Emma commented on scope to integrate across all of the music curricular strands in this lesson for her 4th class pupils, mirroring what Anita suggested in relation to a similar lesson for younger children. The primary difference between practices in these two contexts was the expectations of increased music literacy skills for each of the groups, with Emma's class encouraged to utilise the "playful"... "bird-language" of tonic solfa (Kodály, 1974g, p. 221). This aligns with expectations of the curriculum (NCCA, 1999a) and indeed, extends those expectations at times in Emma's case.

Next, Ruth's practices are explored to get an insight into how playful music pedagogy manifested within her classroom practices and how this may have been seen to contribute to her 5th class pupils' learning.

Case 5: Ruth's Classroom Practices (5th Class)

The most experienced research participant in this study, Ruth had been teaching for almost forty years at the time of the research. Although she had a love of music, vast educational experience, and ability to play the tin-whistle and the concertina, Ruth was the least confident of the participants in the study. This was pronounced when it came to teaching certain aspects of the music curriculum, in particular music literacy. Ruth never studied music 'formally' and while she enjoys listening to and performing traditional music, having recently taken up the concertina and spending summers going to music festivals, she perceived this to be unrelated to any "academic musical capacity" due to her reliance on learning by ear in this context (Ruth: Interview, 2019). In this respect, Ruth differed from the previous participants. Yet, like some of the other teachers, her previous music teaching had primarily consisted of song-singing and tin-whistle, which she has focused on teaching over the course of her career, with support from different text-books.

Upon beginning the research, Ruth was feeling “a bit overwhelmed” (Ruth: Pre-Reflection, 2019). She was similarly “nervous” that she wouldn’t be in a position to “keep up with the group” given her limited “musical experience of this type” (Ruth: Pre-Reflection, 2019) suggesting that musicians who learn by ear have “a different base” to that associated with the music curriculum and present study (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This indicates that the traditionalist element associated with the Kodály philosophy appeared somewhat pronounced in relation to the research from the outset, potentially due to the researcher’s training and emphases in the initial workshop. Regardless, Ruth was eager to learn new strategies and perceived herself to be “the ultimate 'Tabula Rasa' so there is a blank canvas there to fill!! Lots to learn!” (Ruth: Pre-Reflection, 2019). Throughout the research, Ruth engaged with the researcher slightly more than the other participants, making contact to ask for increased support in terms of demonstrations, ideas and resources as she explored playful music pedagogy with her class. Conversely, the other participants did not need to engage with the researcher outside participation within the PLC meetings, where the bulk of the time was afforded to their sharing of ideas with one another, as opposed to asking for support. Ruth also experienced more difficulty engaging with digital resources and templates than her peers.

Ruth’s story is particularly interesting because it sheds light on how a teacher, with little confidence in music theory and no “experience of teaching the games or anything like that” went about facilitating playful music pedagogy in her classroom (Ruth: Interview, 2019) and indicates the extent to which increased supports might be provided to different teachers depending on their underlying confidence and baseline content knowledge (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Playful Music Pedagogy in Ruth's Classroom Practice – Comfort Zones, Well-being, and Fun

Well-being and Fun

Ruth spoke candidly about the constituent elements of playful educational practices musical and otherwise, suggesting that they brought about “a wave of relief” for children (Ruth: Interview, 2019). While she had little experience with playful music pedagogy, Ruth suggested that her 17 years of experience teaching in junior schools had helped shape her into an educator who emphasises ‘fun’ pedagogy. She suggested that fun should be a key ingredient in the learning process for everyone, from the youngest children to the oldest adults, which suggests her interest in the process of playful pedagogy noting “there has to be fun to everything so I’d try to bring it into everything really” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). Indeed, she stated that play-based learning is built upon “an intense amount of enjoyment and anticipation” and her playful music practices demonstrate that this enjoyment and anticipation were shared between herself and the pupils in her classroom (Ruth: Interview, 2019). Such a perception is also mirrored within the literature pertaining to playful learning and pedagogy suggesting that joy and interest are integral to play (Gray, 2013; Zosh et al., 2017).

Musical Games Play – Singing games and Musical Gamification

The lessons taught and reflected upon by Ruth were based on those shared in the initial workshop. Songs taught included ‘Pass one window/Tideo’ and ‘Apple Tree’ as mentioned by previous participants. Ruth reflected that she could have used “any song with a steady beat” as a means of developing children’s understanding of pulse but wanted to try out the songs that had been covered on the course (Ruth: Reflection 1 & 2, 2019). With Ruth representing a traditional Irish musician, it is unfortunate that she did not seek to incorporate music from her own experiences and repertoire into the

lessons. Indeed, this may have represented a unique and meaningful opportunity for Ruth and for the children aligning with Kodály's emphases on the inherent value of folk music for pupils' music learning (Ittész, 2004).

Rather than moving the tables around the room, which is something her class have to do for every staff meeting, Ruth (Interview, 2019) "adapted the children rather than adapt the room [organisation]." On other occasions, she moved to the hall or to another teacher's classroom. This was deemed important because it enabled them to get straight to the activities and having to do "major reconstruction" was perceived to make the whole process less likely to happen (Ruth: Interview, 2019).

Ruth "tried to implement as many different types" of musical play as she could (Ruth: Interview, 2019). To these ends, in addition to singing games, Ruth taught the games 'Hunt the tape' and 'The Movement Canon'. However, she discussed these in her interview and the PLC and did not provide a written reflection on them. We can see from the below extract that Ruth felt under pressure to have the right answers and sought additional supports from the researcher where she participated in the PLC.

Musical Gamification: The Movement Canon

Ruth: The movement canon. I did this with my class and they actually loved it. Emmm basically the teacher does a movement and everybody repeats it and for the second movement the children don't repeat it instantly they just continue with the first movement and then move onto the second movement. So I'm continuously a slight movement ahead...a little tiny bit ahead...If you understand. So anyway I'm not explaining it very well. So if I just do this and you repeat after me...and then when I change to a new movement if you continue doing this nose tapping job for a moment and then afterwards I go on to my next movement (Demonstrating with rest of the group in canon). Basically that was it. Or am I leaving something out? And then I got the children in my class to you know they they were really good at it. They came up and did this part as well. So [Researcher] Help me out here...am I leaving something out?

Researcher: No No That's great. Yeah and [...]what did you use it for? [...] Did you find it kind of useful?

Ruth: Well it's great for conc...well besides the music and everything. I was telling them you know about the sentences and playing you know if you play with two hands and all that. Just even concentration. They really were intent on you know watching and listening and improving as time went by because the first time was a bit of a shambles but they really did improve and then they enjoyed it coming out and being the múinteoir [Irish for Teacher].

(Ruth: Professional Learning Community Meeting 3, 2019).

Ruth reflected on the potential for the aforementioned activity to enhance pupils' concentration, and motor-skills required for instrumental playing aligning with her understanding of the value of such skills as a musician. Moreover, while she did not refer to this specifically, her descriptions also aligned with development of foundational understanding of texture and canon, areas thought to be particularly aligned to development within the Kodály approach (deVries, 2001).

Following on from this lesson, Ruth used this game as part of a spontaneous transition activity with the pupils in her class. This shed light on scope for 'teaching moments' through practice of playful music pedagogy, which might be considered as special moments of synergy where music learning flows naturally for the students and the teachers.

A girl in my class... was looking for something and we were all just watching her and I started (*Demonstrates tapping gesture on lap...*) doing... You know we had done it already and we all joined in and it kinda just... You know it...was a teaching moment.

(Ruth: Professional Learning Community Meeting 3, 2019).

Whilst there was certainly a degree of teacher direction within this activity, the spontaneity of this experience could perhaps be seen as uniquely aligned with Kokas' (1999; 2013) emphasis on playful improvisation and shared engagement in and through music. Moreover, it could indicate that a culture of playfulness in music education was becoming part of the teacher's practices, despite having no prior experience of playful music pedagogy.

Comfort Zones

Ruth demonstrated some reluctance to implement forms of musical play outside of the scaffolded, teacher-led games associated with singing games and gamification in the research “because [she] found that easier” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This may have related to the connection to what had already made up the bulk of her teaching experience in song-singing to date. It may also have been due to a lack of confidence and feeling of pressure that she needed to do “what was intended” for different kinds of lessons, which led her to “taking the easy way out” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). Ruth’s experience suggests a need for differing, and perhaps prolonged forms of PD depending on teachers’ confidence with music literacy and technology. This aligns with the literature indicating the importance of teachers’ initial content knowledge pertaining to the subject in question and is important to consider for future research, particularly given the additional mentoring and support Ruth received in comparison to that of her peers during the PLC (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 3).

Moving on to the final case, Fearne’s practices of playful music pedagogy and suggested contributions to pupils’ learning are considered. These occurred in a fifth class within what was the only DEIS or designated disadvantaged school within the present study.

Case 6: Fearne’s Classroom Practices (5th Class)

The overview of the individual cases of classroom practices of playful music pedagogy concludes with reference to Fearne’s context. With a great deal of musical expertise and experience, Fearne represents another exceptional case for the present research. A choral performer and conductor, with a high level of musical literacy, Fearne undertook years of piano lessons and formal study in music education. In addition to this, she recently extended her skills by learning to play the ukulele. Fearne

had previous experience of the Kodály method, having attended some short-term (e.g. weekend and weeklong) workshops in this, among other areas in music education PD. She described herself as being very happy to take part in the research because she knew she “wouldn’t be uncomfortable” and would get a chance to learn new games and songs, reminding her of things she had done before in college and music courses (Fearne: Pre-Reflection, 2019). Another thing Fearne was happy about was needing to teach play-based lessons on a weekly basis meaning that she would be required to prioritise this every week (Fearne: Pre-Reflection, 2019).

As a confident generalist music teacher, Fearne acknowledged that certain pressure is placed upon her in the school context, with an expectation that she would teach ukulele to the children in her class each year, for school shows and concerts, whereby “the choice is kind of gone for [her] now” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). Indeed, given that none of her colleagues use the ukulele in school, she suggested that she felt “a bit obligated” to make use of the instruments and resources provided to her school given its DEIS status (Fearne: Interview, 2019). However, she also noted that this was something she enjoyed doing, and the children tended to associate her with being the teacher who does ukulele at this point. She suggested that this has meant that while this is a nice thing, “it also means...[she doesn’t] have much time to do anything else, like the Kodály-based stuff” she was interested in (Fearne: Interview, 2019).

Fearne reflected on the fact that when it comes to teaching music she has “met loads of people [*teachers*] who have no idea” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). Conscious that she has confidence in this area, she takes on a mentoring role for other generalist teachers in her school context, often explaining different elements associated with music education textbooks, to support them in navigating the various lessons.

Playful Music Pedagogy in Fearne’s Classroom Practice – Well-being, Shifts in Degrees of Ownership, Comfort Zones and Scaffolded, Embodied Learning

During the present research, Fearne was responsible for teaching a group of fifth class girls within a vertical school with DEIS status in inner-city Dublin. Fearne’s classroom practices of playful music pedagogy incorporated all forms of musical play, which she felt was very beneficial for the girls in her class. She differentiated the type of teaching associated with her practice teaching ukulele and the lessons facilitated as part of the research as being “just completely different” (Fearne: Interview, 2019).

The next sections provide an overview of the types of musical play facilitated in Fearne’s classroom context.

Musical Games Play: Singing Games & Musical Gamification

Well-being and Shifts in Degrees of Ownership

Similar to other teachers in senior classes, Fearne implemented Rhythm Bingo and The Evolution Game with her class. She commented that in participating in Rhythm Bingo among other areas, the children were inclined to be supportive of one another and encouraging, happy for the child who won as opposed to annoyed. In addition to this, they were happy to adopt and follow the rules involved, which was particularly unique given the prior behavioural issues associated with the class in question.

For Fearne, it did not appear that the children were working at all. They “enjoyed the lessons as a whole because they got to kind of it’s almost like playing with their friends [...] even though it was still school and they were still learning”, which may have been beneficial in terms of the increasingly positive behaviours they exhibited (Fearne: Interview, 2019). Fearne also felt there was a feeling of importance afforded to the 11-12 year old children who were “aware they were doing research”

(Fearne, Interview, 2019). This may also have led to them acting in increasingly positive ways with one another.

Fearne's choice of repertoire was slightly more difficult than that of the other teachers as was deemed appropriate to her context. She suggested that the girls in her class had had experience of participation in a range of singing games previously, with students from secondary music education courses attending the school each year, and were used to singing rounds. Fearne reflected the importance of her knowing the songs and material well because if she "was unsure or [...] hesitated [...] they wouldn't be as comfortable and they wouldn't really sing as well" (Fearne: Interview, 2019). Two songs Fearne taught her class as part of the research were 'Hey, Ho, Nobody Home' and 'Lil Liza Jane' each with a different singing game.

Figure 11: Singing Game - Hey, Ho, Nobody Home (Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014, pp. 42–43)

HEY HO NOBODY HOME

Traditional round

The image shows a musical score for the song 'HEY HO NOBODY HOME' in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music, each with a different starting point for a round. The first staff starts at measure 1, the second at measure 3, and the third at measure 5. The lyrics are: 'Hey ho no - bo - dy home. Meat nor drink nor mon - ey have I none. Still I will be mer - ry, ve - ry mer - ry'.

1
Hey ho no - bo - dy home.

3
2
Meat nor drink nor mon - ey have I none.

5
3
Still I will be mer - ry, ve - ry mer - ry

I sang the song "Hey Ho" with my class. I taught them the melody and lyrics. Then I taught them the actions. Once we could perform both the song and the actions, we sang it in a round, as my class are very familiar with singing rounds.

I wanted the children to learn how to sing the song in tune, with actions and to sing it as a round. From this, the children would develop their sense of pitch, pulse, their co-ordination (sic) and their ability to listen to each other singing.

I think the principal benefit of using this methodology is that the children learned musical skills while they were enjoying themselves.

The main difficulty I experienced was that I have very little space in my classroom and I did not have time to move the tables before this lesson. The girls managed to do the actions with limited space.

(Fearne: Reflection 2, 2019).

It becomes clear from reading Fearne's reflections that she was in a position to move quickly across stages when scaffolding pupils' musical development within these lessons. The singing game in this instance involved performing a range of actions in line with and in keeping with the song, which may have been seen to scaffold pupils' singing of the song as a round within the initial lesson (Sarrazin, 2016b). Fearne indicated that there was scope for pupils to develop a range of musical skills within their participation in the aforementioned activity, whilst also enjoying themselves in the process, which aligns with assertions of the value of singing games for musical development (Tiszai, 2016).

As in the other teachers' experiences, space appeared to be somewhat of an issue that needed to be worked around to allow pupils to engage with playful music practices in the classroom. This mirrored broader research into difficulties associated with playful learning in schools associated with a lack of space (Gray & Ryan, 2016; O'Sullivan & Price, 2019). Yet, while space proved somewhat problematic, in terms of other resources, Fearne relied on easily accessible items like pencils as outlined in relation to the following singing game.

LIZA JANE

Traditional folksong from America

1 2

I know a girl that you don't know L'il Li - za Jane.

Way down south in Bal - ti - more L'il Li - za Jane

3 4

Oh E - li - za, L'il Li - za Jane.

Oh E - li - za, L'il Li - za Jane.

I wanted the children to sing the song and pass pencils while keeping a steady beat. This was to develop their singing, sense of pulse and their co-ordination (sic).

I think this methodology is an excellent way to teach musical skills to children. The children enjoyed the challenge of the passing game. The children had to focus on the beat of the song and work together as a team. After we sang the song and passed the pencils a few times I could see the children's confidence grow.

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Above it is clear that the teacher believed the children were feeling pleased with themselves and were developing confidence whilst engaging with increasingly complex, yet playful music practices. In general, a sense of positive behaviour, improved social engagement, collaboration and well-being appeared to emerge from Fearne's reflections upon practices of playful music pedagogy in her classroom context. This was coupled with reference to children's development of motor skills, proficiency in singing and concept of pulse and aligns with the broader literature into scope for children to develop academically and holistically within a positive, playful environment (Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Whitebread et al., 2017). As might be expected from the literature pertaining to pupils' agentic engagement with music learning (Roberts, 2018; Wright, 2016), the children appeared even more enthused for participation within freer forms of musical play on the continuum of the playful music learning framework within Fearne's classroom. Such forms of musical play are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Guided Musical Play: Free, Kinaesthetic/Dramatic Musical Play and Free, Constructive Musical Play

Comfort Zones and Scaffolded, Embodied Learning

Dramatic Musical Play

Fearne (Reflection 5, 2019) opted to use dramatic musical play as a means of demonstrating to the pupils that "you can show you have an understanding of music without having to clap the beat or write down the beats".

I played extracts from "The Elephant" and "The Swan" from "The Carival (sic) of the Animals" by Saint-Saëns. I asked the girls to respond to the music through movement.

I wanted the children to learn that you can show you have an understanding of music without having to clap the beat or write down the beats.

I think the principal benefits of using this methodology were that the children enjoyed themselves, and they were able to interpret the music without having to use words. Many of the girls automatically matched the slow moving cello melody of the “The Swan” by gently waving their arms. I saw some girls performing graceful ballet style moves which matched the mood of the music. When the next group heard “The Elephant” (sic) they stomped around the room as if they were elephants. One girl guessed that this music was about an elephant and pointed her arm as if it was a trunk. The rest of the girls followed her. The children were developing their musical skills while they were enjoying themselves.

I think this methodology is an excellent way to teach musical skills to children. The majority of the children enjoyed interpreting the music through movement. In the past, I would not have thought that this style of music lesson was suitable for fifth class. I have thought (sic) this lesson many times before with younger children. I presumed that fifth class were too old to enjoy a lesson like this. I was pleasantly surprised that my class loved the lesson and want to do more lessons like this in future.

It was an enjoyable lesson to teach as all I had to do was play the music and watch to see the children naturally interpret the tempo, dynamics, pulse and mood of the music they were hearing. While a few children were uncomfortable joining in, I do believe that if they had experienced this style of lesson from a young age they would have been more comfortable.

(Fearne: Reflection 5, 2019).

Fearne shed increased light on this in her interview and explained that following on from this, she played different pieces including Danse Macabre by Saint-Saens, which had been utilised in the initial workshop, and The Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy. When describing the students’ responses to the music she stated:

They were kind of stabbing [...] Yeah just as if [...] they could kind of almost visualise what was happening. And then for the sugarplum fairy they were all kind of tiptoeing around. I didn’t even tell them the name of the piece and they were all kind of jumping around and upbeat and happy looking. They could really imbue the sense and the tone of the piece.

(Fearne: Interview, 2019).

Fearne felt this form of musical play presented a means of allowing children to “naturally interpret the tempo, dynamics, pulse and mood of the music they were

hearing” where some “automatically matched” the mood of different melodies. When describing the activity to another teacher, one of the pupils in her class pronounced it to be a process of “showing music with [their] bodies” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This recalls Kokas’ (1999, p. 11) suggestion that pupils’ “acquisition of the language of music is the most corporeal experience” which means they are able to “discover the music [...] with their body”.

Although this may appear as a relatively simple piece of musical response, given the age of the pupils it was quite unusual for them to be afforded the opportunity to engage with music in this way. This was alluded to by Fearne within the interview and aligned with the perspectives of other teachers in the study, who suggested pupils’ scope for active music learning begins to diminish as they move through the primary school. Such practices may be related to broader cultural tendencies to place increased focus on work and concrete learning, moving away from playful learning opportunities as children develop as was discussed previously (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010).

Whilst these playful responses aligned in part with the underlying philosophy of Kokas Pedagogy, it appeared that some of the children felt uncomfortable with the activity and opted to watch their peers instead. It is possible that there may have been increased confidence on the part of the children had the teacher joined in within the play activities rather than watching them take part, something that Kokas strived to do as a means of creating a positive, welcoming environment within the classroom (Kokas, 1999; Vékony, 2013).

The final example of playful music pedagogy discussed within this section was carried out by Fearne as a means of encouraging her class to work together and demonstrate their learning in relation to rhythm and notation. This was called the human stick-notation game and had not been covered within the initial PD, which was a

feature of a number of the activities covered by teachers within the study as they engaged playfully with playful music pedagogy in their classrooms.

Free, Constructive Musical Play – The Human Stick-notation Game

Using four hula hoops we played the human stick notation game where groups of 4/5 girls stood in the hoops and made the shapes of different stick notation rhythms. The rest of the class performed the four beat rhythms by clapping them.

The shapes they made were the crotchet rest, ta, ti-ti, ta-a.

I needed four hula-hoops for the human stick notation game. I needed one child to translate the instructions to my students without English.

When the girls were making the four beat rhythms in the hula hoops, I let the group compose the rhythms themselves. The next time we play this game I will clap a rhythm for them to create in the hula hoops to develop their listening skills.

(Fearne: Reflection 6, 2019)

Fearne (Reflection 6, 2019) shared that participating in the human stick-notation game was very enjoyable for the children and that they were all very “proud of their hard work”. However, aligning with the broader Kodály approach (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015) and to support pupils in increasingly imaginative and complex composition (Swanwick, 2009) and musical play, Fearne (Reflection 6, 2019) suggested that a prerequisite for this to succeed would be that the children would have spent “a lot of time singing songs and playing clapping games” in advance. Fearne’s practices here also indicated some scope for inclusion for the pupils with English as an additional language and demonstrated forward planning in relation to how she would continue to develop pupils musical skills through playful music pedagogy.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of different teachers’ practices of playful music pedagogy making reference to different forms of musical play in line with the new framework presented in Figure 3. In doing so, it has outlined how playful music

pedagogy became part of different teachers' classroom practices and considered teachers' perceptions of contributions to pupils' learning. Interestingly, while some of the same materials were utilised across different contexts, particularly those provided within the initial PD and indeed, also some shared by teachers in the PLC, ultimately, there were differences within practices across all of the classes, even in those with similarly-aged pupils.

Looking specifically at the infant classes, one teacher, more au fait with the Aistear programme, was more inclined to utilise thematic and integrated learning and less inclined to view possibilities for broader music development inherent in different activities. Conversely, the other teacher with less of an understanding of Aistear and increased music education PD experience, was more focused on how the play could contribute to specific measurable skill development in music education. Both emphasised a scaffolded approach to teaching and learning and noted increased engagement for the pupils in their class but suggested a potential need to prepare pupils for the degree of freedom associated with the increasingly child-led playful elements of the approach.

Conversely, with a number of the same materials utilised, ultimately, the practices within the senior classes were not dissimilar to one another. Emphasis on scaffolded, musical understanding and skill development via musical games play moving towards increasingly child-led, guided musical play was apparent. Also apparent, was an openness to increasingly playful opportunities for children at older ages and a surprise at how this was received by the children. There was noted engagement within all of the classes although some pupils appeared less comfortable than their peers with engaging with the increasingly free forms of play, which will be discussed in some detail within the next chapter. Interestingly, like those in junior

classes, teachers in senior classes also suggested a potential need to prepare pupils for the degree of freedom associated with the increasingly child-led playful elements of the approach, which was seen to indicate a sense of needing to move outside of comfort zones at times.

Looking back at the framework for playful music learning, overall, it appeared that children were offered limited opportunities to engage with free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play within the present study, which means that it cannot necessarily be stated that teachers provided a great deal of “balance between adult scaffolding and self-direction” (Skolnich Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 179). However, with teachers in this study primarily striving to provide opportunities for music literacy development, and understanding of pulse, rhythm and pitch, it may have been that this balance was particularly likely to “shift [towards increased degrees of teacher scaffolding, aligned with] learners’ abilities and the learning goals” (Skolnich Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 179).

Following initial exploration of documentation pertaining to each of the individual teachers and reflection upon key elements in each context, it is next important to consider findings in relation to the practice of playful music pedagogy across all cases. Thus, the next chapter provides an overview of the results of the cross-case analysis performed as part of the present study. Here emergent themes are discussed in more detail. Drawing from the constant comparative analysis and the directed content analysis, these findings are also considered with reference to key literature shedding light on its connection to the broader field.

CHAPTER 5: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Chapter 4 introduced the framework for playful music learning developed as part of the present study and provided an outline of the different practices of playful music pedagogy within individual participating teachers' classrooms. The present chapter explores key themes and subthemes identified within cross-case constant comparative analysis and directed content analysis of the data pertaining to the reflective documents, professional learning community transcripts and interviews. This is completed with reference to data analysed and literature from the fields of play-based education and music education.

Three broad themes emerged from the cross-case analysis, related to classroom culture and dynamics, pupil attitudes and pupil learning. Each of the more specific themes, together with identified subthemes are depicted in Table 4, and discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Table 4: Study Themes and Subthemes

Classroom Culture Shift and Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased informality • Shift in degrees of ownership • Comfort zones • Challenging stereotypes
Meaningful Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement, Anticipation and Motivation • Inclusion for pupils with Special Educational Needs
Holistic Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting academic learning and development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Music learning and development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scaffolded learning - Other curricular learning and development • 21st century skill development, well-being and broader learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidence, well-being and social skills

THEME 1: Classroom Culture Shift and Transformation

Classroom culture shift and transformation emerged as a distinct feature of teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy within the current study. This manifested within increased informality in the lessons with participation involving a range of alternative contexts compared to regular lessons. Culture transformation was also evidenced within shifting degrees of ownership for activities. However, this transformation necessitated teachers and pupils move outside their comfort zones on occasion, which indicated deep-rooted yet unconscious tendencies that appeared to transcend the different classroom contexts. The final feature associated with current theme involved a challenging of traditional stereotypes. Each of these areas is explored in detail within the following section.

Increased Informality

The literature review provided a brief exploration of the notion of informal and formal learning. For exploring the sub-theme of increased informality in the learning environments within this study, aligning with Colley et al. (2001), four key aspects should be considered: Location/setting, content, purposes and process. A number of elements within the data were thought to indicate shifts towards increased informality within the playful music lessons facilitated in the study, which are discussed in some detail in the coming sections.

Location/Setting

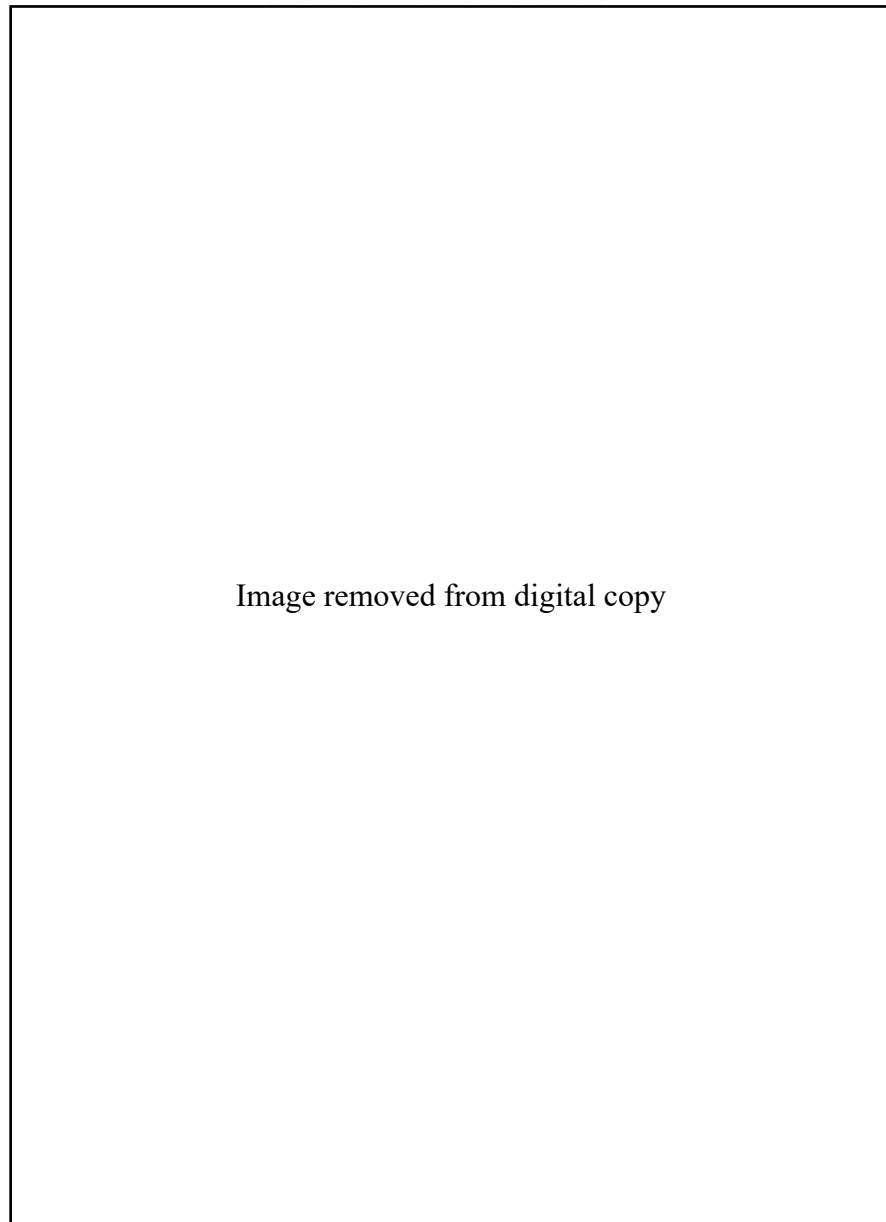
Physical location is a key factor in determining the degree of in/formality associated with learning, with informal learning often equated with settings outside of the norm associated with formal schooling (Colley et al., 2001). However, these authors have suggested there to be scope for incorporating increasingly informal elements “in more formal learning settings” (Colley et al., 2001, p. 31). With school buildings and infrastructure seen to hamper potential to teach the primary school curriculum (Darmody, Smyth & Doherty, 2010) and formality noted in Irish early years primary situations involving predominantly seated, desk work (OECD Directorate for Education, 2004), it was interesting to see that lessons in the present study, involved use of alternative locations to the classroom and less focus on seated activities. With this in mind, it may not be surprising that teachers in this study felt that the play-based music education lessons they facilitated represented “a nice break from lessons” for pupils, away from more traditional and increasingly formal approaches to teaching (Emma: Reflection 3, 2019). Ciara suggested that this scene may have been set visually from the outset in pushing the tables back and sitting in a circle as opposed to sitting at their tables as they usually would have in her music classes, as in every other subject.

Even that one small change...made such a difference with their engagement and the children thought, 'Oh this is going to be something different...This isn't like normal work'

(Ciara: Interview, 2019).

Emphasis on collaborative learning within varying classroom structures meant that participating teachers were often required, like Ciara, to improvise, move furniture or indeed, take their class to other environments as a means of ensuring there was sufficient room for activities. All of the teachers took it upon themselves to move furniture, and source free rooms and environments in their individual school contexts. Figure 13 provides a visual representation of how playful music pedagogy physically became part of classroom practices across the six different teachers' contexts.

Figure 13: Collage of Playful Music Pedagogy from Teachers' Practices



As can be seen in Figure 13, classes of all ages engaged in play-based music education, were unlikely to be seated at their desks with teachers employing didactic and formal methods. On the contrary, they tended to be sitting or standing in whole class, circle activities or in small groups engaging and collaborating with their peers, away from their desks and sometimes even away from their classroom, participating in open-air lessons or lessons in the school hall. The notion of using less formal, outdoor

spaces for playful activities, whilst not always possible in the Irish context given our climate, is reminiscent of the outdoor circle games associated with Froebel (Froebel, 1967; Bruce, 2015). This also recalls Kodály's (1974f, p. 151) perspective that it is preferable for performances "in the open air, on dust-free lawns and not on dusty stages, so that the children should not play for the public but for themselves, or at most, for one another, in alternating groups" with performing for others also emerging within some of the practices. In terms of the broader field of education, use of outdoor spaces for teaching and learning also brings to mind the Finnish playful learning environments (Hyvonen, 2011, p. 49) and work within the NCSE report alluding to potential benefits of outdoor play for the well-being of pupils with special educational needs in the Irish context (Rose et al., 2015).

Movement away from locations, organisational settings and structures may be beneficial, if educators are seeking to provide "balance between the informal and the formal" (Dewey, 1916a, para. 22) increasing the informality associated with music learning (Colley et al., 2001). In reality, however, it was difficult for teachers to make changes to typical classroom structures and seemed particularly so, for those teaching infant classes with limited space, where children were unable to help move desks around. For Anita this often required pre-moving all of the tables while the pupils were in the playground at lunchtime or else moving to the hall. For Suzanne, this tended to involve moving the class to other environments such as the playground or hall for her lessons. It appears that increased informality in lessons in this study was somewhat impeded by the infrastructure and culture surrounding music education and education more generally within the Irish context, which recalls previous research by Gray & Ryan (2016) that "the physical space available for play [in observed Junior and Senior Infant classrooms is] extremely limited" (Gray & Ryan, 2016). However, this does not

appear unique to the Irish context, with previous findings from research by O’Sullivan and Price (2019) into drama and play within the Chinese early years context indicating that head teachers were particularly dubious about the possibility of implementing play-based teaching given space limitations, whilst dealing with large class sizes (O’Sullivan & Price, 2019).

Although the fact that playful music pedagogy was located within the school context, means that they could not be viewed as entirely informal (Colley, 2001), they were situated in learning environments outside of a “directive and formal” classroom setup of “whole class teaching with children sitting quietly at tables” (OECD, 2004, p. 54). This was deemed to indicate movement towards increased informality within teachers’ practices. Having outlined details pertaining to the location and setting of these practices, next is an exploration of content.

Content

Content is deeply related to the nature of learning and its outcomes. For the purposes of the present study, the content of lessons was rarely directed or chosen by the learners as is the case in most educational institutions (Colley, 2001, p. 31). Interestingly, however, aligning with an increasingly informal approach to learning, teachers referred to playful music pedagogical practices as sometimes leading to a range of “serendipitous” outcomes (Colley, 2001, p. 31). This tendency towards serendipity appeared particularly liable to happen within guided forms of musical play such as free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play and free, constructive musical play. In some of these lessons, teachers expressed difficulty understanding responses provided by pupils. For instance, in relation to pupils’ response within one of her lessons, Anita (Interview, 2019) reflected “They got this out of somewhere so you know you have to accept it. You can’t tell them to try again you know.”

The third aspect for exploring increased in/formality in learning is purposes. This is described in some detail in the next section.

Purposes

In reflecting on degrees of in/formality, Colley et al. (2001, p. 31) suggested that purposes concern “the extent to which learning is the prime and deliberate focus of an activity, as in schools”. This is particularly interesting to consider in the context of playful music pedagogy within this study as it appeared that the purposes for the teachers and learners differed. For teachers, playful pedagogy was undoubtedly facilitated with a view to providing musical experiences for teaching and learning of the set curriculum. However, teachers believed some of the pupil learning in this study was ‘subconscious’ for the children in many respects, with the process occurring within “such an enjoyable environment that nobody was like even **realising** that it was [...]a learning task that they were doing” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This suggested that pupils’ engagement in tasks may have aligned with the purpose of playing rather than learning. This recalls Ciara’s (Interview: 2019) suggestion that:

They didn’t even think [...] that they were doing music [...] They just thought that they were playing. And I think like that’s all that children want to do [...] is to play. [...] obviously we wove in the different types of songs, then it was even interesting [...] how they responded differently to if we were doing a song maybe that we’d learn from a book.

Similarly, within the PLC discussions Anita felt Fearne had “hit the nail on the head” when she mentioned that her pupils began inquiring when they would be “doing work” and emphasised that whilst “they think they’re just playing games [...] actually there’s content in there” (Anita: PLC Meeting 3, 2019). This aligns with the conception of children’s play offering an avenue for educational development with adults’ support and guidance (Bruce, 2015; Bruner, 1983; Froebel, 1967; Vygotsky, 1967). In its positionality outside of more distinctly formal educational approaches, some of the

participants suggested that when you facilitate play-based music education, “...you do the games, you do the activities and they think that **all** they’re doing is having fun. And the learning is kind of subconscious, which is ideal” (Anita: Interview, 2019).

However, potentially related to the presence of another purpose/intention on the part of the teachers, that of learning as opposed to simply playing, if somewhat concealed to the pupils at times, some of the teachers’ responses suggested that, while the fun and joy experienced in the lessons may have aligned with Zosh et al.’s (2017) playful characteristics, the fun being experienced in the process was not real fun. They alluded to scenarios where “the children think that they’re having fun...they think that they’re playing” (Anita: Interview, 2019) or the teacher is “Organising the children’s lessons so they feel like they’re playing” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This could be seen to mirror Bruners’ (1983) suggestion that only activities that are free of adult input can truly be classed as play. It also suggests that the teachers in this study viewed the use of play in schools as requiring a shift of some sort to something that whilst “almost like playing with their friends” was not quite the same (Fearne: Interview, 2019).

Process

Finally, considering increased informality in terms of process, there was some movement away from primarily, “didactic, teacher-controlled pedagogic approaches” towards “more democratic, negotiated or student-led approaches” (Colley et al., 2001, p. 30) along a continuum of ownership, within the research (Wright, 2016; Zosh et al., 2017). This area is explored in detail in the next section as it represented a sub-theme within the research.

Shift in Degrees of Ownership

Another feature of classroom culture shift and transformation within the present study involved some shift in degrees of ownership for pupils and teachers in play-based

music lessons. This aligns with the framework for playful music learning presented in chapter 4. It also aligns with the broader research in playful pedagogy and informal music learning viewing ownership as existing along a continuum between entirely free and informal, child-led play, thought particularly difficult to negotiate within the classroom environment, and teacher-directed, formal, ‘non-play’ or work (Wright, 2016; Zosh et al., 2017).

Fearne (Interview, 2019) argued that a shift along a continuum of ownership was an integral part of playful music pedagogy, stating that teachers need to be, “comfortable enough to let go of the old fashioned role of being the only person who is allowed to speak and do as I say approach” for it to work. This was differentiated from other lessons involving more formal approaches to teaching and learning, outlined by Fearne (Interview, 2019) in relation to her previous teaching of the ukulele, “If someone’s talking when I’m talking or if someone’s playing when I’m talking they are in trouble straight away”.

Resonating with the importance of democratic approaches to quality music teaching and learning (Jeanneret and DeGraffenreid, 2012), and indicative of increased informality within the learning environment (Colley et al., 2001), teachers suggested that pupils demonstrated greater ownership of the rules involved in the musical games and practices within their classes more generally.

In relation to the rules involved in games, Emma (Interview: 2019) suggested that rules are an important part of such play where players “know that even though it’s a game there are rules and they have to follow them”. In particular, it appeared that within the musical gamification lessons, children were seen to encourage each other to follow rules and tell each other to “be ready” (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This suggested

that increased ownership of activities may have been an important factor in children being more open to following the rules.

However, these rules would not just apply to children but to teachers as well depending on the role they took within the lessons. Pupils were seen to enjoy the fact that in the musical games-play, when teacher “is [an] active participant” there was an equal chance that she/he “can get knocked out” (Emma: Interview, 2019). This increased ownership of the rules within many of the games and activities was generally seen to manifest in fewer classroom management difficulties. For instance, Ciara (Interview, 2019) suggested that one of the benefits of playful music pedagogy was that she had fewer “classroom management difficulties...because the children were enjoying it” and less likely to think the activities were “boring” and start “fidgeting or messing or trying to catch someone’s eye”. This was mirrored in the other participants’ experiences.

Although there appeared to be an understanding on the part of the teachers as to the voluntary nature of play-based lessons, participants suggested that it was important to set and maintain ground rules within the lessons for health and safety reasons, for classroom management and for ensuring the goals of the lessons/activities were reached. In some ways, recalling Dewey’s understanding that “optimal education exists at a median point between two polarised, yet flawed approaches to education; the first approach with children afforded perpetual freedom with no boundaries and the second in possession of no freedom at all” (Ties, 1988), Suzanne suggested that there needed to be a balance between boundaries and freedom within playful music lessons that children had to understand. She indicated that teachers should “explain to them...what you’re doing and...that you still have to be safe in the classroom” because the lessons don’t “just throw out every rule” (Suzanne: Interview, 2019). In relation to free,

constructive musical play in the human stick notation game, Fearne (PLC Meeting 2, 2019) lamented that pupils were liable to dramatically fall to the ground when taking part in such freer activities, which she felt was not permissible and another reason for reminders in terms of health and safety.

While health and safety concerns are important to bear in mind, by not allowing children the agency to engage playfully with increasingly child-led activities outside of the teachers' conceptualisations of acceptable behaviour, there is also a suggestion that in this case, "play rules as long as adult rules for play are obeyed" (Grieshaber & McArdle, 2010, p. 59). Indeed, considering Bruner's (1986, p. 22) reflection that "aims are as often implicit and in the form of maxims as they are explicitly formulated", one might consider a possibility that teachers were particularly inclined to rely on rules for health and safety as a way to maintain authority and ownership within increasingly child-led lessons. This can be noted when we explore the degree to which teachers could feel outside of their comfort zones within these practices.

Thus, while a degree of cultural shift and transformation appeared in relation to the playful music lessons facilitated, this had implications for teachers and students in this study and involved moving away from traditional norms and out of comfort zones.

Comfort Zones

Thought to be indicative of an underlying culture surrounding teaching and learning in Irish primary schools, the notion of challenging comfort zones emerged as an important element within the present study. Teachers began to recognise their own comfort zones, extending past them or reverting back to areas of perceived confidence at times. They also noted and reflected upon difficulties some children experienced in engaging with freer forms of playful music pedagogy and suggested that this may have required extra support or 'training' for the children.

Ciara reflected that she initially felt out of her comfort zone when commencing the playful music pedagogy in her classroom due to the fact that “the children were...not just sitting at their desks”. She suggested that:

You have a comfort zone as a teacher and you’re nearly used to ok I’m just going to direct from the top of the room (*laughing*) and I suppose [this involved] moving out of that comfort zone and just giving the children a [...] different learner experience...

(Ciara: Interview, 2019).

This notion of providing learners with different learning experiences, recalls Wright’s (2016, p. 212) suggestion that in seeking to negotiate increasingly informal learning approaches, teachers should “be aware of this shifting ground [...] and willing to adapt to this and adopt the most relevant teaching model in the best learning interests of his or her students”.

Indeed, it appeared that adopting increasingly child-led approaches to playful music learning required a degree of adaptation and moving outside of comfort zones for a number of participants. Despite her confidence in musicianship, Anita (Interview, 2019) posited that her level of confidence in facilitating a play-based approach to music education was impacted by the use of the different types of lessons, “Not so much for the content, more for the general management and organisation of different approaches”. She indicated that she was less confident facilitating “the dramatic and the kind of free...lessons” because as a teacher she doesn’t “like to relinquish control...very much”, insinuating that the more child-led lessons required a shift in control and ownership that she was less comfortable with. For this reason, she told the researcher:

I would always... be leaning toward...a nice singing game or... a circle game where we’re all sort of taking turns and we’re all doing the same thing at the same time and I can keep an eye on everyone

(Anita: Interview, 2019).

While this may have allowed the participant to engage with key aspects of the Kodály approach to music education, particularly in relation to singing games, wanting to maintain control of the results of the lessons had implications on this participant's scope to facilitate the increasingly child-led lessons. Interestingly, this sense of discomfort brings to mind Deszpot's (2013, p. 11) assertion that a key element of Kokas pedagogy, with its connection to the freer, more child-centred forms of musical play, is that the "teacher surrenders pedagogical control to the selected music and the movement experience".

Whilst other teachers may not have all agreed with Anita in so many words, given that the bulk of the lessons taught for the duration of the research were more teacher-led than child-directed, it is possible that others may have had a similar mindset. This is notable when we consider incidences of different forms of musical play facilitated within teachers' classroom practices as part of the cross-case analysis. This is demonstrated in Figures 14 and 15, developed as part of the Directed Content Analysis.

Figure 14: Cross-Case Analysis: Incidences of Different Forms of Musical Play Within Lessons Taught

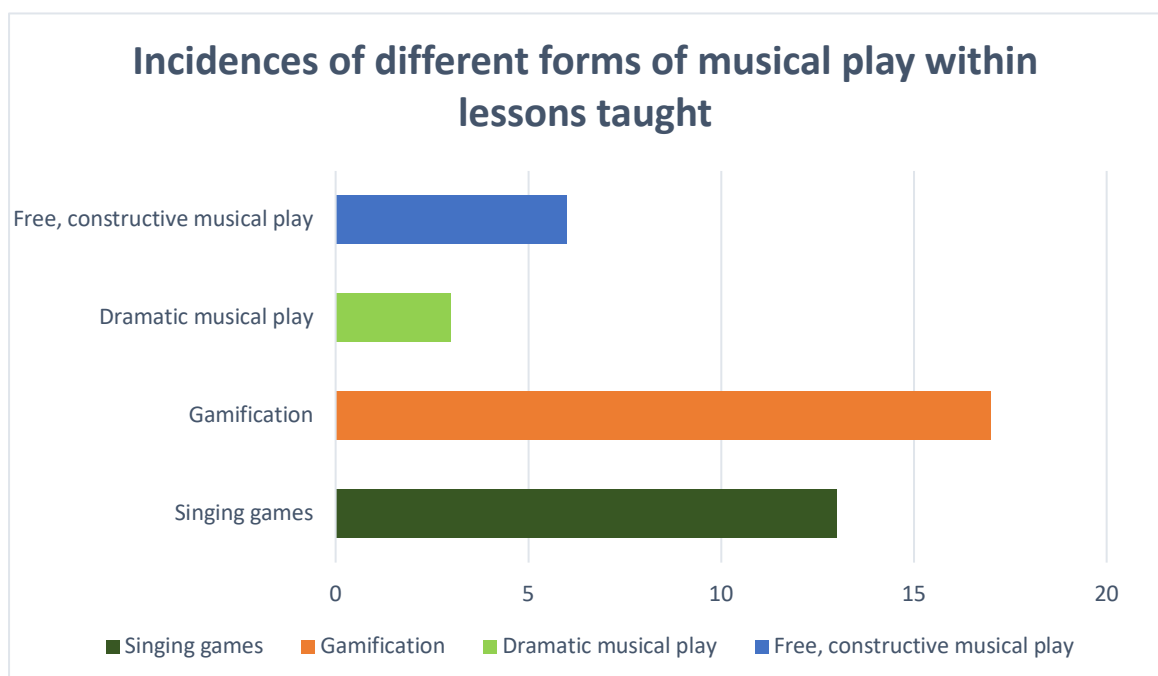
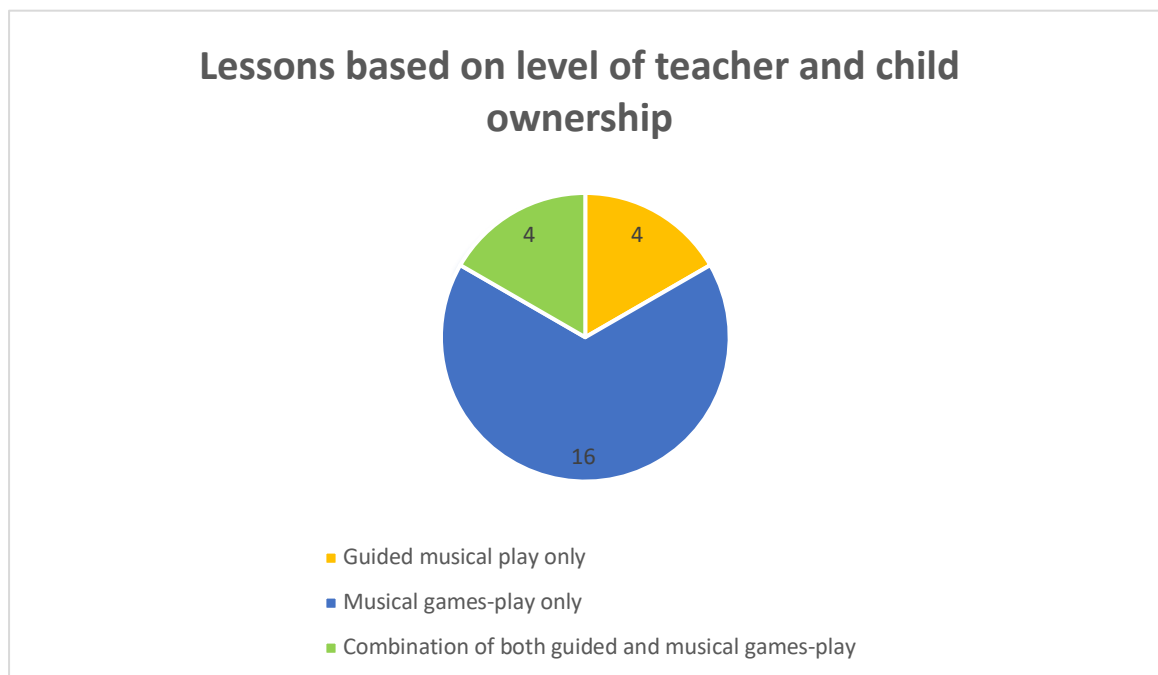


Figure 14 represents the number of different forms of musical play activities adopted by teachers in this study from the 24 reflections provided. Above, each of the 4 different forms of playful musical learning are shown on the Y-axis, with the X-axis representing the number of incidences within teachers' lessons. Free, constructive musical play accounted for 6 of the 39 incidences of playful learning or 15%, and free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play was noted in 3 of the 39 incidences or just below 8%. Conversely, with 17/39 (45%) and 13/39 (33.333%) signifying incidences of engagement with gamification and singing games respectively, these increasingly teacher-scaffolded activities were substantially represented in classroom practices in the present study. Some of the lessons included more than one type of playful music pedagogy, with teachers often opting to commence lessons with a gamification activity in advance of moving on within the lesson.

Figure 15: Lessons Based on Level of Teacher and Child Ownership



Looking behind the data shown in Figure 15, a tendency for participating teachers to facilitate predominantly teacher scaffolded, musical games-play becomes increasingly evident. There were a total of 24 lessons outlined within the teacher

reflections. Of these 24 lessons, 16 or 66.66% entirely consisted of musical-games play, involving singing games and/or musical gamification. Just 4 lessons, or 17% of the total involved a form guided musical play only, while the same percentage of lessons incorporated a combination of both guided musical play and musical games-play. This indicated that half of the lessons that involved some form of guided musical play were used in tandem with the increasingly teacher scaffolded musical-games play, involving singing games or gamification.

This table is particularly interesting following on from research conducted by Pyle & Danniels (2017) in early years settings in the Canadian context, which demonstrated tendencies for a number of participants to completely avoid teacher-scaffolded play when facilitating play-based learning. Indeed, these researchers suggested that “the integration of play-based pedagogy, [was difficult] not because [teachers] did not value play but because they struggled to negotiate a balance between the child-directed play they felt was essential, and the mandated academic standards” of the curriculum, which they found difficult to address (Pyle & Danniels, 2017, p. 280). With this in mind, teachers’ tendency towards increasingly scaffolded musical-play in the present study could potentially be seen to align in some part with cultural expectations pertaining to the value of increasingly child-directed play as children move past the early years (Bergin & Pronin Fromberg, 2009; Kangas et al., 2020; Zhang, 2020). Counter to the results of Pyle & Danniels’ (2017) research, in the present research context, it may be possible that prioritisation of increasingly teacher scaffolded learning was towards “the learning goals” of increasingly academic music literacy learning for children in the primary school (Skolnich Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 179) and associated with Kodály music education.

However, with Ruth (Interview, 2019), Anita (Interview, 2019) and Fearne, initially at least, (Interview, 2019) all commenting on feeling more comfortable implementing singing games and gamification, tendencies towards these areas may also have related to teachers' degree of comfortability utilising increasingly child-led forms of musical play with their classes. When asked about tendencies to avoid other forms of musical play, Ruth (Interview, 2019) explained that her main focus was on "singing games because [she] found that easier". Her comfort facilitating these more teacher-led activities may also have been connected to the fact that she, like the majority of generalist primary school teachers in Ireland (Inspectorate, 2002; Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009), has tended to focus on song-singing as a key part of her teaching. Indeed, emphasis on songs within all of the lessons suggested that the play-based approach aligned with the Irish Music Curriculum (NCCA, 1999a) and the Kodály method which, "If one were to attempt to express [its] essence...in one word, it could only be – *singing*" (Kodály, 1974e, p. 120). Connections to the Kodály concept of music education were also evidenced in use of simple folk songs within the bulk of the lessons. However, given that some of these were supplied to teachers within resource materials, this is not altogether surprising, and Ruth (Reflection 1, 2019) suggested that "any song with a steady beat would have sufficed".

While she said she wouldn't be averse to facilitating freer forms of musical play later on, for the purposes of the research Ruth (Interview: 2019) was afraid that it wouldn't end up as "what was intended" so she "just took the easy way out" with something she knew she could do with ease. Conversely, more confident of her 'academic' musical ability, Anita felt that her senior infant and first class group, "were not responding [to music] effectively using role-play, particularly at the beginning of the lesson". In this sense, they didn't appear to be moving in relation to the music as she

would have expected. Interestingly, the photograph Anita chose to represent her dramatic musical play lesson, was very much in keeping with the notion of ‘pomp and circumstance’ in line with the music chosen, with pupils fanning around ‘celebrities’ in role, suggesting this was deemed an appropriate response. In relation to responses she didn’t believe matched the music, Anita wondered whether the pupils required a degree of preparation in drama and role-play that her senior infant and first class had not quite received prior to this point.

The notion of assessing for a correct response to music in what was nominally a child-led lesson is interesting. In many ways it goes against Kokas’ suggestion that child-centered lessons should encourage pupils to “enjoy creating things together; share the joy and share the efforts with each other...[within an] environment where judgment, classification, comparison, measuring up, or competition [are] unknown concepts.” However, it could be related to the classification of this form of musical play as ‘dramatic’, a decision taken for ease of understanding, but potentially insinuating a need for specific in-role characterisation. Considering the hope that it would allow for dramatic and freer movements, following completion of the research, it was deemed preferable to re-envision this as free kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play.

On the other hand, a sense of right and wrong in terms of assessment of and expectations for guided musical play also emerged within difficulties Anita alluded to previously. The fact that this participant needed to remind herself “that actually what they have come up with isn’t in fact wrong even though it might not be what I imagined they would come up with” indicated a struggle for control on the part of the teacher (Anita: Interview, 2019). This sheds light on tendencies for teachers to have a comfort zone both in terms of lessons facilitated and results and responses expected of pupils. While this may align with the teaching of subject areas like numeracy where there is

often one correct answer, it may require a change of mindset in relation to increasingly creative areas like music and the arts, where in some contexts, there is “no such thing as a “mistake”. What could it be? The others would celebrate her for whatever idea she came up with” (Kokas, 2013, p. 38). Indeed, Anita (Interview, 2019) suggested that the children “got this out of somewhere so [...] you have to accept it. You can’t tell them to try again you know.” In light of Anita’s experience, there is a suggestion that the possibility for classroom cultural transformation and shifts in the degree of ownership within playful music pedagogy is dependent on the degree to which teachers are able and willing to step outside of their comfort zones. Such a perception is increasingly important to consider when we reflect on Bruner’s (1986, p. 22) guidance that the “opportunity cost for inculcating obedience to authority may include not risking innovative solutions in the presence of authority, with the result that we encourage private daring and public banality among those growing up in a generation dominated by [...] contradictory ideal[s]”. With teachers appearing less inclined to allow for activities with increasing degrees of ownership for their pupils, children’s capacity to engage playfully and creatively with music may be impacted. This is indicative of a power struggle associated with playful pedagogy in practice, which has been explored previously in relation to drama education (McCabe & Farrell, 2020).

Interestingly, with Anita representing a confident generalist teacher, with a notion of exactly what she expected from pupils musically, this may have had a role to play in her expectations of the pupils. However, Ciara (Interview, 2019) had a different approach in this area, suggesting that she primarily felt out of her comfort zone:

when I wasn’t completely familiar with the content myself [...] and then it nearly took me a few times and even I was nearly sort of learning as the children were learning also [...] but I think though maybe that for the children as well because they saw me make mistakes that was nearly better [...] clapping some of the rhythms and I made a mistake they were able to help me correct myself.

Ciara believed that this was beneficial for students in coming to terms with making mistakes themselves. However, unlike Anita, this participant did not provide written reflections on child-led forms of musical play for the most part so the comparison is not indicative of how she would have engaged with dramatic musical play with her class. Having outlined teachers' experiences moving outside of their comfort zones, next it is important to consider their perceptions of pupils' experiences in this area.

Recalling Wood's (2014) assertion that some children can struggle with freer forms of play, Fearne (Interview, 2019) suggested that some pupils appeared to be "uncomfortable" with the degree of freedom involved in the guided musical play facilitated in her classroom. This led to a case where children participated with different degrees of comfort. Whilst a number of pupils gradually got really into the lesson or participated in a less enthusiastic fashion whilst still showing grasp of things like the steady beat and some movements, "one or two children...wouldn't join in". It was important for Fearne (Interview, 2019) that she could not "make them do it" because ultimately "it's not a play-based lesson if you're being **forced** to play" highlighting the importance of freedom and agency within play activities (Gray, 2008; Liebschner, 1992; Wood, 2014; Zosh et al., 2017; 2018). In this scenario she stated that those who were less comfortable actually began to walk "around to the beat and a couple of little movements. But they were still keeping the beat as they walked" (Fearne: Interview, 2019).

Following on from Fearne's (Reflection 5, 2019) suggestion that if pupils "had experienced this style of lesson from a young age they would have been more comfortable joining in", an interesting finding that emerged in relation to a number of the participants' data, was a notion that pupils would benefit from 'training' or 'getting

used to' the level of freedom associated with increasingly child-led forms of musical play. This may indicate that children find it increasingly difficult to engage with free, creative forms of learning as they move through an educational system that adapts "educational procedures" to "reproduce" our expectation for developing children, involving "a loss in zest for creating rich and satisfying fantasy" (Bruner, 1986, p. 24). With Anita positing that the freer forms of musical play could be more suited to older classes who "might be more responsible and prepared for the freedom that this approach presents", there may indeed, be an expectation that children can become increasingly capable of responding in a way deemed acceptable as they become enculturated within the Irish education system (Bruner, 1986).

This notion of cultural expectations was further emphasised in the final sub-theme pertaining to classroom cultural shift and transformation. It appeared that in pushing past comfort zones, teachers and pupils began to discover misalignment between commonly-held conceptions about pupil learning, and the reality of their experiences with playful music pedagogy.

Challenging Stereotypes

Stereotypes teachers alluded to that were challenged in relation to the present research included the notion that increasingly 'free' play activities are suitable only for young children, that active learning is suitable only for young children and that music is perceived as a 'girly' subject.

Speaking in relation to playful music pedagogy more generally, though her practices were primarily scaffolded games-play, Ciara (Interview, 2019) suggested that in older classes, the types of learning opportunities provided to children within the present study, may not align with a stereotype that "music is only active [...] as far as second class".

This was a common thread within the research as teachers indicated previous tendencies to have utilised increasingly active and playful methods with younger children, in line with the literature around play more generally (Hall, 2013; Moyles, 2010; NCCA, 2009b; Whitebread & Jameson, 2010). Teachers also indicated surprise at the extent to which the playful pedagogy appeared to work in older classes, which suggests an acceptance that play is not suitable for older children that shifted at least slightly, in line with teachers' experiences in the study.

In some ways, Fearne's practice of guided, dramatic musical play with fifth class shed light on the notion that initial stereotypes regarding the use of increasingly child-directed forms of play with older children may not always be entirely valid. Having used playground games in the past with younger classes, Fearne (Interview, 2019) was surprised at how well received they were by the children in her fifth class stating that "they loved **all** of those lessons...especially the dramatic play" which she "was worried about" at first, and "would never" have done before "with older children". This was particularly interesting from her perspective because "it was lovely to see how my class even though they're fifth class and they have often complained about things being for babies or like they're acting like they're too cool for school. They loved trying to show off all their moves and they loved getting the moment to just dance around the room" (Fearne: Interview, 2019). Such practices were completely out of the norm and pupils appeared to respond favourably to them for the most part.

However, some pupils asked their teacher, "when are we going to do any work? [...] because they're just having a laugh they think" (Fearne: PLC Meeting 3, 2019). Such a suggestion indicates that where there was no scope for discussion and discovery of specific music elements towards increasingly concrete, curricular objectives, teachers could be placed under pressure by pupils to justify the use of increasingly child-led

forms of pedagogy as important for their education - “No. It’s important too” (Fearne: PLC Meeting 3, 2019).

This did not tend to transfer across to the increasingly scaffolded, discovery learning associated with musical games-play. In these lessons, it was easier to eventually “correlate [learning] to music and literacy [...] it’s like with science you let them predict first rather than tell it right we’ll do this and this is what’s going to happen. Let them discover it themselves...” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This suggests that perceptions pertaining to the suitability of different forms of play as children develop may indeed be shared between adults and children aligned with cultural norms associated with the Irish context (Bruner, 1986; Kangas et al., 2020).

Another stereotype that appeared to be challenged by the use of playful music pedagogy was that music is sometimes perceived to be a ‘girls’ subject’ which has been explored by Odena (2009) commenting on musical behaviours, femininity and young boys’ self-esteem. According to Emma (Reflection 2, 2019), “Children who often aren’t engaged in singing activities were much more motivated to participate on an active level rather than passive”. In general, Emma (Interview, 2019) felt that it was the use of musical games and in particular, their competitive elements, which enhanced enjoyment for pupils “who don’t always enjoy music” particularly “boys, who mightn’t be mad on the singing”. She said that music can sometimes be perceived as a “girls’ subject” but “when you’re playing games and things it definitely isn’t”. With Kodály (1974b) emphasising the importance of opening music up to everyone, it is positive to see suggestions that such an approach might support enhanced engagement in music for children that may otherwise not have participated in lessons.

Having outlined the initial theme and subthemes identified, next is a discussion around capacity for playful music pedagogy to facilitate meaningful engagement in the learning process.

THEME 2: Meaningful Engagement

The importance of this theme is underpinned by participating teachers' suggestions that there can be tendencies for some pupils either to avoid, or not to enjoy participation in music education in school more generally.

Engagement, Anticipation and Motivation

A play-based approach was seen to support pupils' inclusion and engagement in music activities to a certain extent, aligning with Csikszentmihalyi's (2014, p. 140) assertion that play can grasp individuals' "undivided attention" in activities they may not typically be motivated towards. In relation to the present study, all of the teachers agreed that pupils in their class enjoyed and were highly engaged in the play-based music education activities facilitated. This aligns with the notion that the "predominant emotions of play are interest and joy" (Gray, 2013, p. 18). This manifested in a great deal of anticipation for lessons, motivation to participate and inclusion of pupils in music activities that were "more open and readily available to everyone" and "different types of learners" (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

Fearne, who implemented all forms of musical play within the research, believed the children in her class really appreciated the variety of different lessons ranging from the more teacher-led singing games and activities to dramatic musical play, movement and free, constructive play. Such anticipation was mirrored in Ruth's experiences where she suggested that a key element of playful music pedagogy, like any play-based education, is that it involves an "intense amount of enjoyment and anticipation" (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This manifested in teachers receiving requests for

more of these games and activities by pupils in their classes who were particularly motivated to take part in lessons with children as young as five years old asking their teachers, “Can we do that again? Can we do that again?” (Suzanne: PLC Meeting 2, 2019) and, “Can we do research today?” (Anita: PLC Meeting 2, 2019). With similar reflections pertaining to pupils’ enjoyment and engagement across all of the contexts, it appeared that pupils were afforded the opportunity to positively engage with music-making within the study, something deVries (2001) has emphasised as integral to the Kodály approach.

The enjoyment, motivation and fun experienced in these lessons was thought to relate to challenges pupils faced as part of the “fun side of music” (Emma: PLC Meeting 2, 2019) which, “like Aistear[...is...] organised for the children that they would be themselves naturally and as they’re as they’re completing the task they’re learning and they’re enjoying themselves (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This recalls Szirányi’s (2014) suggestion that Kodály music education places emphasis on encouraging pupils to approach challenges with joy and delight. So enjoying their experiences, pupils of all ages in the study were said to appear increasingly motivated towards trial and error “because it was a game [...and] they wanted to keep going and see could they get it” (Fearne: Interview, 2019) and whilst they may have found some of activities “very difficult [...at times] they were very much enjoying the numerous attempts” (Anita: Reflection 5, 2019). This aligns with suggestions by Zosh et al. (2017) that learning through play can involve practice, iteration and perseverance for pupils.

Teachers found that the introduction of increased challenges in teacher-led activities in particular “heightened the concentration required but added to the fun element” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This recalls commentators’ assertions that participation in play can lead to a great deal of motivation, flow and “total involvement

with tasks” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 136, 2014; Walsh, 2017). Indeed, it appeared that the challenge associated with some of the games represented a key motivator and source of enjoyment for many of the pupils, particularly those who enjoyed elements of competition within the lessons (Alsawaier, 2018; Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

Suzanne (Interview, 2019) suggested of playful music pedagogy:

I just think it brings the children along [...] It involves every child rather than the few that you know are going to be fine with the book anyways or you know are going to be fine with the traditional way [...] or maybe the children who already do music out of school.

Another way playful music pedagogy appeared to enhance meaningful engagement in relation to music was in relation to including those with special educational needs.

Inclusion of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

In Fearne’s fifth class, the approach was seen to work for pupils with language difficulties who “picked up what was going on very quickly [in the lessons and]...were happy to join in with the rest of the class”. This recalls work from O’Sullivan and Price (2019) in early years contexts in China, where they found play to support pupils’ participation and learning prior to the development of language skills. Suzanne also suggested that the approach was “inclusive for everybody” even pupils with specific disabilities, where a pupil in her class with cerebral palsy was enabled to participate in the circle game for the song ‘See the pony galloping’ and act the part of the pony, moving and going around.

She loved it. She didn’t need the walker or whatever. She loved being the horse and getting faster and slower (Suzanne: Interview, 2019).

However, this required specific differentiation, whereby Suzanne was willing to hold the young girl’s hand and guide her in participating. This level of teacher support and willingness to adapt has been shown to be invaluable by parents of pupils with SEN

in Irish contexts (Rose et al., 2015). Suzanne (Interview, 2019) also commented that the approach “seemed to have got” another girl in her class, who is often distracted, reluctant to do any schoolwork and “goes to a special teacher for learning support”. Again, demonstrating alignment of playful music pedagogy along a continuum between work and play, Suzanne suggested that the young girl had been “actually...loving it...and getting involved” within the music lessons because “she feels like...it’s a more of a game rather than work”. This recalls the recent NCSE report on inclusion (Rose et al., 2015, p. 141) which alluded to the child with “difficulties engaging in classroom tasks” who, himself expressed a need for outdoor play in his school context, “we don’t play out loads, I just really want to just get outside and play a lot. It really pulls me down”.

Although play therapy has been used to support children with special needs in the realm of personal, social and emotional development (The Irish Play Therapy Association, 2019), minimal research has explored the role of play-based education as a means of creating an increasingly inclusive environment for these children. Within the present research, teachers suggested that participation in singing games involved an inherent degree of peer scaffolding and support for development of pulse from other children’s modelling (Ciara: Interview, 2019), which aligns with suggested benefits of singing games as part of children’s free musical play, previously hypothesised not to transfer to classroom practices of singing games (Roberts, 2018).

Connections between playful lessons and inclusion for pupils has not been explored in detail within the literature thus far. However, a special education teacher pointed to experiential learning through play with a flexible approach to curriculum as being integral for pupils in special schools within the NCSE longitudinal report on inclusion of pupils with SEN in Irish schools (Rose et al., 2015). Interestingly in this

same report it was argued by a parent that “the older” pupils get “the more they [are] excluded” from activities in mainstream settings (Rose et al., 2015, p. 109). This could potentially relate to tendencies to move away from active learning as children move up through the primary school, highlighted by Ciara previously.

THEME 3: Holistic Learning

The final theme identified in this research aligned with the literature around play-based education more generally (Danniels & Pyle, 2018; Hammond & Foster, 2018). This was that teachers believed their practices of play-based music education offered scope for pupils to learn and develop across a range of domains, academic and otherwise, scaffolded by their teachers’ planning and practices.

Academic Learning and Development

Participating teachers outlined scope for playful music pedagogy to support pupils’ musical learning and development in addition to that across a range of other subjects. Within this study, emphasis was predominantly placed on pupils’ academic music learning and development within the playful music lessons taught, aligned with the conception of playful learning underpinning the research. To a lesser extent, scope for integrated learning of other curricular areas was also evidenced. Importantly, as referred to previously in terms of purpose of the lessons facilitated in the present study, for teachers, play was not necessarily viewed as important in and of itself. Instead, it was viewed as a vehicle for supporting and enhancing the learning process aligning with the notion that “learning through play can happen [...] when adults or aspects of the environment structure the play situation towards a particular learning goal” (Zosh et al., 2017, p. 13).

Active Music Learning and Development

Playful music lessons implemented by teachers within the study were very much aligned with the 1999 Music Curriculum, covering all of the strands: Listening and Responding, Composing and Performing, within their lessons, often at the same time. This was evidenced within the previous chapter, with integration between curricular strands and between musical elements and concepts, emerging throughout participants' experiences. Houlahan & Tacka (2015, p. 2) have suggested that a key feature of Kodály music education should involve placing emphasis on active pupil engagement across "a combination of music making, singing, creating rhythmic and vocal accompaniment to songs, and active listening". Such a combination of musical activities within playful music pedagogical practices was something that led Suzanne (Interview, 2019) to describe this as an "all-round approach".

Within the music lessons facilitated by teachers in the study, learning outcomes related to a range of musical elements, namely: pulse, rhythm and duration, pitch, structure and form, timbre, tempo and texture. Emma (Interview, 2019) reflected that participation in playful music pedagogy, in particular musical games-play, was "absolutely brilliant for teaching the difference between rhythm and pulse" something she herself had struggled with previously. Aligning with assertions by Kodály music educators that such an approach to music education provides scope for enhancing "children's singing [and sense of] pitch" significantly improving "rhythmic skills [...], music literacy" and sense of texture through Kodály-based practices (deVries, 2001, p. 24), the participants in this study emphasised particular scope for the approach to support learning related to rhythm, pitch and pulse.

However, as well as linking across curricular strands, the learning associated with the playful lessons also tended to be perceived to incorporate elements from across

the music curriculum. Suzanne (Interview, 2019) reflected that the children “were learning all the [musical] skills at the same time as the contents of [the activity]”. This was echoed by Ciara (Professional Learning Community Meeting 3, 2019) who suggested playful music pedagogy offered scope to tick “so many boxes off [...] the curriculum [...where] you’re [...] doing those rhythms [...] well that’s them composing, you’ve done [...] song-singing, you’re doing [...] tempo, you’re doing [...] pitch, you’re doing [...] rhythms. You’re doing so many different things” in any one lesson. However, perhaps related to the span of contributions to pupils’ learning thought associated with practices in the study, Ciara (Interview, 2019) indicated that in offering opportunities for pupils to get “a sprinkling of everything”, it could be difficult at times to identify one specific learning goal or objective in a lesson (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

In addition to the span of musical learning thought associated with playful music pedagogy, teachers believed that playful music pedagogy offered means of supporting a more in-depth understanding of music “rather than just the theoretical idea of it” (Anita: Interview, 2019) related to the active and experiential nature of the lessons. This notion of active, experiential learning through play aligns with work by Bruce (2015) though her work has tended to focus on experiences of very young children, while the emphasis on integration across strands recalls the value placed on thematic and contextual learning in the Aistear programme (NCCA, 2009). Moreover, Anita and Fearne (Interviews, 2019) separately noted that musical games-play in particular provided teachers with increasingly concrete means of achieving curricular objectives and assessing pupils’ associated learning and achievement. This is interesting to consider given the degree of contention in the literature pertaining to assessment in music education (Murphy, 2007).

When learning songs via playful music activities, a number of teachers indicated increased tendency that pupils would actively engage. This made it all the more likely that learning objectives could be met by the whole class (Emma: Interview, 2019; Fearne: Interview, 2019) who were open “to a different type of learning” (Ciara: Interview, 2019) from the outset. However, the degree to which the purposes of the activities equated to ‘learning’ differed from pupils to teachers, with suggestions that “what came first was the game, and then the music” (Ciara: Interview, 2019).

Interestingly, while the children were deemed to be open to a different type of learning, the extent to which teachers engaged with the more child-led forms of musical play, and in particular free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play, may have limited scope for pupils to experience more embodied musical learning aligned with increasingly free movement (Kokas, 1999, 2013).

Recalling the previously discussed subthemes of continua of ownership and movement outside of teachers’ comfort zones, Anita (Interview, 2019) shared that initial lessons, where pupils are offered increased ownership, could be “a bit of a disaster” where ultimately the children don’t end up “achieving the objectives at the end because it was crowd control”. This recalls previous research suggesting adults tendencies towards adopting “rules, and routines [... to protect] against the potential anarchy of the children” (Löfgren & Ehn, 2010, p. 84).

Having outlined examples of music learning associated with practices of playful music pedagogy in the present study, next an overview is provided of the process of teacher scaffolding involved in the process. As expected, this appeared to represent an integral element underpinning pupils’ learning, understandable given the emphasis on scaffolding within both guided musical play and musical games-play along the framework for playful music learning (Zosh et al., 2017).

Scaffolded Learning

The bulk of the lessons taught in the research appeared to emphasise the role of teachers in modelling and scaffolding their pupils' musical skill development with a marked focus on literacy development, particularly in the older classes. The hope was that pupils would be afforded the opportunity to experience musical concepts through playful activities such that they could be extended musically in subsequent lessons. Anita (Interview, 2019) suggested that when pupils experience musical concepts through "play-based" activities "on an unconscious level" it makes it much easier later on to "fly through the technical stuff because they have such an inherent experience of what that technical concept is". Initial lessons across all of the contexts tended to involve focus on musical games-play, aligning with Hargreaves' (2009, p. 215) suggestion that the initial priority for music teaching should be "the intuitive experience and enjoyment of music" such that the "acquisition of formal musical skills occurs inductively".

Forms of musical games-play, in particular, were seen to provide enjoyable, motivating and experiential means of scaffolding pupils' musical development, understanding and application in this research. This appeared to require a degree of teacher-led discussion following engagement, which recalls the second stage of the Kodály approach to music teaching: Presentation (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015). Emma (Interview, 2019) spoke about how she was in a position to "teach [musical concepts] through play and then bring them together and then...spend the time to actually talk about it and point it out". Ruth (Interview, 2019) also felt that there was a need for "a bit of...gentle nudging in the right direction" on the part of the teacher to support pupils in correlating playful learning activities "to music and literacy or musical education". This was seen to allow pupils to discover the musical relevance of what they had

experienced by bringing “it down to a very simple level” scaffolded with “lots of little steps” such that it was “attainable to them” (Ruth: Interview, 2019).

In many ways, teachers’ experiences and practices appeared to align with Dewey’s (1916b, para. 3) stages “Subconscious preparation, presentation of new subject matter and application” and for the most part, in the study, this was evidenced in modelling and scaffolding pupils’ musical development, rather than “being up at the whiteboard and pounding out, ‘this is what tempo is’ and getting them all mixed up” (Ruth: Interview, 2019). This focus may have been related to emphasis placed on such elements within the PD workshop and shared PLC discussions given alignment with the Kodály staged-approach (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

For pupils, this scaffolded approach was seen to allow for moments of discovery in meaningful learning when, pupils would come to realise their development of (musical) literacy and understanding.

It's nice to see their reactions when they see the reason why you're doing stick notation...and clapping out the rhythms and then eventually I've shown some girls the music to 'Hey Ho, Nobody Home'. I just showed them that they knew how to read that. I blew it up really big on the board and my class were like, 'Oh we know how to read that music.' Because they're so familiar with the stick patterns, the stick notation

(Fearne: Interview, 2019)

Use of musical games-play alongside structured teaching and presentation of musical elements and literacy played a role in enabling pupils to discover their capacity for musicianship, meaningfully “tap[ping] into their existing knowledge and spur[ring] them to make connections” (Zosh et al., 2017, p. 21). The degree of emphasis placed on active learning and discovery, scaffolded by teachers within these lessons may have been seen to underpin the degree of engagement experienced by the pupils as previously discussed, potentially allowing for “a deeper, conceptual understanding”

(Zosh et. al, 2017, p. 23) as teachers' suggested. In this sense, the approach tended to involve: "A combination of [musical] play (to encourage confidence and creativity) alongside teaching/modeling (to introduce and develop new concepts and skills)" (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010, p. 105) followed by opportunities to practice and consolidate learning, within increasingly child-led forms of musical play.

From this, in the majority of the classes, guided musical play was incorporated into practices to encourage pupils' participation in musical composition activities building on prior experiences and knowledge. This was in keeping with Houlahan & Tacka's (2015, p. 26) suggestion that, composition "activities need to be correlated to the repertoire being studied and presented sequentially". Such a spiral and scaffolded approach to music learning was evidenced across all teachers' practices in relation to the research and was tailored for junior and senior classes in line with the expectations of the degree of music literacy expected and aligned with the music curriculum.

At the younger stages, having previously explored the timbres of different percussion instruments or the musical element tempo respectively, Anita and Suzanne encouraged pupils to create thematic musical compositions showcasing these different elements aligning with stories and content being explored across subjects. Conversely, for older pupils, at a more advanced level, free, constructive musical play involved children composing and improvising short melodies and rhythmic patterns building on from previous work on pitch and rhythm respectively. However, aligned with the notion of guided play requiring that teachers encourage children's learning through play within "a prepared environment and with adult scaffolding" (Skolnick Weisberg et al., 2016, p. 177), Fearne (Interview, 2019) described the need to provide children with the "basic jigsaw pieces" and encouraging them to play. Following this, the children could "call

[the] teacher over and say look what we did” placing the teacher in a position to extend the pupils’ learning within their ZPD.

Teacher is like, ‘Oh clap that for me’...and if they see that there’s too many beats per bar you can be like, ‘Oh come on there’s 5 beats in this 4/4 bar here, what can you do to change it?’

(Fearne: Interview, 2019)

Interestingly, there was also a degree of scaffolding inherent to the PD involved in the present study. As noted within teachers’ practices of playful pedagogy, it became quite apparent that the role of the researcher was to provide participants with the key building blocks needed for engaging with musical play in the initial workshop. Following from this, in a scaffolded manner, like pupils, teachers engaged in active learning, were encouraged to engage creatively and playfully with playful music pedagogy and supported in their application whilst collaborating and sharing within a PLC. In many ways, this scaffolded approach may have set the scene for the research from the outset, encouraging participants to engage similarly within their classrooms.

Suzanne (Interview, 2019) commented on the benefit of the initial “music day [which was] great [...] to get ideas” and the value of “when we came back together [within the PLC and...] shared [...] different things that we were doing”. This was seen to be to make the notion of facilitating music education in the older classes, in particular, seem much more “manageable and so easy to do” than her previous experiences.

Having outlined scope for a play-based approach to support musical learning in a natural way across the primary school, next it is important to consider its connection to learning in other curricular areas.

Other Curricular Areas

Although primary focus was on music education within lessons facilitated in this study, Drama, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Mathematics, English and Science were integrated and touched upon within a process of subservient integration in many of the lessons (Bresler, 1995). Cognisant of previous research indicating scope for Kodály music education to ‘transfer’ to learning across other subject areas, it is not necessarily surprising that teachers’ perceived this to be the case within the present study (Goopy, 2013). This section specifically explores integration and development in relation to literacy, numeracy and motor skills before exploring relevance to broader learning and development.

As described within the interim review of the Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life Strategy, a key directive of this strategy was unsurprisingly to increase time spent on literacy and numeracy, through integration “of literacy and numeracy skills in all curriculum areas” (DES, 2017, p. 35). In general, literacy was the primary focus of integration within the study, which may have aligned with tendencies to view this as of utmost importance for pupils, in line with policy initiatives in the Irish context discussed previously (DES, 2011a, 2017; O’Flynn, 2011).

Anita expressed an understanding that “literacy and oral language” have an important role for infants within playful music lessons. Whilst engaging in a music listening gamification activity with her composite class of senior infants and first class based on identifying different musical instruments based on the timbre, Anita sought to develop children’s oral language skills, asking questions like, “Why do you decide it was drum?”. Touching also on science education, this led to responses such as, “I knew it didn’t sound like metal”. Similar emphasis was evidenced in Suzanne’s context with younger pupils, where she spent a good deal of time discussing the language of tempo

and building pupils' awareness of new vocabulary within the songs and resources utilised across all of her lessons before exploring constructive musical play in reference to a story from a well-known picture book.

The benefits of integrated language learning through playful practices have been highlighted within educational theory (Bruner, 1983; Vygotsky, 1974). Moreover, such learning is integral to policy at early childhood level within the Irish context (Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE), 2006; Primary Developments, NCCA, & Department of Education and Skills, 2015; Shiel, Cregan, McGough & Archer, 2012).

However, perceived scope for integrated learning across other curricular areas did not appear to be completely unique to the younger classes in this study. Emma believed a strength of playful music pedagogy was its potential to naturally connect to other curricular areas suggesting that there was scope for working on “vocabulary development, rhythm and maths” with her 4th class pupils drawing connections between fractions and music notation in the middle of her game of rhythm bingo (Emma: Interview, 2019). Moreover, aligning with the new Primary Language Curriculum (Primary Developments, NCCA, & Department of Education and Skills, 2015), encouraging playful and creative use of language in the senior classes, within composing activities Emma reflected that the children in her class had “an opportunity to develop literacy skills such as rhyme and vocabulary” (Emma: Reflection 6, 2019).

Aside from literacy and numeracy, teachers also referred to engagement in aspects associated with Physical Education (Dance and Movement) in the majority of the playful music lessons carried out as part of the study. This manifested in pupils passing objects to others on the pulse, using their bodies to identify the pitch of music, jumping in and out of hula hoops, dancing, performing actions, galloping like horses,

chasing one another in cat and mouse games and using their bodies in response to music. Owing to this, a number of teachers suggested that some of the lessons afforded pupils the opportunity to develop motor-skills and coordination. This recalled Houlahan and Tacka's (2015, p. 131) suggestion that singing games place pupils in a position to "absorb a number of basic movement activities". It also aligned with previous research findings indicating that engagement in movement with music can enhance fundamental locomotor skills in tandem with rhythmic development (Derri, Tsapakidou, Zachopoulou & Kiomourtzoglou, 2001). If playful music pedagogy indeed offers scope for further supporting pupils in developing fundamental movement skills (FMS), it might be worth consideration given recently documented "absence of proficiency across all FMS components" on the part of Irish primary school children (Behan, Belton, Peers, O'Connor & Issartel, 2020, para. 33).

Whilst teachers alluded to scope for integrated and cross-curricular learning within play-based lessons facilitated within the study, arguably, many of these could also have existed within non-play-based but similarly active, engaging music education lessons as well (NCCA, 1999a) aligning with the previously documented benefits of Kodály music education more generally (Goopy, 2013). Having provided an outline into the academic learning and development that was perceived to constitute much of the learning alluded to by teachers within this study, next is important to explore how the lessons were perceived to contribute to pupils' broader learning and development.

Broader Learning and Development

Kokas (1999, p. 86) once said "Do we teach music? No. We teach children and we heal. We inspire, help, encourage, and strengthen with music". While she was passionate about music education, she believed that it also had the potential to impact children on a much broader level. Teachers in this study suggested that pupils worked

towards developing “periphery life-skills” (Anita: Interview, 2019) as part of the process, outside of those connected with more formal and academic learning. This aligns with Goopy’s (2013, p. 72) reference to there being “firm foundation to advocate the ‘extra-musical effects’ and benefits of Kodály music education” which, is seen to “nourish the learning of skills and ways of thinking that correlate to other areas of learning.”

Some of the learning referred to within teachers’ reflections and interviews during the course of the present study was thought to align with those associated with 21st century learning (Fadel, 2008; Qian & Clark, 2016). These were primarily associated with two key domains: Learning and Innovation, and Life and Career skills (Fadel, 2008). Drawing from teachers’ references to pupil learning, Table 5 provides an overview of some skills referred to by teachers in relation to their perceptions of contributions to pupils’ broader learning through participation in playful music pedagogy and presents them next to 21st century skills identified by Fadel (2008). Below this table is a brief overview making reference to direct quotations from the participants before an more in-depth discussion pertaining to perceived development of pupils’ confidence, well-being and social skills.

Table 5: Comparison of 21st Century Skills and Those Thought to be Encouraged and Developed Through Participation in Playful Music Activities

21st Century Skills (Fadel, 2008)	Skills Worked on Within Playful Music Pedagogical Practices
Learning & Innovation Skills	
Critical thinking & Problem solving	Critical thinking
Creativity & Innovation	More creative
Communication & Collaboration	Cooperation, Listening, Social Skills, Teamwork
Life & Career Skills	
Flexibility & Adaptability	Dealing with mistakes
Initiative & Self-Direction	Perseverance, Patience, Independence, Confidence, Focus
Social & Cross-Cultural Skills	Listening, Social Skills, Teamwork
Productivity & Accountability	Patience, Focus
Leadership & Responsibility	Decision-making
Other Skills	
	Memory
	Self-esteem
	Coordination, Motor Skills
	Well-being, Stress-relief

Fadel (2008, p. 14) has considered “critical thinking”, “problem-solving”, “creativity”, “communication” and “collaboration” to represent 21st century skills aligned with learning and innovation. These recall Qian and Clarke’s (2016) overview of important skills that can be developed through games play. In the present study, creativity was deemed to result from children’s engagement in increasingly child-led forms of musical play (Fearne: Interview, 2019). This was primarily noted within composition activities across teachers’ practices in the present study. Given the

emphasis on group-work over and above what has been previously shown to exist within music lessons in Ireland previously (Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009), it is perhaps not surprising that teachers indicated a good deal of scope for pupils to develop, “cooperation” (Emma: Reflection 2, 2019), “active listening” (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019), social skills (Anita: Reflection 2), in addition to “working more as a team” (Fearne: Interview, 2019) within playful music lessons. This mirrors the some of literature more generally in relation to development of cooperative skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2003; Liu, Karp & Davis, 2010).

As well as skills associated with learning and development, Fadel (2008, p. 16) reflected on the importance of “flexibility & adaptability”, “initiative & self-direction”, “social & cross-cultural skills”, “productivity & accountability” in tandem with “leadership & responsibility” for the 21st century. While these were not seen word-for-word in teachers’ reflections, a number of these skills were viewed to be related to scenarios and skill development outlined by teachers. Demonstrating adaptability and flexibility in their practices, pupils of all ages and indeed, teachers themselves demonstrated tolerance for dealing with mistakes within increasingly playful lessons and games. Ciara (Interview, 2019) described scenarios where she would “make mistakes” within lessons and children would “know that it’s okay to make mistakes as well”. Similarly, Fearne (Interview, 2019) noted that “if someone made a mistake passing the pencil on the beat...everyone laughed at that ‘cause it was all part of the fun” and Anita recounted that her “class found the [...] activity very difficult but were very much enjoying the numerous attempts” (Anita: Reflection 5, 2019). These findings recall Qian and Clarke’s (2016, p. 5) suggestion that games are “able to promote meaningful learning opportunities” by offering “challenge [...] self-expression, discovery, immediate feedback, clear goals, player control, immersion, collaboration,

competition, variable rewards and low stakes failure. In addition to this, relevant to leadership, productivity and accountability in this area, Anita (Reflection 2, 5, 2019) suggested that pupils strengthened their “decision-making” and “patience”, while Ruth (Reflection 2, 2019) highlighted the fact that children demonstrated “concentration” within musical games-play activities.

These 21st century skills deemed integral for future workforces (Fadel, 2008), align with those sought within the government Action Plan for Education (DES, 2019) and are viewed as key learning goals for pupils in schools around the world. In addition to this, they have been emphasised by the LEGO Corporation within documents highlighting the benefits of play-based learning (Zosh et al., 2017). With 21st century skills deemed integral for contemporary pupils (DES, 2019; Fadel, 2008), the notion that they may potentially be developed through participation in playful music pedagogy is worthy of further exploration.

Aside from those skills aligning with Fadel (2008), teachers also referred to development of other skills including “memory” (Ruth: PLC Meeting 3, 2019), motor-skills as discussed previously, in tandem with enhancing self-esteem and well-being. With emphasis on “resilience and wellbeing” within the Action Plan for education (DES, 2019, p. 12) and the emphasis on “socially interactive” elements of playful practices alluded to by Zosh et al. (2017) previously, it was deemed appropriate to focus on pupils’ development of confidence, well-being and social skills as part of this analysis.

Development of Confidence, Well-being and Social Skills

Confidence

Kokas (1999) argued that “In the education which concentrates on achievements, the self-esteem of the less successful can be seriously injured”.

Interestingly, the development of confidence emerged as a common element within the research. Ciara (Interview, 2019) alluded to a sense that students in her 4th class “felt that they were actually doing it right”, which she suggested may have been partially related to the easily accessible nature of the songs utilised in the lessons. However, this was not something only associated with older children. With her younger class, Anita described pupils’ “immense” pride in themselves as they began to achieve within play-based games and activities (Anita: Reflection 1, 2019), with “a massive confidence booster for their music skills” (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019). Yet, it wasn’t just in music skills that this confidence was thought to emerge. Fearne (Reflection 3, 2019) suggested that repetitions of songs and activities led to a growth in the “children’s confidence in themselves” and Ruth (Interview, 2019) suggested that pupils came to realise they “could achieve...learning outcomes that perhaps they would have thought were unattainable to them or that were beyond them”.

Well-being

As well as encouraging pupils’ development of self-esteem and confidence, Fearne drew attention to the possibility that pupils’ participation in these lessons may have offered an opportunity to relieve pupils of stresses and anxieties they may be holding onto in their everyday lives. As the only participating teacher working in a DEIS school in the inner city, who suggested that classroom management and pupil behaviour tended to be problematic in many lessons, in respect of the play-based music lessons she taught, Fearne said:

I enjoy the lessons themselves. I enjoy when the whole class are singing together. And you can see the looks on their faces that everyone is enjoying themselves and kind of letting go of anxiety or issues when the whole class are all together we’re all singing there’s a lovely moment and that’s really enjoyable to be the teacher who started that and you’re part of it as well

(Fearne: Interview, 2019).

This may be seen to indicate that pupils began to let go of stress, at least for a short period of time, whilst participating within the lessons, a notion that was not unique to Fearne's context. Its wording also recalls the notion of a teaching moment referred to by Ruth previously signalling something relatively special that occurred in these contexts. Ruth (Interview, 2019) also suggested that there was a "wave of relief" in her classroom whenever she would begin or even mention taking part in the play-based music lessons. This may have been related to Fearne's suggestion that pupils were not "put on the spot" (Fearne: Reflection 3, 2019) and mistakes were seen as a part of the process or laughed at as "part of the fun" (Fearne: Interview, 2019) within what Emma classed as a more "relaxed" approach (Emma: Interview, 2019) recalling the informality discussed previously. In recent guidelines for mental health in Irish primary schools (National Educational Psychological Service et al., 2015), well-being has been described as:

the presence of a culture, ethos and environment which promotes dynamic, optimal development and flourishing for all in the school community. It encompasses the domains of relationship, meaning, emotion, motivation, purpose, and achievement. It includes quality teaching and learning for the development of all elements related to healthy living whether cultural, academic, social, emotional, physical or technological with particular focus on resilience and coping (p. 9).

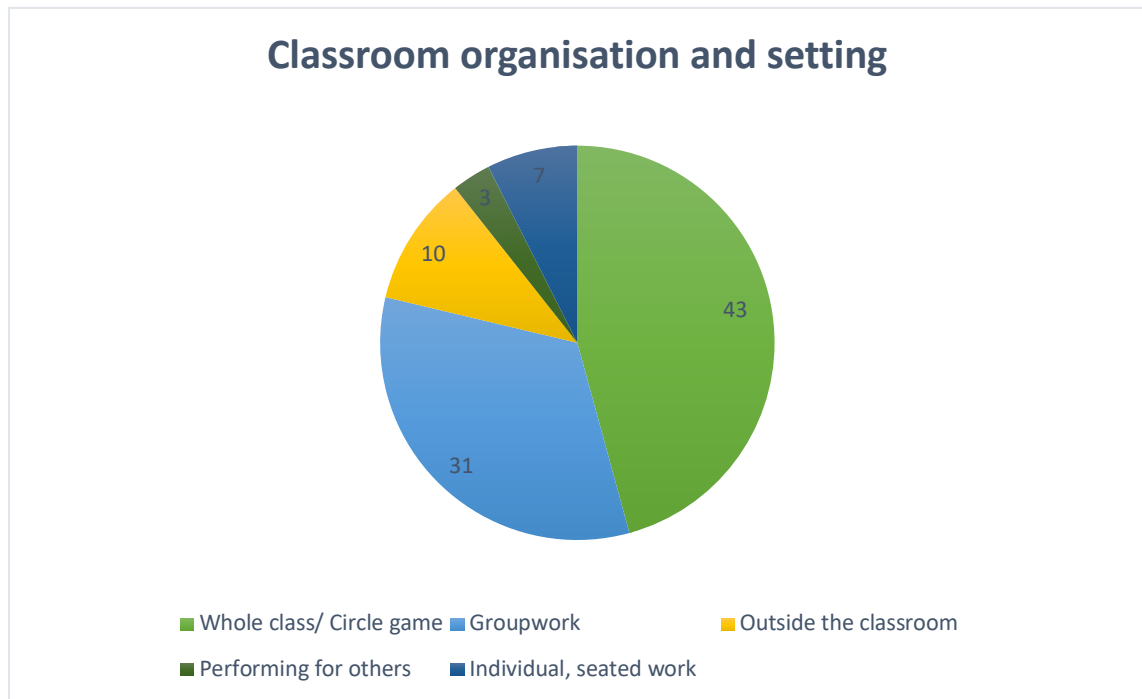
With this in mind, the notion that playful music activities may contribute to pupils' participation in an environment that develops emotional well-being and, as is outlined below, social skills.

Social Skills

Social development has been seen as an important positive consequence of play-based learning across the continuum (Pyle & Danniels, 2017). Opportunities for social development and engagement were plentiful within the lesson facilitated as part of this study given that classroom organisation related to the lessons in this study primarily

involved children out of their seats and working together. Figure 16, with units of measurement referring to the different forms of classroom organisation associated with the different lessons taught by all of the teachers in the study, provides a clear picture of this.

Figure 16: Classroom Organisation and Setting



Upon coding teachers' reflections and photographs of playful music pedagogy in practice, 94 units of meaning pertaining to differing classroom organisation and context were identified. 43 of these, or 46% of the total, involved whole class/circle game activities. 31 units of meaning were coded to groupwork with this increasingly collaborative classroom organisation comprising 33.33% of the overall. Given documented concerns that “the physical space available for play [in observed Junior and Senior Infant classrooms is] extremely limited” (Gray & Ryan, 2016), it is not surprising that 10 of the units of meaning in the present study, representing 11% of the total, were attached to situations outside of the classroom context, within the school hall

or playground. This aligned with concerns reported by teachers that conducting playful lessons involved increased restructuring and flexibility on their part. Interestingly, within the present study were just 7 units of meaning (just under 7%) coded to seated work, which tended to be individual, within the content analysis. These primarily involved pupils participating in the gamification activity rhythm BINGO or composing individual pieces of music. Finally, 3 units of meaning related to pupils formally engaged in performing and listening to others, generally within groupwork contexts.

As we can see from the above chart, predominant use of collaborative and whole-class work over individual, seated work was stark within lessons facilitated by the teachers in the study, indicating movement away from formal teaching methods previously associated with didactic practices in the Irish context (OECD Directorate for Education, 2004). Perhaps related to the use of such collaborative lesson structures, and aligned with Zosh et al.'s (2009) suggestion that playful learning can bolster social relationships, Anita suggested that in tandem with pupils' music learning, "They also strengthened their interpersonal skills of turn-taking, active listening and decision-making" (Anita: Reflection 2, 2019) with lessons requiring "concentration, team-work and patience" of the children (Anita: Reflection 5, 2019). Similarly, Fearne (Interview, 2019) suggested that her class were "all very united" and "working more as a team" when taking part in games and were proud of their whole class group for "everyone singing" and performing what they had learned for other teachers. This sense of team-work was common throughout a number of the teachers' experiences and recalls Kokas' (1999) suggestion that:

Although every child is entailed with different abilities—under individual ways through music are also different— it is possible to teach them together in groups, because even with their contrary tendencies, they supplement each other. Inspired by music, they are able to tune into each other's wavelengths (p. 24).

An increasingly collaborative mindset appeared within Ciara's (Interview, 2019) experiences, where "instead of just working on their own", pupils were involved in what could be described as "peer-tutoring" and helping one another. Similarly, Suzanne highlighted examples of senior infant pupils teaching peers who had missed previous lessons how to participate in play-based music education activities within their free-play in yard time. Indeed, whilst they "were in the playground practicing it... they were teaching other children in the other classes" as well. In this scenario, arguably the use of teacher-led musical play encouraged pupils to "become more musical" (Shehan Campbell, 2010, p. 248) taking ownership of the singing games outside of formal settings within their own free play (Marsh, 2006).

Summary

This chapter has shed light on the results of the cross case analysis, drawing on those discussed in relation to individual teachers, but considering them as part of the broader study playful music pedagogical practices. It has pinpointed three key themes suggesting a need for cultural transformation to adopt playful music pedagogy, scope for meaningful engagement on the part of the pupils and potential for holistic learning and development scaffolded by teachers. The next chapter considers these findings with reference to the initial research questions that guided the study. It discusses key issues arising from the analysis and provides an overview of stakeholders to whom the research may be of interest, as well as limitations associated with the study and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Following steps taken in the field of play more generally to understand a range of different applications of playful pedagogy to support the learning process, this research sought to gain increased understanding in relation to how play might become part of the music education practices of teachers in Irish primary schools. This was thought to represent one way of increasing scope for playful practices across the primary school in the Irish context (Sahlberg, 2017) whilst also increasing opportunities for active and playful music learning within teachers' practices.

The introductory chapter set the scene for this research by providing an overview into the current state of affairs in relation to playful pedagogy. It explored a policy rationale for playful pedagogy as situated in relation to children's right to play, scope for developing 21st century skills and building upon curricular documents and developments emphasising the value of play for primary school children. This led to a selective exploration of the literature pertaining to theories of education (Dewey, 1916a; Vygotsky, 1974; Bruner, 1983, 1986), playful pedagogy (e.g. Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Mardell et al., 2019; Zosh et al., 2017), musical play (e.g. Niland, 2009; Littleton, 1998; Marsh & Young, 2006) and music education (e.g. deVries, 2001; Goopy, 2013; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Wright, 1916) whilst placing substantial focus on the work of Zoltán Kodály and Klára Kokas. Finally, the context surrounding PD, both in education (e.g. Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002, 2003, 2014; Kennedy, 2014) and music education (deVries, 2014; Holden, 2016; Jeanneret & DeGraffenreid, 2012; O'Flynn, 2011; Sinclair et al., 2015) was considered.

The methodology chapter provided an overview of the conceptual framework and research design and methods undertaken to achieve the goals of the research, which sought to:

1. Expand the researcher's understandings of musical play across a continuum of ownership to inform a framework for playful music learning for across the Irish primary school context.
2. Explore if and how playful music learning might be realised in teachers' classroom practices across all stages of the primary school in Ireland.
3. Consider Irish primary school teachers' perceptions of the value of playful music pedagogy for primary schools.

To these ends, the research design for this study required deep engagement with the literature, and provision of an initial PD workshop based on the foundations of a play-based music education for generalist teachers. Following this, in keeping with the multiple case study methodology adopted (Merriam, 1998), 6 teachers explored playful music pedagogy within their classrooms whilst engaging within a PLC and reflecting upon their practices. Data collection involved 6 initial reflections, 24 participant reflections, 6 semi-structured interviews and 3 PLC meetings. Whilst qualitative in nature, situation of the study within the pragmatic paradigm underpinned application of two forms of analysis with the data: constant comparative method and directed content analysis.

Having outlined the results of the within case and cross case analysis pertaining to this study whilst making reference to the broader body of literature within Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, the present chapter is structured in three parts. It commences by revisiting the research questions and discussing key findings of the study. Following this is an in-depth presentation of the implications of these findings where reference is made to stakeholders, including policy-makers and those responsible for curricular design and teacher education in the Irish context. Finally, a brief reflection on the

research process leads to a revisiting of the study's limitations and final recommendations for practice, research and policy.

Revisiting the Research Questions and Reviewing the Key Findings

In engaging with the literature pertaining to play, playful pedagogy, musical play and music education, and conducting exploratory research with a group of primary school teachers in Ireland, the present study was conducted with a view to addressing the following research questions. Following initial PD, and in exploring playful music pedagogy as part of a professional learning community:

1. How can playful music pedagogy become part of Irish primary school teachers' classroom practices?
2. How do Irish primary school teachers perceive playful music pedagogical practices to contribute to pupils' musical, and wider learning and development?
 - a. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute pupils' understanding of musical elements and concepts?
 - b. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' learning across other areas of the curriculum e.g. literacy and numeracy?
 - c. How do teachers perceive these practices to contribute to pupils' broader skill development e.g. social/emotional, motor skills?

The remainder of this section presents an overview of how these questions were addressed, making reference to some of the key findings.

How can Playful Music Pedagogy Become Part Of Irish Primary School Teachers' Classroom Practices?

This research question was fundamentally connected to the aim of expanding the researcher's understandings of musical play across a continuum of ownership for the Irish primary school context. It was answered theoretically, through engagement with the literature, and practically, through exploration of concrete examples of teachers' classroom practices of playful music pedagogy in this study. These theoretical

and practical understandings combined, resulted in the generation of a new framework for playful music learning depicted and discussed at the outset of Chapter 4.

A key finding within this study, has been that playful music learning can indeed, be viewed to encapsulate musical play across a continuum of ownership between entirely free play and scaffolded, guided musical play and musical games-play. The latter two categorisations of musical play, involving different degrees of adult scaffolding and child ownership, with related pedagogical implications for teachers' practices, represented the primary focus of this study. However, different categorisations of playful music learning became part of teachers' practices to varying extents. This section refers to findings pertaining to possibilities for the different forms of musical play in light of the research, in addition to those related to contextual and cultural factors seen to impact upon teachers' practices.

Incorporation of Musical Games-Play into Teachers' Classroom Practices to Scaffold Pupils' Musical Development

For the purposes of this research, and in line with the newly created framework for playful music learning, musical games-play may be seen to encompass playful music activities involving a good deal of teacher direction and scaffolding. These can be categorised as including pedagogical singing games and musical gamification (Geoghegan & Nemes, 2014; Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Kodály, 1974; Vajda, 2008). In incorporating musical games-play within their pedagogical practices, teachers in the present study demonstrated scope for singing games and musical gamification to provide a bedrock upon which, pupils could extend their understanding of music literacy and related skill development. They showed potential for adopting an approach to music education that involves: "A combination of [musical games] play (to encourage confidence and creativity) alongside teaching/modeling (to introduce and

develop new concepts and skills)” (Whitebread & Jameson, 2010, p. 105) followed by opportunities to practice and consolidate learning with further, increasingly child-led, guided forms of musical play. Indeed, such an approach, appeared to draw upon the initial three stages of preparation, presentation and practice associated with Kodály music education in particular (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

Singing Games

In addition to being integral to the Kodály music education philosophy (Ittzés, 2004), singing has historically played a foundational role in music education practices in the Irish context (Henegan, 2001; Inspectorate, 2002; Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2009). This study has indicated that singing games became part of Irish primary school teachers’ practices, extending processes of simple song-singing. Their practices demonstrate that a range of basic, pedagogical games and circle games such as those outlined in the literature review can be utilised alongside simple folk-song materials, with a view to supporting teaching and learning of “musical elements, rhythmic and melodic motives” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015; Kokas, 1969, p. 125) as part of a playful approach to music education.

Musical Gamification

As in relation to singing games, teachers within this study demonstrated an understanding that musical gamification provides an option for involving all pupils in fun and engaging musical experiences, with ultimate focus on the application and development of musical learning and understanding aligned with the musical elements. With a view to building musical skills, gamification can become part of teachers’ practices via use of structured musical games like Rhythm BINGO, Secret Conductor, Hunt the tape, and rhythmic canons.

In addition to singing games and musical gamification, offering increased child ownership along the continuum of playful music learning, two other forms of musical play became part of teachers' practices in this study, albeit to a lesser extent.

Incorporating Guided Musical Play into Teachers' Classroom Practices to Encourage Meaningful Engagement with Music

Guided musical play involves higher levels of child autonomy and ownership in tandem with adult scaffolding and can be seen to encompass free, constructive musical play and free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play (Kokas, 1999, 2013; Niland, 2009).

Free, Constructive Musical Play

Aligning with Houlahan & Tacka's (2015) suggestions for composing and improvisation, this study has demonstrated scope for Irish primary school teachers to incorporate free, constructive musical play as a follow-on from musical experiences and activities grounded in song-singing and musical games-play as a means of preparing pupils for the increased complexity of creative, compositional tasks (Swanwick, 2005). This study has indicated scope to encourage pupils to create pieces of music based on themes or songs previously studied with music literacy expectations aligned to their understanding (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015).

Free, Kinaesthetic/Dramatic Musical Play

Where free, constructive musical play can be aligned with the composing strand of the curriculum, free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play can be seen as very much aligned with listening and responding (NCCA, 1999a). This form of guided musical play involves offering pupils the opportunity to listen and respond to music via movement and/or improvisation and thus, requires a degree of agency for children and an openness on the part of the teacher to a range of different responses. With this form of musical play arguably the most free for pupils, interestingly, a key finding of this

study was that it was both the one area teachers suggested that pupils enjoyed the most and teachers were least comfortable facilitating. This important juxtaposition will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

The present study has indicated a need for increased support for teachers in understanding means by which, pupils can engage with elements of free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play in particular. This is particularly important since, it is through such free response to music that pupils are enabled to get closer to music and depict their experience of music with their bodies (Kokas, 1999, 2013).

Thus far in describing how playful music pedagogy could become part of teachers' practices emphasis has been placed on synthesis. However, it is also integral to refer to the integral role individual teachers played in realising this pedagogy in practice.

The Role of Individual Teachers

The present study has demonstrated scope for teachers to incorporate playful music pedagogy within their varying contexts with tendencies to prioritise the scaffolding of musical skill development with use of a good deal of musical games-play. However, while teachers undertook the same PD as part of the study, and used some similar materials and resources, their practices were seen to vary slightly across different contexts depending on their personal experience and approach, which mirrors work previously carried out by Martlew et al. (2011) pertaining to playful learning in the Scottish context. This was notable in relation to the extent to which different teachers strived to facilitate musical play activities from across the continuum of ownership and to integrate music across the curriculum. The former tended to be more likely for teachers with previous experience of Kodály music education and the latter

tended to be more common for teachers in infant classes and without Kodály music education experience.

Overall, this research has indicated a capacity for teachers to use previously tried-and-tested resources and to engage playfully and creatively with playful music pedagogy along a continuum of ownership in incorporating increasingly playful music learning within their classroom practices. Indeed, it is suggested that teachers might be further supported in this endeavour by engaging with the playful music learning framework developed as part of this study for increased clarity as to what constitutes playful music practices (Kangas et al., 2020; Mardell et al., 2019). This leads to exploration of the second research question and related findings.

How do Irish Primary School Teachers Perceive Playful Music Pedagogical Practices to Contribute to Pupils' Musical, and Wider Learning and Development?

This research question was of great importance for the present study. As was previously discussed, having not been in a position to create a specific instrument for measuring potentially broad contributions of playful pedagogy and elements associated with Kodály and Kokas music education in the research, this question, divided into three sub-questions, was answered by engaging with teachers' perceptions of pupils' learning as part of the present study. The findings of this study appear to mirror the broader literature indicating scope for playful practices to impact pupils' academic and holistic learning (Dunphy et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2010; Pyle et al., 2017; Whitebread et al., 2017; Zhang, 2020). In addition to this, they reflect the literature pertaining to impacts of Kodály and Kokas pedagogy on pupils' learning. (deVries, 2001; Goopy, 2013; Kokas, 1970). This is discussed in the following sections.

How do Teachers Perceive These Practices to Contribute Pupils'

Understanding of Musical Elements and Concepts?

Given that practices of playful music pedagogy tended to prioritise singing games and gamification, within a scaffolded approach to musical development, it is unsurprising that much of the perceived associated learning, curricular at least, pertained to the musical elements. A number of new songs and games were learned through pupils' participation in the playful music lessons. These singing games were seen to allow for experiential learning of musical elements, thought to lead to a deeper understanding than would have been possible through more formal teaching. This aligns with Kokas' (1970) suggestions that music becomes "living reality" for children through experience of active singing, which can be further enhanced as part of "musical training in combination with movement and rhythm" (pp. 51-52).

An important finding of this study was that teachers perceived the approach to contribute to music learning by providing increasingly inclusive opportunities for all children to engage in performance (singing, with rhythm and with musical instruments), composition and listening and responding to one another, to their teacher and to classical music. They also suggested scope for learning across other curricular areas.

How do Teachers Perceive These Practices to Contribute to Pupils'

Learning Across Other Areas of the Curriculum e.g. Literacy and Numeracy?

Aligning with new emphases on playful use of language within the primary language curriculum (2017), integration between playful music pedagogy and literacy learning was evidenced in both the junior and senior classes in the present study. Such focus on integrating literacy into music lessons may indicate a sense that teachers are eager to find new and creative ways to increase the time allocation to literacy from across the curriculum, understandable given broader governmental policy to prioritise

literacy and numeracy in the primary school by integrating it across other curricular areas where possible (DES, 2011b).

Unsurprisingly given the policy context, the other curricular area mentioned within the study was numeracy, with reference to scope for integrating this curricular area in the study of music literacy. In addition to learning in literacy and numeracy, teachers also referred to scope for playful music educational contribution to learning in physical education, discussed briefly in the next section.

How do Teachers Perceive These Practices to Contribute to Pupils’

Broader Skill Development e.g. Social/Emotional, Motor Skills?

A range of commentators have previously indicated a possibility for Kodály music education to contribute to children’s broader learning, growth and development (Bridges, 1979; Goopy, 2013). In the present study, perceived contributions to learning outside of the academic sphere were noted in relation to broader areas suggested to align with Learning & Innovation and Life & Career, 21st century skills (Fadel, 2008). Teachers suggested that children appeared to work towards the development of critical thinking, creativity, cooperation, social skills and perseverance among other areas within the study, whilst also building confidence and demonstrating enhanced well-being. In many ways, the practice of musical games-play was perceived by teachers to offer potential for pupils to develop their “social, emotional, and kinaesthetic skills and abilities” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 120) in addition to their musical skills.

Having briefly revisited the research questions and findings of the study, the second section of this chapter presents an in-depth presentation of insights and implications pertaining to the findings, making reference to stakeholders, including policy-makers and those responsible for curricular design and teacher education in the Irish context.

Research Implications

Just as all play is bound by rules (Vygotsky, 1967), it appears that so too is playful music pedagogy. With classroom practices seeming to have been subject to implicit rules, expectations and rhetoric within the broader culture and context surrounding music education, play and education more generally in Ireland, there is a need to consider these elements in the Irish context. If, as was suggested in the initial chapter of this dissertation, it is hoped that the Irish education system will encourage and support increasingly playful practices in schools and curricula (Hammond & Foster, 2018), it is necessary to consider and learn from the complexities associated with examples of playful practices within the Irish context (Mardell et al., 2019).

Consider the Impact of Culture and Infrastructure on Overarching Goals and Practices

Norms, values and expectations associated with the overarching culture of given societies have long played an integral role in guiding and shaping educational goals and practices around the world. For those focused on enhancing practices of education in Ireland, there is undoubtedly a need for clarity as to what the overarching norms, values and expectations are for our society such that we can ensure an alignment with our priorities, policies and infrastructure towards these areas. Of relevance for the present study, if there is a wish to move away from increasingly formal classroom practices in Ireland (OECD Directorate for Education, 2004) towards increasingly active, playful (Mardell et al., 2019) and engaging learning, within less formal contexts (Colley et al., 2001), it appears that the Irish educational system may have a distance to travel.

Mardell et al., (2019, pp. 232-233) have spoken of a need both for “policies that promote playful learning” and for changes to “Attitudes about the nature of learning” before our practices can merge to “create cultures of playful learning”. This appears

particularly relevant to the Irish context based on findings in the present study. Primary school teachers indeed demonstrated scope for incorporating increasingly playful pedagogies into their practices, yet encountered challenges whilst facilitating this at times. Challenges related to the present research may be deemed to reside in support and infrastructure, in addition to broader cultural norms and expectations (Kangas et al., 2019).

Support and Infrastructure

Concerns as to the impact of school design and infrastructure on scope for increasingly varied approaches to teaching and learning in Irish schools have been alluded to previously by Darmody et al. (2010, p. 63) who suggested that there are “difficulties [associated with] delivering the primary curriculum to its full potential due to constraints on space within the classroom.” These concerns are echoed within the present study, where a dearth of space in teachers’ classrooms was seen to impact the useability of playful music pedagogy in practice. This lack of space may have been compounded by the fact that class sizes in Irish primary schools are the highest in Europe at present with 1 in 5 children in classes of 30 or more pupils (INTO, 2020). Indeed, within this research, teachers were required to rearrange classroom furniture, go outside or try to find spare rooms/space wherever possible as a means of affording pupils the requisite space to participate in many of the activities. On other occasions, teachers resigned themselves to modifying the organisation of the children around the furniture to suit the activity in question. Thus, echoing previous concerns regarding school design and infrastructure in Ireland (Darmody et al., 2010), the present research leads us to reflect that despite calls for active learning, playful practices and movement away from didactic methods, Irish schools have not been sufficiently equipped to deal with this in a way that makes this practical for teachers. This may be indicative of a

broader cultural concern whereby formal structures are prioritised that can be associated with rote learning and desk-learning, referred to by one of the teachers at the outset of this research study.

An important implication for policy directors and curriculum developers in Ireland, is that over the longer term, should more teachers seek to incorporate increasingly playful, active and engaging pedagogy into their practices, Irish schools would be unable to cope with the degree of space needed to facilitate such an approach. This is unfortunate given the suggestion that the Irish education system needs to prioritise providing increased opportunities for pupils to play (Sahlberg, 2017) and calls for active learning and movement in schools to enhance pupils' health and well-being (Behan et al., 2018; DES, 2018).

Other issues pertaining to the overarching supports and infrastructure for schools in the Irish context related to teachers' previously limited opportunities to participate in PD in and around music education and playful pedagogy. This is particularly notable when we consider the value placed on teacher PD by the Cosán framework (Teaching Council, 2017) and unfortunately, aligns with previous research describing challenges to the provision of Aistear in the Irish context (Gray & Ryan, 2016). Indeed, limitations relating to the degree of supports for teachers in these areas recalls the idea that Article 21 in relation to play, arts and leisure, truly is the 'forgotten article of the Convention' (IPA (International Play Association), 2012, para. 12) and Eisner's (1990) suggestions that, "Neither play nor art is associated with work" (p. 43).

The present study has highlighted the need to bolster PD supports for Irish primary school teachers in relation to playful pedagogy and music education. Participating teachers demonstrated scope for facilitating playful music educational practices whilst engaging in two different forms of PD that provided "specific, concrete

and practical ideas” that related to their everyday classroom practices (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Guskey, 2002, p. 382). However, given that participants in the present study were already confident with music education, PD for teachers with different degrees of confidence will need to be specifically tailored and targeted to ensure they have requisite content knowledge in this area (Darling-Hammond, 2017). An important implication of this research, is the need for the development of such targeted and extended forms of PD for increased numbers of Irish primary school teachers that provides transmission of key elements associated with playful pedagogy pertaining to musical play (Kennedy, 2014) along the playful music learning framework, and aligns with Desimone’s (2009) characteristics of effective PD.

Overarching Culture and Expectations

Tendencies to prioritise PD for different subject areas and educational approaches is arguably also connected to overarching culture, investment and policy expectations prioritising literacy and numeracy and ‘core’ subject areas, in addition to “cognitive goals” and processes associated with “school readiness” and formal learning approaches (Kangas et al., 2020, p. 2) in the Irish context.

Despite possessing a love of music and belief in its intrinsic value for pupils, it appeared that teachers in this study were resigned to an understanding of music representing a non-core subject in the holistic primary school curriculum. Similarly, while teachers commented on the capacity for playful music pedagogy and indeed, music more generally, to positively contribute to pupils’ overall well-being and holistic development, a sense of turmoil was evident within their attempts to support and foster these areas whilst also ensuring they prioritised certain subjects. In general, similar to previous research, in this study it appeared that teachers felt under pressure to ally the

goals of a holistic, broad curriculum and overarching policy and guidelines to prioritise literacy and numeracy (Gray & Ryan, 2016).

This may be caused by DES expectations leading to curriculum overload, which has become increasingly prevalent in Ireland in recent years, and is said to occur where teachers are striving to “attain high standards in ‘the basics’”, and has often resulted in leaving “time for subjects such as Art, Music, Drama, History and Geography [diminished]” (NCCA, 2010, p. 7). However, prioritising high achievement in literacy and numeracy has also been suggested to impact scope for Irish primary school teachers to facilitate increasingly playful classroom practices within the Irish context (Concannon-Gibney, 2018), which could potentially be related to broader cultural factors.

Indeed, Kangas et al. (2020, p. 10) have suggested that broader cultural expectations can lead to scenarios whereby educational systems who recognise the value of play for children’s “holistic well-being, learning and development” can sometimes include pedagogical practices that both limit scope for play and “simultaneously strive to develop play-friendly practices and learning environments”. An important cultural expectation pertaining to the present research rests on the diminishing value and appropriateness of placed on play and more specifically, child-led play for pupils as they move through the primary school.

Recalling a continuum between work and play, the findings suggest that children were increasingly uncomfortable participating in, and more inclined to question the value and relevance of freer forms of musical play to their learning, inquiring as to when they would do ‘real work’. Where broader emphases are placed on concrete measurable ‘work’ and standardised achievement and limitations placed on scope for play as children progress through primary school, it appeared that older

children found it particularly difficult to engage with playful practices at times when there were no clearly defined academic learning goals. This recalls previous suggestions by Eyles (1993) pertaining to play and education and may indeed, be indicative of a scenario whereby older children felt that such activities were not real work and thus did not “have the highest worth” and so began to see the “freshness, spontaneity, and the fountains of [their] play slowly run dry” (Hall, 2013, p. 235).

Relatedly, researchers have alluded to “multidimensional and dynamic definitions [of play and playful pedagogy, which rest within...] contexts and cultures” that may have the potential to enculturate children into broader societal expectations (Kangas et al., 2020, p.10). Teachers being required to justify the value of freer, playful music activities to pupils, could indeed be related to broader cultural conceptions that certain elements pertaining to play are “fine for little children”, even necessary for them, though that there is a sense that they “must outgrow it and learn more “serious” or “adult” ways of learning” (Holt, 1973, p. 25).

Based on this research, an important implication, is that there is a need for increased clarity and consideration pertaining to prioritisation of subjects, learning approaches and overarching values within the Irish context. If focus on literacy and numeracy continually detracts from engagement with a broad curriculum, potential impacts on children’s holistic development should be taken into account. Those responsible for curriculum development might also afford further consideration to means of encouraging teachers to engage playfully with learning and integrating across and within subject areas as demonstrated by participants within this study. Moreover, if there is a hope that the Irish education system will support children in developing creatively and holistically in line with 21st century skills and competencies, whilst also prioritising two ‘core’ curricular areas to the extent that teachers feel they don’t have

sufficient time to dedicate to other areas, there may perhaps be an inherent contradiction in how we go about teaching pupils to “navigate in the value-laden and constructed world [...] created by society for its own regulation” (Bruner, 1986, p. 20).

In addition to cultural norms and expectations pertaining to certain subjects, the present research also suggests that teachers might be in a position to provide various learning experiences moving “in and out of formal and informal modes [cognisant of...] this shifting ground” and be “willing to adopt the most relevant teaching mode in the best learning interests [of the students]” (Wright, 2016, pp. 211-212). However, it appears that this is not always easy, which sheds light on important power dynamics that may be implicit within practices in the Irish cultural context.

Consider Power Dynamics Implicit in our Practices

An important finding and consideration pertaining to the present study is the notion of power dynamics intrinsic to, impacting on and emergent from the classroom practices of playful music pedagogy. This was evidenced in teachers feeling out of their comfort zones with shifts in ownership required from themselves to the pupils in their classes in line with classroom cultural shift and transformation. It may have been implicit within tendencies of teachers and indeed, pupils themselves, to prioritise, value and emphasise scaffolded, teacher-led musical games-play over and above guided musical play as previously outlined. Furthermore, the idea that teachers perceived pupils to require a degree of ‘training’ to be capable of participating fully in the more child-led forms of musical play was deemed to be inherently contradictory and interesting given the fact that children play freely without any such training from the youngest ages (Frost et al., 2012; Vygotsky, 1967). Such training may potentially be viewed as a means of adults using “rules, and routines” to control playful practices as a

means of “protecting against the potential anarchy of the children” (Löfgren & Ehn, 2010, p. 84).

With teachers in this study feeling outside their comfort zones in many instances in relation to relinquishing control to the pupils in their classes, there are implications for the degree to which playful pedagogy might be practicable in the present context of education in Ireland. Whilst the expectation was that guided musical play would offer an opportunity for increasingly child-directed musical play in Irish primary schools, some teachers experienced difficulties in relation to the degree of ownership this afforded to the children in their classes. Ultimately, this impacted the degree of creative freedom pupils were granted. Where it did occur, the guided musical play that manifested may have been more akin to co-opting or directing play to align with teacher expectations than truly expressive, child-led play (Zosh et al., 2018).

Grieshaber & McArdle have suggested that implicit rules where “adults assume there are shared understandings when there are not” (Grieshaber & McArdle, 2010, p. 60), can be very difficult for young children to follow. Arguably, where this occurred in relation to guided musical play in the present study, children began to learn to provide responses teachers expected, solidifying a power dynamic where the teacher is seen as the most knowledgeable and important individual. Such a dynamic has been described before in relation to practices of playful pedagogy more generally within early years contexts (Grieshaber & McArdle, 2010; McCabe & Farrell, 2020). Bruner has noted that society “may wish children to be both innovatively creative [...] and obedient to authority [...] which] may, in fact provide an impossible trade off” (Bruner, 1986, p. 22). This would appear to be the case within the current study, that may be seen to resonate with contradictory aims within policy and practice across society (Bruner, 1986) that

are important for policy-makers and pedagogues to consider when reflecting on culture surrounding the Irish educational system in general.

On other occasions, where guided musical play manifested as more closely aligned to Kokas pedagogy, it provided a route for allowing pupils the creative freedom to build upon or extend their previous music learning from the more teacher-directed forms of musical play. Indeed, through some of these practices we are reminded of Kokas' suggestion that kinaesthetic response to music can allow pupils to get closer to the meaning of the music in question. Particularly as the approach became increasingly aligned with Kokas' pedagogy, free, kinaesthetic/dramatic musical play was suggested to be the musical play activity most enjoyed by pupils, whilst also appearing to be the one teachers' were least comfortable facilitating. This recalls tendencies for educators to adopt primarily formal learning approaches in their classrooms, even at a very young age (OECD Directorate for Education, 2004) and for teachers to be less confident with increasingly creative forms of music education (Stakelum, 2008).

Mardell et al. (2020, p. 234) have argued that “you cannot simply ‘install’ learning through play in a school with [...] a new curriculum that has more math games”. Instead, these researchers suggested that there is a need to support educators within learning communities such as those in the present study, whilst navigating the paradoxes that arise when seeking to incorporate playful practices into formal school settings (Mardell et al., 2020). An important implication of this study is the suggestion of a need for PD that strives to encourage teachers to become aware of their comfort zones as educators, and supports them in discussing and exploring power dynamics within their practices. Such awareness may be integral for educators (Wright, 2016), supporting them in finding balance of ownership within their practices (Dewey, 1916a; Zosh et al., 2018). It may also represent an important step in providing an increasingly

wide range of opportunities for pupils to engage in their learning and develop skills in playful practices with varying degrees of ownership (Mardell et al., 2020).

Cognisant of the infrastructural and overarching cultural context with related power structures that may be seen to impact means by which, playful pedagogy can become part of teachers' practices in Irish primary schools, there is indeed a need for what Mardell et al. (2019) have called for in increased "policies that promote playful learning" and changes to "Attitudes about the nature of learning" such that our practices can merge to "create cultures of playful learning" (Mardell et al., 2019, pp. 232–233). This may not be easily reconciled with broader tendencies to formalise teaching and learning in the Irish context, and to prioritise literacy and numeracy achievement over and above that in other subject areas in line with GERM (Sahlberg, 2011, 2017; Wasmuth & Nitecki, 2017).

Having considered broad conclusions of relevance to those concerned with the provision of education for pupils in Irish primary schools, both in terms of music education and more generally, next it is important to reflect on recommendations that can be taken from the present study.

Reflection

This final section of this thesis provides for reflection upon the process of exploring playful music pedagogy as part of the present study. It also alludes to some of the limitations and suggests recommendations for practice, research and policy moving forward.

Despite commencing the research with a passion and belief in the value of playful music pedagogy developed from my reading, experiences and personal practices, when I look back on the process I cannot help but be struck by the (playful) naivety that characterised my experiences in the lead up to the first meeting with

teachers, in what would be the first introduction to this conceptualisation of playful music learning and pedagogy for many of them. With an interest in music education, some knowledge of playful pedagogy, professional learning and a background in generalist teaching, I adopted a pragmatic approach to consider if and how playful music pedagogy could work in generalist teachers' practices. In doing so, I focused on measurable, achievable goals and tasks and considered implications for those within the study specifically to ensure the process would run as smoothly as possible. My reflection on the morning of the 13th of October 2018 before the PD course commenced, signalled that it truly was "the real start of things!"

Upon commencing data collection and analysis I began to realise the intricacies involved in conducting research with people who bring with them diverse knowledge, experiences and expectations and much to offer. It became clear that the methodology I adopted would indeed shed light on what the teachers prioritised and took from the continuum of playful music pedagogy. I looked at other examples from the literature and reflected that rather than focusing on a "facilitator helping to ensure a programme is fully implemented" my research was more open and exploratory, hoping to see "what [playful music pedagogy] might look like" in practice (Personal Reflection: Saturday 16th February, 2019). However, what I had not predicted was the extent to which, this would begin to shed light on broader, personal, school-wide and indeed, country-wide policies, practices and features of the overarching educational culture in Ireland. Exploring practices of playful music pedagogy will continue to inform my ongoing engagement with music education, playful pedagogy and PD with increased cognisance of the broader culture surrounding education in Ireland moving forward, touching on all aspects of the conceptual framework that underpinned the study.

I am cognisant of the limitations associated with the present research alluded to previously. These included, the fact that:

1. The researcher played an integral role in developing a general framework to underpin 'Playful music pedagogy' within this study, which may have led participants to have shared reflections and responses they felt would be well-received by the researcher.
2. Just one formal, day-long workshop pertaining to playful music pedagogy was provided to participants.
3. Pupils' voices were not captured within this research and pupils' learning was not formally assessed.
4. There was a small sample size within this study which mean that the study cannot be seen as representative to a broader population.
5. The primary school teachers who participated in the present study all had an interest in music and confidence in teaching music, which meant the group in question may not be seen as entirely representative of typical generalist teachers
6. The folk music selected in the research was a selection from a range of different English-speaking countries

Despite these limitations, the present study was designed in such a way that it would be feasible and allow teachers to engage with a new, child-centred and playful form of music education and related PD within their unique contexts. With these in mind, the following recommendations can be made in the hopes that the present research will represent one of many steps on the journey towards understanding the potential for increasingly active, engaging and playful experiences for pupils in Irish primary schools both in music and across the curriculum.

Recommendations

The suggestion that pupils across all levels of the primary school were often seen to disengage from music education experiences is something to be taken seriously.

With teachers commenting on increased, meaningful engagement and inclusion of pupils in playful musical activities, consideration should be afforded to incorporating increasingly playful learning experiences into music curriculum for the Irish primary school context. Prioritising meaningful, joyful, iterative, social and engaging experiences across the continuum of ownership, this may provide the opportunity for deep musical and broader development (Zosh et al., 2017), in addition to a love of music (Kodály, 1974b).

There appeared to be scope for the primary school teachers in this study to creatively adapt and apply aspects of playful music pedagogy within their classroom practices throughout the primary school. Teachers' playful music practices were seen to enhance experiences of music learning for the pupils in their classes and their positive experiences of music-making with their classes was noted to have reinvigorated certain teachers' personal love for teaching music. However, for playful practices to be realised across other contexts, there is indeed, a need for more streamlined PD tailored to the needs of generalist teachers with differing levels of musical knowledge, understanding and experience. Workshops have since been developed and facilitated with less confident primary school teachers in the Irish context, which will need to be further fine-tuned, building upon findings from the current study. This will also necessitate further research.

With somewhat contradictory priorities in the overarching culture at present in relation to holistic education and modifications of practices to strive for internationally competitive results for literacy and numeracy in standardised assessments, there is a need for policy makers to provide increased clarity as to what constitutes the key aims for Irish primary school curricula. Now is an ideal time for this, owing to the fact that the NCCA is presently defining a framework for a revised primary school curriculum in

Ireland. When doing so, it is a good idea to look to arts educationalist Eisner (2002, para. 40) who paraphrased Churchill by saying “first we design our curriculum then our curriculum designs us”.

If we wish to encourage our pupils to develop creatively and holistically, then we need to ensure that curriculum and policy are aligned and conducive to supporting this. Similarly, we need to develop education policies that are closely related to practice, investment in people, and prioritisation of equity for children and curricular areas (Sahlberg, 2017). Based on the present research, it would appear that placing increased emphasis on playful music pedagogy might offer scope to encourage the development of a range of skills and competencies both in terms of music and other curricular areas in addition to some of those associated with holistic, 21st century learning.

If we consider playful pedagogy to represent an important next step for future teaching and learning, there is a need to prioritise the creation of a culture (Mardell et al., 2019), an infrastructure and requisite supports for teachers to implement increasingly playful and active practices in their classrooms. In doing so, steps will need to be taken to encourage the development of primary school cultures and environments that prioritise pupils’ holistic development in practice as well as in theory. Instead of training pupils to become capable of participating in increasingly child-led forms of play when they reach the senior end of primary school, perhaps we need to train ourselves to incorporate practices and policies from the outset of children’s education, that encourage the ongoing development of creativity, collaboration and self-expression in tandem with academic knowledge and skill development.

In line with the policies and research rationale explored previously, and the findings of this research, at primary school level in Ireland, there is an opportunity to prioritise development of a culture wherein playful pedagogies and associated learning are understood and valued for the contribution they make to children's overall development, academic and otherwise into "happier and healthier children" (Sahlberg, 2017, para. 16). This is perhaps all the more important at present where we begin to reassess and re-establish practices in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Below are some specific recommendations for PD, curriculum, research and teacher education following on from the present research study.

Professional Development

- Development and fine-tuning of increased PD opportunities for primary school teachers in Ireland following on from the present study. Involving scope for increased teacher agency, these may take the form of Action Research projects or further case studies that address key characteristics of effective PD (Desmione, 2009).
- Conducting whole-school studies into playful music pedagogy whilst providing requisite PD and supports for different teachers within the Irish primary school context.
- Support Irish primary school teachers in exploring power dynamics implicit within their teaching (Mardell et al., 2020). Cognisant of these dynamics and of increasingly "shifting ground" between formal and informal learning, encourage them to be "willing to adopt the most relevant teaching mode in the best learning interests [of their pupils]" (Wright, 2016, pp. 211-212).

Research

- Further conceptualising 'what works' in terms of guided musical play for Irish primary classrooms and identifying means of supporting teachers in navigating pedagogical practices involving increased pupil agency.
- Conducting case studies like the present study into practices of playful music pedagogy within the Irish primary school context from a range of Irish primary school teachers with limited musical experience.

- Conducting studies into pupils' experiences and perceptions of playful music pedagogy.
- Developing quantitative tools for measuring musical and/or 21st century skill development that can be utilised in mixed-method studies pertaining to playful music pedagogy.

Curriculum

- Consider a role for increasingly playful music practices within future curricula, building on aspects of the work of Kodály and Kokas along the continuum of playful music learning that has been developed as part of the present study.
- Consider potential to develop frameworks for playful learning along a continuum of ownership across a range of curricular areas.

Initial Teacher Education

- Seek to incorporate elements of playful music pedagogy within ITE in support of curriculum frameworks emphasising the importance of play for children throughout the primary years.

Conclusion

Although this research has offered some answers to the questions asked at the outset of this journey, and has painted a clearer picture of the context of education in Ireland more generally, musical and otherwise, it has ultimately left me with many more questions to be explored. The underlying goals of expanding conceptualisations of musical play along a continuum of ownership for primary schools in Ireland, and exploring Irish primary school teachers' practices of playful music pedagogy, and perceptions of related contributions to pupil learning and development, were achieved. Teachers illustrated scenes of joy and musical engagement in their reflections pertaining to playful music pedagogy, with pupils increasingly eager to participate in lessons and teachers stepping away, at least physically if not always metaphorically, from increasingly formal and didactic teaching approaches. Replaced by playful pedagogy, music lessons involved increasingly informal, joyful and active learning experiences for pupils and teachers alike, which occurred within circle activities,

outdoors and away from typical classroom organisational structures. The research indicated scope for playful music pedagogy to lead to positive, engaging and meaningful music education practices for increasing numbers of pupils, seen by teachers to contribute positively to pupils' learning in music and more generally, and also re-ignited love for music and music education in participating teachers.

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, unremembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning;
At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree

(T.S. Eliot, 1942)

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























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APPENDIX A: A SUGGESTED SEQUENCE IN RHYTHM

(NCCA, 1999b, p. 137)

A suggested sequence in rhythm

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Staff notation	Stick notation	Rhythm patterns
one beat	<i>crotchet</i>	<i>ta</i>			
half beat	<i>quaver</i>	<i>ti</i> <i>ti-ti</i> (for two)		↑ (□)	□ □ □
one-beat rest	<i>crotchet rest</i>	<i>(gesture)</i>		Z	z □ z
half-whole-half	<i>quaver-crotchet-quaver</i>	<i>syn-co-pa</i>		↑ ↑	↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ □ □ ↑
two beats	<i>minim</i>	<i>ta-aa</i>			□  ↑ ↑ 
three beats	<i>dotted minim</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa</i>			 z 
four beats	<i>semibreve</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa-aa</i>			
one-and-a-half beats	<i>dotted crotchet</i>	<i>ta-i</i>		.	. ↑ . ↑ □ z
Extension in Rhythm					
quarter beats (in fours or twos)	<i>semiquaver</i>	<i>ti-ri-ti-ri</i>			
	<i>quaver plus two semiquavers</i>	<i>ti ti-ri</i>			□ 
		<i>ti-ri ti</i>			□ □ 

APPENDIX B: A SUGGESTED SEQUENCE IN MELODY

(NCCA, 1999b, p. 138)

A suggested sequence in melody

Pitch (tonic solfa: emphasises moveable pitch)	Intervals (in tonic solfa)	Melodic patterns	Absolute pitch (letter names: emphasises fixed pitch)
<i>s, m</i>	<i>s-m m-s</i> ; (minor third)	<i>s-m-s-s-m-m</i> <i>m-m-s-s m-s</i>	
<i>l, s, m</i> (in handsigns only)	<i>l-s s-l</i> (major second) <i>l- m m-l</i> (perfect fourth)	<i>s-l-s-m s-s-l-l-s-s-m</i> <i>l-(s*)-m l-m l-l-m-m</i> <i>m-s-l m-(s)-l m-l</i>	
<i>l, s, m / m, r, d</i> (handsigns and 2- or 3-line stave)	<i>m-d d-m</i> (major third) <i>m-r r-m</i> (major second) <i>r-d, d-r</i> (major second)	<i>s-m-d d-m-s</i> <i>s-l-s-m d d-m-s-l-s</i> <i>m-r-d d-r-m</i> <i>d-d-r-r-m-r-d</i>	
<i>l, s, m, r, d</i> (handsigns and 3-line stave)	<i>s-d, d-s</i> (perfect fifth) <i>l-r, r-l</i> (perfect fifth)	<i>s-m-d s-(m)-d s-d</i> <i>d-(m)-s d-s</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d l-(s)-m-r-d;</i> <i>l-(s-m) r l-r</i> <i>d-r-m-s-l r-(m-s)-l r-l</i>	B, A, G E
<i>l, s, m, r, d</i> (handsigns, finger stave and 5-line stave)	<i>d-l, l-d</i> (major sixth)	<i>d-r-m-s-l d-(r-m-s)-l</i> <i>d-l</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d l-(s-m-r) d</i> <i>l-d</i>	D', C' (octave above middle C)
<i>l, s, f, m, r, d</i> low <i>s</i> , low <i>l</i> , (handsigns, finger stave and 5-line stave) key signatures C, G major	<i>d-l, l-d</i> (minor third) <i>d-s, s-d</i> (perfect fourth) <i>m-l, l-m</i> , (perfect fifth) <i>m-s, s-m</i> (major sixth)	<i>d-l, l-d</i> <i>m-r-d-l, d</i> <i>d-l, s, d-(l)-s, d-s,</i> <i>m-r-d-l, s;</i> <i>m-(r-d)-l, m-l,</i> <i>l-(d-r)-m l-m</i> <i>m-(r-d-l)-s, m-s,</i> <i>s, (l-d-r)-m s-m</i>	F, D, C (middle) F [#]
<i>d', t, l, s, f, m, r, d</i> (5-line stave) key signatures: D and F major	<i>r-s, s,-r</i> (perfect fifth) <i>r-l, l,-r</i> (perfect fourth) <i>s- s, l- l</i> , (perfect octave) <i>d'-d</i> (perfect octave)	<i>(m)-r-d-l, s,</i> <i>r-(d-l)-s, r-s,</i> <i>s,- (l-d)-r s,-r</i> <i>r-(d)-l, r-l,</i> <i>l-(d)-r l,-r</i> <i>s-m-r-d-l, s,</i> <i>s-(m-r-d-l)-s, s-s,</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d-l,</i> <i>l-(s-m-r-d)-l, l-l,</i> <i>d'-l -s-m-r-d</i> <i>d'-(l -s-m-r)-d d'-d</i>	E' C [#] , B ^b
	<i>d-t</i> (semitone) <i>f-m</i> (semitone)	<i>d-t-d d-t-l-s</i> <i>s-f-m-r-d d-r-m-f-s</i> <i>d'-t-l-s-f-m-r-d</i> <i>d-r-m-f-s-l-t-d'</i>	

d' denotes high *doh*
s, denotes low *soh*
l, denotes low *lah*

*The note is not
sounded aloud but
is heard internally.

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE OF SINGING GAME FROM MUSIC

CURRICULUM TEACHER GUIDELINES

(NCCA, 1999b, p. 63)

Exemplar 9

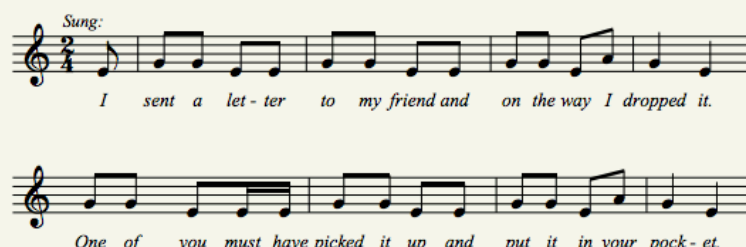
Singing game

infants to second classes


'I Sent a Letter'

Traditional singing game

Sung:



Chanted



One, two, three ... ten!

Sung:

'I sent a letter to my friend and on the way I dropped it.

One of you must have picked it up and put it in your pocket.'

Chanted:

'One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten!'

Young children enjoy playing this game of finding and losing objects. The children stand in a circle, with one child walking around the outside. At the end of the song, the child on the outside drops the letter at the feet of one of the children and starts to run around the circle. The child who has the letter at his/her feet must try to catch the first child. If the second child manages to catch the first child by the count of ten, the second child becomes the leader and the game is repeated.

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE OF GAMIFICATION FROM MUSIC

CURRICULUM TEACHER GUIDELINES

(NCCA, 1999b, p. 61)

Beat detective

One child, the 'beat detective', is sent out of the room. A second child is then appointed 'beat keeper'. The beat keeper and the other children stand in a circle; the beat keeper moves one part of the body to the beat of the music, and the others copy the movement. Every so often the beat keeper changes the movement. The beat detective comes back and tries to identify the beat keeper. When the music ends, a new beat keeper is appointed and the game begins again.

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE OF CONSTRUCTIVE MUSICAL PLAY FROM THE FROM MUSIC CURRICULUM TEACHER GUIDELINES

(NCCA, 1999b, p. 113)

Exemplar 20

Accompanying a story, song or game

This lesson may be adapted to suit children of various ages, depending on their previous experience. While the use of the story 'The Elves and the Shoemaker' suggests younger children, older children will require an equally familiar but more complex story, around which their first efforts at composing may be framed.

In the early stages, the children will be concerned mainly with sound effects to accompany a story, poem or song and the way in which these can be incorporated into the narrative. The accompaniment will focus on the obvious features in the story or text, or a predictable high point, for instance '... And he huffed, and he puffed, and he blew the house down!' Later the chosen sounds are recorded symbolically so that others can interpret them.

Step 1: Setting the scene

The teacher reads the story to the children and together they collaborate to identify the main theme, events or characters:

- the elves
- the shoemaker and his wife
- cutting out leather
- the elves hammering and sewing
- scampering off when the job is completed.

Step 2: Choosing instruments

The teacher encourages the children to think about sound-making sources (body percussion, vocal sounds and classroom instruments) that might be used to illustrate aspects of the story.

Step 3: Identifying features

The common features in the sounds may be discussed:

- the shoemaker at work
- the shoemaker's wife at work
- the elves at work
- heavy hammering sounds
- light hammering sounds.

Step 4: Illustrating characters

The children may work collaboratively in groups to illustrate specific characters. After choosing the appropriate sounds, the children may wish to modify them to add more expression:

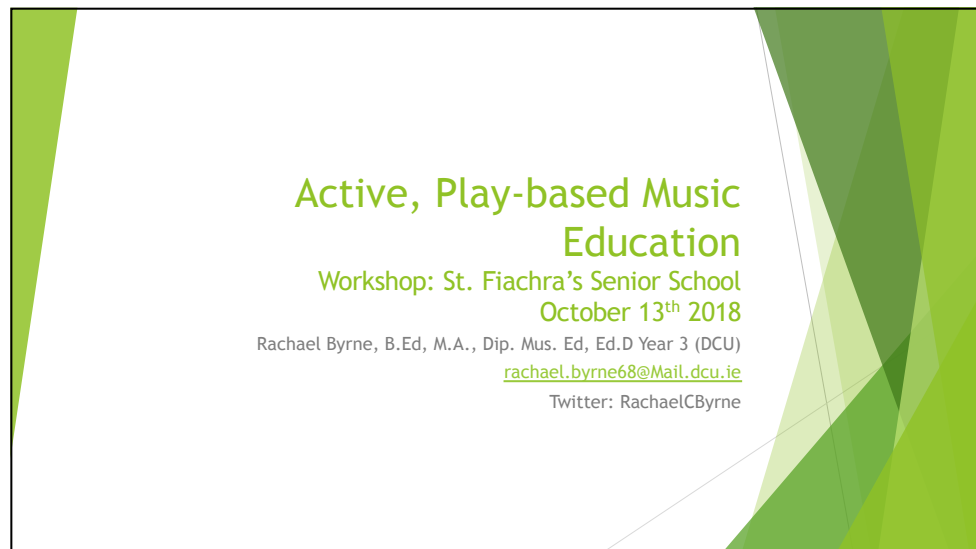
- the dismay of the shoemaker when he realises how little leather is left (the shoemaker tune may be played softly, eventually dying away)
- the surprise at finding the shoes already made (the shoemaker tune at a walking pace, then stopping suddenly in the middle of the tune)
- the excitement of waiting to see who has been secretly working for them (tunes or patterns from the shoemaker and his wife, followed by the light hammering sounds of the elves).

Step 5: Telling the story in sound

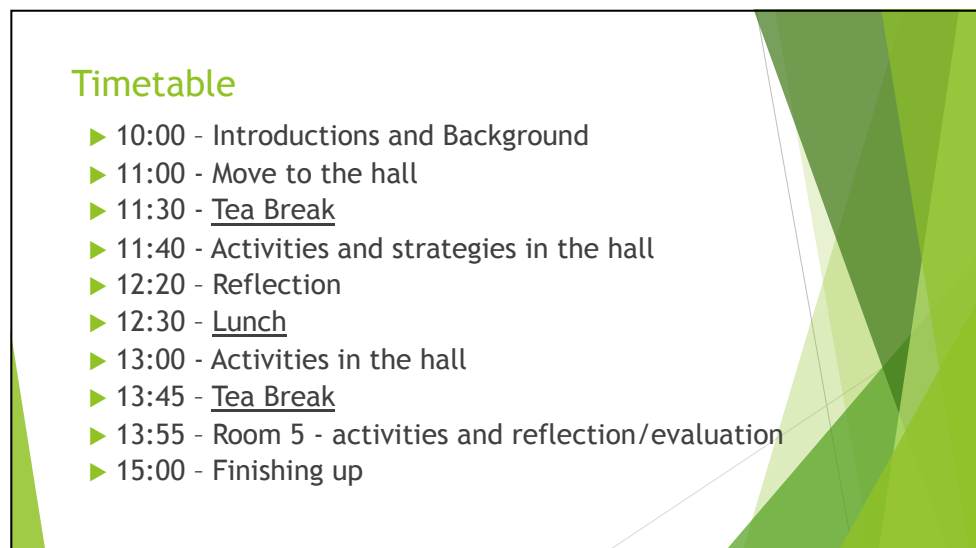
The final telling of the story should be taped and listened to so that the children can reflect upon and evaluate their composition before reworking it as necessary.

APPENDIX F: PLAY-BASED MUSIC EDUCATION WORKSHOP
POWERPOINT AND NOTES (OCT 2018)

11/7/20



1



2

1

Introductions

- ▶ Name
- ▶ School
- ▶ Class you're currently teaching
- ▶ Feeling this morning

Name Game Activity *Drama

3

Music Curriculum

"Purposeful, active listening"

"Movement from the known to the unknown..."

"Active participation in musical games and in other pleasurable musical experiences"

Irish Primary School Music Curriculum Strands and Strand Units (NCCA, 1999)

	Listening & Responding	Performing	Composing
Jl & Sl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring sounds Listening and responding to music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Song singing Early literacy Playing instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
First - Sixth Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring sounds Listening and responding to music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Song singing Literacy Playing instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions

"Dwells on the importance of using the voice"

"Literacy is explored through...rhythm and pitch...in response to the need to record or recall a...rhythm pattern, a melody or an entire song – rather than being considered as a set of isolated skills".

4

Why an Active, Play-based approach to Music Education?

- ▶ “layers of research...form the firm underpinning for a complex pedagogy centred on play” (Goouch, 2010, p. 56)
- ▶ Hammond and Foster (2018, p. 4) “Discovery learning and active learning” important within the current curriculum and “**play and playful approaches to teaching and learning are [becoming, even] more prevalent**”. (Regarding new curriculum developments)

5

Musical Elements

- ▶ Pulse: The steady beat of the music that cannot be heard but felt (<3 beat)
- ▶ Duration: The length of notes and sounds (Rhythmic values, Rhythm syllables)
- ▶ Structure: The layout of a song/composition with similar/different sections. e.g. Hot cross buns (AABA)
- ▶ Timbre: The unique sound made by a given instrument/voice.
- ▶ Tempo: The speed/pace of the steady beat/pulse.
- ▶ Texture: The combinations of sounds/melodies (1 alone or with harmony part)
- ▶ Pitch: The high/low quality of sound (Note names, Solfa)
- ▶ Dynamics: How loud/soft the music is (Soft = p, Loud = f).
- ▶ Style: Type of music, conventions etc.

6

Strategies Associated with Active, Play-based Music Education

- ▶ **More structured, teacher-led strategies/activities:**
 - ▶ Singing games (Chase, Clapping, Circle etc.)
 - ▶ Structured movements (e.g. For rhythm syllables)
 - ▶ Gamification (e.g. For skill/literacy development)
- ▶ **Less structured, more child-led strategies/activities:**
 - ▶ Free play/Exploration/Improvisation
 - ▶ Dramatic play, Free movement

7

Continuum of Play-based Approaches

Ownership continuum (Wright, 2016, p. 210).

Teacher-led

Student-led

Intentionality continuum (Wright, 2016, p. 210).

To learn

To play

8

6th Class - Pitch (Literacy: Scaffolded)

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

s-m m-s l-s-m s-l l-s s-l-s-m ss-ll-ss-mm s-ml-s-m l-m m-l
s-d s-m-d d-m-s d-s m-r-d d-r-m d-r r-d
d-l, l-d l-s, s-l, d-s, s-d m-r-d-l, m-r-d-l-s, l-d-r-m s-l-d-r-m
r-l, l-r m-l, l-m l-l, r-s, s-r m-s, s-m s-s, s-s
s-l, l-s s-l l-s,

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

9

6th Class - Duration (Literacy: Scaffolded)

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

syn-co-pa



10

Possible Framework: Skill development - Teacher-led/Structured Play

1. Prepare
 - ▶ Simple songs taught with active, play-based strategies (e.g. singing games, movement, gamification)
2. Present
 - ▶ Scaffolded, discovery learning
3. Ongoing Practice
 - ▶ Revising songs, skills & games

11

Activities: Singing games

- ▶ Apple Tree (Pulse, Ta, Ti-ti) (Introduce rhythm syllables - Classroom)
- ▶ Hall: Doggie, Doggie (l-s-m)
- ▶ London Bridge (Concentration, Listening)
- ▶ Tea Break
- ▶ Hey Ho, Nobody Home (Clapping, Texture)
- ▶ Pass one window (Cups)

12

Rhythm games

- ▶ Cup game - performance (Kaboom)

13

Reflection

- ▶ Questions and Discussion
 - ▶ What skills are children learning in these lessons?

14

Lunch (12:30-13:00)

- Staff Room

15

Less structured, more child-led strategies

- Use of unstructured/less structured movements
 - E.g. Free movement in response to music extracts, Artistic response to music,
- Use of dramatic play
 - Dramatic improvisation in response to music (*Framework and expectations)

16

Towards a framework - Musical Listening and Response

- ▶ Elements of Dalcroze and Kokas Pedagogy *Int. drama and visual arts
 - ▶ Begin with a **music/drama/creativity game** - Maybe follow by song /improvisation
 - ▶ Listen to extract once (Eyes closed)
 - ▶ Then listen again with a task to do...(E.g. only move your baby finger, look at someone and move on to someone else when they see you)
 - ▶ Then listen again with a more complex task/s (**Continuum: Teacher-led/Pupil-led**)
 - ▶ **TEACHER-LED** Listen to the same piece numerous times with new activities for each listening
 - ▶ **PUPIL-LED** Listen to the same piece numerous times to let them develop a dramatic/visual/movement based response
 - ▶ Share responses at end of class and discuss

17

Tea Break

- ▶ 10 minutes - Meet back in the classroom!

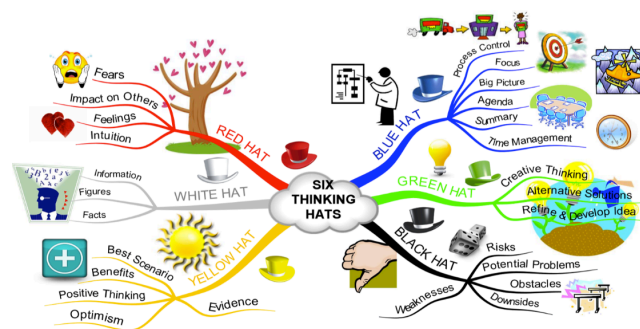
18

Gamification of Music

- ▶ Video - Rhythm Snake
- ▶ Rhythm Bingo
- ▶ Video - Fill in the blanks (What did I change?)
 - ▶ Boys v Girls
- ▶ Evolution Game
- ▶ Land of the Silver Birch

19

Reflections and Questions



20

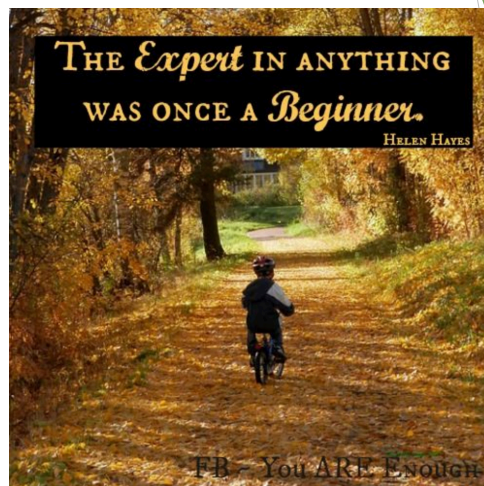
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Resources

- ▶ Handouts
- ▶ Have a look at the Lucinda Goeghegan Books - Singing Games for Early Years, for Middle Grades 1 and 2, for ages 9-99 (Laszló Nemes)
- ▶ Google Shared Drive (With a copy of today's ppt., framework for using structured/less structured play and musical examples not on the handout) - Write your email on sheet if you would like access to this.
- ▶ <http://kodaly.hnu.edu/collection.cfm> (NB!)

21

Be creative!



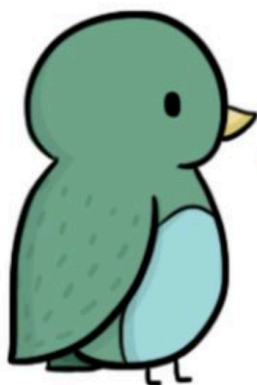
22

Evaluation

- ▶ If you could take the next few minutes to read the informed consent form. If you decide you are happy to complete the **anonymous** evaluation survey, I would be extremely grateful!
- ▶ **Interested** in taking part in a **professional learning community** of teachers who are **trying out** an **active, play-based approach** to music education in their classrooms?
 - ▶ Please provide your email at the end of the survey.

23

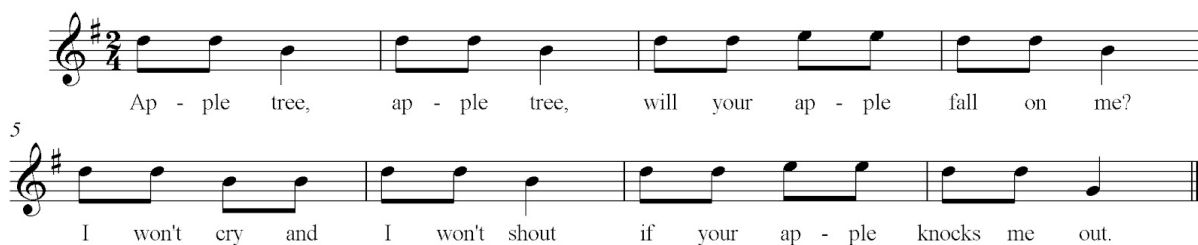
Thanks a million!



GOOD LUCK!
YOU'VE GOT
THIS!

24

Apple Tree



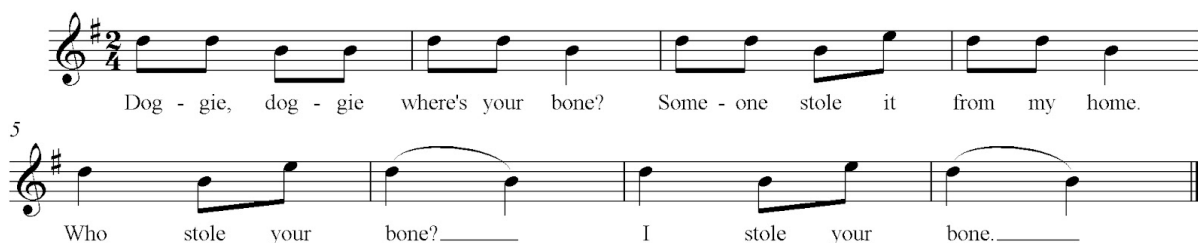
Ap - ple tree, ap - ple tree, will your ap - ple fall on me?
 I won't cry and I won't shout if your ap - ple knocks me out.

Cobbler Cobbler




Cob - bler, cob - bler mend my shoe, get it done by half past two.
 Half past two is just too late, get it done by half past eight.

Doggie, Doggie



Dog - gie, dog - gie where's your bone? Some - one stole it from my home.
 Who stole your bone? I stole your bone.

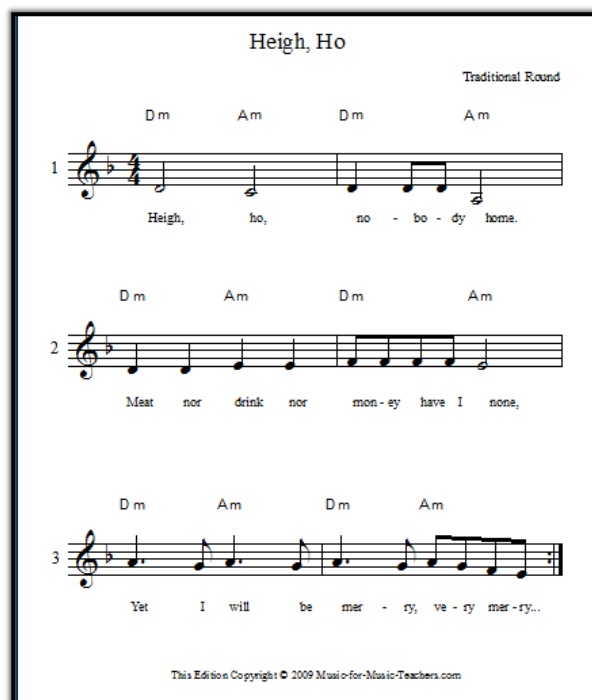
Land of the Silver Birch



Land of the sil - ver birch, home of the bea - ver.
 Where still the might - y moose wan - ders at will.
 Blue lake and rock - y shore, I will re - turn once more.
 Boom di - di boom boom, boom di - di boom boom boom di - di boom boom boom

Heigh, Ho

Traditional Round



Heigh, ho, no - bo - dy home.
 Meat nor drink nor mon - ey have I none,
 Yet I will be mar - ry, ve - ry mar - ry.

This Edition Copyright © 2009 Music-for-Music-Teachers.com

Games Covered today:

Apple Tree (Can use to prepare and teach ta and ti-ti, s-m interval)

1. Pulse Game
2. Out if lands on you
3. Saved from being out if you anticipate it

Cobbler Cobbler (Can use to prepare and teach ta and ti-ti, s-m interval)

1. Movement based – Pulse

Doggie Doggie (Can use to prepare and teach l-s-m intervals and develop solo singing)

1. Chase game between dog and thief ☺
2. Dynamics game (1 person holds it – hot and cold game)

London Bridge (See Lucinda Goeghegan's sheet music and game in Drive)

Heigh, Ho (Can be used to teach tam-ti)

1. Actions (Walk for first two bars, Bar 3: right shoulder, right click, left click, left shoulder, Bar 4 clap knees twice clap, Bar 5 and 6 Hands joined in the air, Repeat heigh ho bars 1 and 2 on the spot with arms clapping off neighbours)
2. Then repeat whole song – Can be done in two groups (Circles or interlocking with movements above)

Pass one window (See shared drive (Can be used to teach tiri-tiri, lsfmrd)

1. Circle game – Cups and pass to the right on the beat (Draw attention to tiri-tiri tap on the lid and then pass on tideo)

Kaboom Cup Game (On Shared Drive)

Rhythm Snake – 2 x 2/4 bars: 1st bar = repeat previous, 2nd bar = improvised

Rhythm Bingo – Tailored to any level

Fill in the blanks (What did I change in this music?)

Secret conductor – Pupils in a circle (1 is secret conductor and changes the rhythm and way perform it) Detective tries to figure out who the conductor is.

Land of the Silver Birch (Syncopa)

Bar 1: Clap, Right cross, Clap, Left cross

Bar 2: Right shoulder, right click, left click, left shoulder, 2 hand click, clap, 2 hand click

Continue for rest of song - Alternating

Listening and Responding Pieces

Structured Listening and Responding: Grieg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwTPfVGXY8Y>

Unstructured/Less Structured Listening and Responding: Saint-Sens

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyknBTm_YyM

APPENDIX G: REFLECTION DOCUMENT 1

- 1. Outline the active, play-based lesson you taught today (Include the activities and resources/songs you used).**

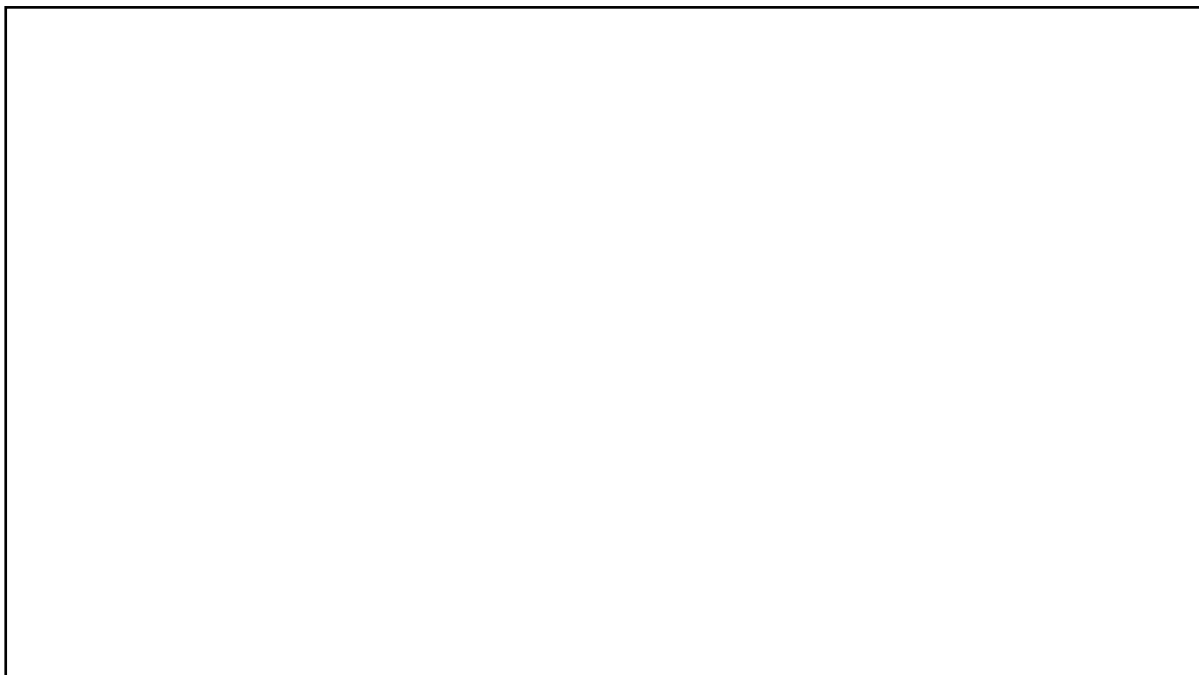
- 2. List and describe what was needed in order to facilitate this lesson (E.g. planning, organisation, teaching, differentiation etc.)**

- 3. Describe what went well during the lesson. Why do you think this was the case?**

- 4. If you were to teach this lesson again, would you do something differently? What and why?**

- 5. Outline what you consider to be the pupils' main learning from today's lesson (Musical and otherwise). How might this be assessed?**

Please attach a photograph of an element of this week's lesson showing the pupils engaging in active, play-based music education.



6. Describe what is happening in this photograph.

7. Please give a detailed account of your thoughts on the use of active/play-based approaches to music education in your classroom based on your experiences this week.

8. Following on from this lesson, what new ideas, activities or initiatives do you hope to implement in future lessons?

APPENDIX H: UPDATED REFLECTION DOCUMENT

1. Outline the play-based methodology you used to teach music today (Describe how this worked as well as the activities and songs etc. as appropriate)

2. Was this an example of:

a) A singing/circle game ☐

b) A free/constructive activity ☐

c) Dramatic/role-play ☐

d) Gamification ☐

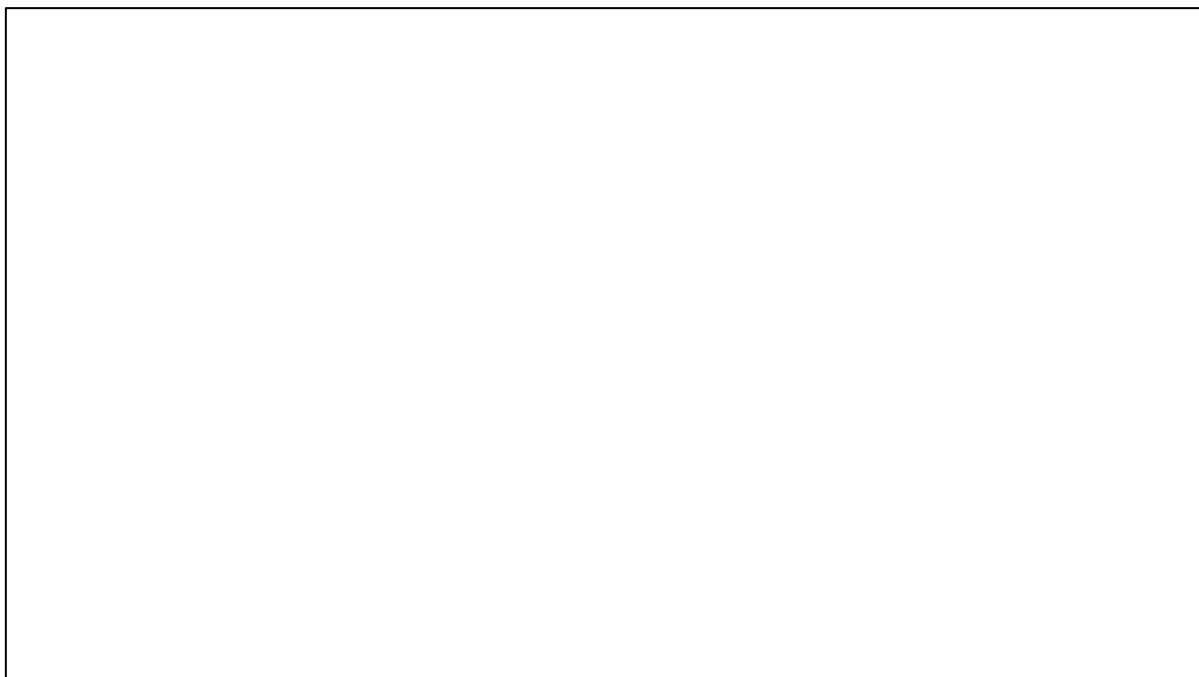
3. What did you want the pupils to learn through your use of this methodology?

4. Describe what you needed to do to use this methodology in your lesson.

5. What do you think were the principal benefits of your use of this methodology in your lesson?

6. What difficulties did this methodology pose (For you and/or your students)?

7. Please attach a photograph of this methodology in action in your classroom.



8. Describe what the children are doing in this photograph.

9. Please give a detailed account of your thoughts on the use of this play-based methodology to support pupils' musical (and other) development.

APPENDIX I: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY POWERPOINT

SLIDES



Professional Learning Community
PLAY-BASED MUSIC ED
for Irish Primary Classrooms

Rachael Byrne
Ed.D Year 3, School of Arts Education and Movement
Dublin City University

Supervisors: Dr. Regina Murphy, Dr. Francis Ward and Dr. Una McCabe

Contact Details: rachael.byrne68@mail.dcu.ie  RachaelCByrne

The slide features a green background with a collage of black and white icons on the left, including a cassette, key, ship's wheel, lightning bolt, football, globe, ship, glasses, star, sunglasses, heart, clock, gear, location pin, speech bubble, puzzle piece, ring, fork, pin, and musical notes.

1



**PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING**

REFLECTION

**RESEARCH
OVERVIEW**

COLLABORATION

PRACTICE

The slide has a dark, chalkboard-like background. The words 'PROFESSIONAL LEARNING', 'REFLECTION', 'COLLABORATION', and 'PRACTICE' are written in a light green, hand-drawn font at the corners. 'RESEARCH OVERVIEW' is written in a white, hand-drawn font in the center.

2



AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Sharing ideas on the use of play-based strategies in our classrooms:
[redacted] and [redacted]
3. Reflections
4. Discussion - Moving forward

3



Sharing Ideas/ Elements from Lessons

Discussion

4



5



6



APPENDIX J: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS

Teacher Semi-Structured Interviews

Protocol and Questions

Protocol: Ensure participant has read Plain Language Statement and signed Informed consent form. Ask if it is ok to begin recording.

Introduction: From the outset, I'd like to thank you very much for taking the time to talk with me today about your experiences in music education prior to, as part of and since completing the professional development in play-based music education and your perspectives on this form of music education for primary schools.

1. To begin, could I ask you to **Tell me a little bit about yourself as a teacher.** Your experience to date...What class are you teaching at the moment? How has your year been so far? Have you ever been an infant teacher? Used playful methods before? In what context...
2. What is your **background in music education**? What kinds of music education experiences have you had in your life as a student/teacher etc.? Do you play any instruments? Can you read music? Do you participate in musical activities yourself outside of education/the classroom?
3. Overall, would you consider yourself **very confident, confident, less confident or not confident at all teaching music**? Can you explain why this is the case? Does this change depend on the lesson/strategy in question? How?
4. What do **you enjoy most about music education**? What do you **enjoy least about music education**?
5. What do you think is the **purpose of music education**?
6. Prior to taking part in this research study, what kinds of methods would you have used for teaching music mainly?

7. **To what extent did you use play-based methods to teach music to your class during the research?**

8. What **EXPERIENCES** have you had using play-based music education in your classroom? What format did your lessons tend to take?

What were the children learning? How did this relate to curriculum objective for music/other subjects?

Did you find that this effected your **position in the class**? – Physically? Emotionally?

What difficulties did you face?

9. **How did the pupils in your class respond** to the use of the different strategies in your lessons? Singing games/circle games, gamification, free/constructive musical play, dramatic musical play. --- Did you **favour or tend to use one strategy for play-based music education over another? If so, why?** Were you surprised at this?

10. **What resources did you find useful for planning and teaching play-based music lessons? What supports did you avail of?**

11. **What was required of you as a teacher?** How did you go about planning for your lessons?

12. Do you think play-based learning could/should fit into the teaching and learning of music throughout the primary school? At different levels? Why/Why not?

13. Can you summarise what you think play-based education means? Looking back on the work you have been doing with your class in this area, can you please **outline what play-based music education means to you?**

14. What do you think are the **main benefits and disadvantages** to this approach to teaching music (if any)?

15. How do you feel about the teaching of music by **generalist (or non-specialist) teachers in primary school contexts? In general and in relation to using these strategies...**

16. Have you continued to use this approach since completing the research?

17. Would you consider yourself a music specialist? Why/Why not?

Thank you so much for your time!

APPENDIX K: EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING PLC MEETINGS

Hi ladies,

Still buzzing from our great meeting yesterday! I know we got lots of new and inspiring ideas from Anita, Fearne and Emma that we can look to bring to our own classrooms.

Just to provide an outline of some of these ideas

(I hope I didn't miss any!!! Let me know if you've anything to add/change!!)

- **Listening and Responding using 'Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra' (YouTube)**
 - o Pupils sit in groups and act out the roles of the different instrumentalists from the orchestra as they hear them.
- **Sight reading using known songs**
 - o Pupils learn songs with simple rhythms such as 'Don't let me down'
 - o When they know the songs well they can follow along using the sheet music and can complete activities based on this.
- **Hunt the Tape**
 - o Hide something in the classroom.

- o Pupils and teacher tap the steady beat on their knees and get louder as the person looking for the item gets nearer to it.
- **Hold the Coat/Guessing game**
 - o Pupils listen to instruments with a range of different timbres.
 - o Their friend holds a coat in front of them to discourage any peeking.
 - o They guess which instrument it was based on the sound they hear.
- **Free play/Composing**
 - o Pupils work in groups of 3-4 and are inspired by a shared theme.
 - o They are given a group of instruments and encouraged to share between group members.
- **Rhythm bingo**
 - o Teacher has a card with a range of rhythms written down (Master sheet).
 - o Teacher calls out a range of rhythms and pupils tick them off if they have them on their individual cards.
 - o Fearne has kindly provided a pack of these cards for us, which can be printed off and laminated! (Thanks, Fearne!!!)
- **Hula Hoop Activity**
 - o 4 hula hoops are placed on the floor to represent four crotchet beats.
 - o Teacher claps out rhythms for pupils to create using these hula hoops.

- o This can be used for composing, dictation, listening and sight reading.
- **Paintbrush/Pencil/Drum stick activity**
 - o Using sticks the pupils sit in a circle and pass the sticks into their neighbours hand and take from their other neighbour on alternating beats as a means of keeping the pulse to a song. A second stick can be placed on the floor in front.
 - o On the words 'O Eliza' pupils lift up the two sticks in the air and on 'Lil Liza Jane' they show the rhythm using the sticks.

<https://www.bethsnotesplus.com/2011/02/lil-liza-jane.html>

- **Sheet music**

(Other lyrics: I know a girl that you don't know, Lil Liza Jane, Way down south in Baltimore, Lil Liza Jane, O E-Liza, Lil Liza Jane, O E-Liza, Lil Liza Jane)

Thanks again to everyone for all of your hard work, reflection and collaboration!

Let me know if I can help with anything! Looking forward to seeing the rest of your reflections and to our next get together on Monday 8th of April at 3:30pm.

All the best,

Rachael

Hi everyone,

Just want to say thank you again for sharing all of the great things you have been doing in your music classes over the last number of weeks.

Special thanks to Ciara, Ruth and Suzanne who presented their examples to the group on Monday and got us to try out some singing games and ideas!

It's been amazing working with you and I am so grateful for all the work you have been doing!!

I'll be in touch with everyone over the next few weeks to try and arrange a suitable time and place for our one-on-one chats/interviews.

As discussed on Monday, I will also create a group email list for us to continue to share our ideas with everyone in the group! However, if anyone doesn't want me to share their email with the rest of our group please let me know!

Hope you all have a great Spring Break :)

Thanks a million,

Rachael

Below is a list of ideas we discussed on Monday - I hope I haven't missed any!!!

Play-Based Music Education

Professional Learning Community Ideas from Monday 7th April 2019

Silent movement canon

- Teacher leads and is 4 beats ahead of pupils who only begin when he/she moves onto the next movement e.g. Tap head 4 times, then tap shoulder, then hands etc.

Hot Cross Buns (Circle/Singing Game) – Teaching the crotchet rest

- Pupils sing the song Hot Cross Buns standing in a circle
- They clap their own hands and clap hands with partners throughout the song and when there is a rest they jump.

Ideas for tempo

Hunt the Tape

- Hidden tape and pupils clap faster/slower depending on how hot/cold the person searching is

Galloping Horses (Circle/Singing Game)

- Pupils gallop in circles fast and slow based on the lyrics of the song 'Galloping Horses'

Tiptoe Joe

- Based on Book (Available on YouTube)
- Pupils listen to the story and following the characters in the story they play instruments fast/slow

Cat and Mouse – Old Grey Cat (Circle/Singing Game)

- One cat is asleep in the middle of the circle and mouse is creeping around to avoid waking him/her up
- Based on the song the cat wakes up and chases the mouse as he/she tries to get back to a space

Hello Everybody

- Teacher sings and pupils respond
- Call and response
- Can clap rhythms for call and response
- Pupils can lead and teacher can respond

Tideo with cups

- Pupils sing the song 'Tideo' in a circle
- Keep the steady beat with cups
 - o Good idea to start by mirroring for pupils
- Can relate to previous songs e.g. Apple Tree
- Works when the pupils do it in small groups – passing the cups

Clapping rhythms of known songs e.g. Apple Tree

- Showing the rhythms on lollipop sticks

Using Giant Cards to direct pupils to be loud/soft with singing

- Pianissimo vs Forte

Responding to music – Dramatic Musical Play

- Elephant from Carnival of the animals
- Dance of the sugar plum fairy
- Romeo and Juliet Overture

APPENDIX L: RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University



Ms Rachael Byrne
School of Arts, Education and Movement

10th August 2018

REC Reference: DCUREC/2018/135
Proposal Title: Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools
Applicant(s): Ms Rachael Byrne, Dr Regina Murphy

Dear Rachael,

Further to expedited review, the DCU Research Ethics Committee approves this research proposal.

Materials used to recruit participants should note that ethical approval for this project has been obtained from the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee.

Should substantial modifications to the research protocol be required at a later stage, a further amendment submission should be made to the REC.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dónal O'Gorman'.

Dr Dónal O'Gorman
Chairperson
DCU Research Ethics Committee



Taighde & Nuálaíocht Tacaíocht
Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath,
Baile Átha Cliath, Éire

Research & Innovation Support
Dublin City University,
Dublin 9, Ireland

T +353 1 700 8000
F +353 1 700 8002
E research@dcu.ie
www.dcu.ie

APPENDIX M: PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENTS

Plain Language Statement – Parents of Pupils

‘Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools’ is a doctoral research study being carried out by Rachael Byrne under the supervision of Dr. Regina Murphy of the School of Arts Education and Movement within the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. This research seeks to explore the potential to generate and implement an approach to music education founded on active, play-based methods for teachers within Irish primary schools.

Contemporary research points to the value of active, child-centred and play-based teaching and learning in primary schools and it is important that we begin to establish its potential for support the teaching of music in Irish primary schools by non-specialist teachers, especially since much of the research in the field of music education has focused on the teaching of music by specialists.

As part of this research, following participation in a professional development course focused on active, play-based music education, a small group of teachers have chosen to participate in a professional learning community to avail of resources, ideas and supports as they begin to implement an active, play-based approach to music education in their classroom. Your child’s teacher has opted to take part. As he/she implements this approach in your child’s classroom, he/she will be providing the researcher with written reflections on their experiences and taking some pictures that demonstrate this approach in action.

These reflections and pictures will only be used for the purposes of this research and any related conference proceedings or subsequent publications. Using Photoshop software, the researcher will blur out pupils’ and teachers’ faces and crests within all of the pictures to protect their identities. Once this has been completed, original photographs will be deleted to further protect anonymity. Despite the use of this software, at a local level, for those close to the research, such as teachers, pupils or principals, there may be certain limits to confidentiality that can be guaranteed.

Data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research and any related conference proceedings or subsequent publications. Edited pictures will be stored securely and disposed of after a period of five years following completion of the research. They will be stored in line with data protection guidelines, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in keeping with, and subject to legal requirements.

You are entirely within your rights to change your mind regarding participation in the study and to withdraw your child from participation at any time.

When the project is completed, you will have the opportunity to view a synopsis of the results, if you so choose.

If you have any queries or would like further information, please feel free to contact me at rachael.byrne68@mail.dcu.ie.

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: The secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail [**rec@dcu.ie**](mailto:rec@dcu.ie)

Plain Language Statement - Pupils

Title: 'Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools'

Researcher: Rachael Byrne

Supervisor: Regina Murphy

School of Arts Education and Movement, Dublin City University

RESEARCH PROJECT

You are being invited to take part in a research project about music in primary schools in Ireland. A research project is a way to learn more about something. You are being asked to take part to help us to understand more about how to make music fun and enjoyable for everyone in school.

Before you decide to take part, you need to understand why this research is being done and what you will have to do. Please read the following information carefully. You can discuss it with your parents/guardians at home. They have a letter like this one to read too. Let me know if there is anything that is not clear to you or if you have any questions.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

If you decide to take part in the research project, your teacher will take some photographs of you taking part in music lessons. These photographs will be used to show other people how music lessons can be active, fun and playful in school. I will edit the pictures so that someone who does not know you will not be able to recognise you in the pictures. This will make your face and school crest look blurry but will show you taking part in your music lesson. You do not need to let your teacher take your photograph if you do not want to. If you choose not to have your photograph taken, you can still take part in music classes.

KEEPING INFORMATION SAFE

I will keep the photographs in a locked file on my computer. Once I have edited the pictures to make it difficult for you, your classmates and your teacher to be recognised, I will delete the original photographs. When I write about what I have learned in the research project, no one will know your name, your school or your teacher's name or that it is you in the photographs.

RESULTS

When I have collected the information from all of the people taking part in this research project, I will write about what I have learned about music in primary schools in a dissertation, which is a long essay that I need to complete for my course, or talk about it with other people who are interested in music in schools. If you would like, I can tell you and the other children what I have learned when I am finished.

If you have any questions about this study, you can give them to your teacher or your parents/guardians, who will send them to me and I will try my best to answer them for you.

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: The secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Plain Language Statement – Teacher Interviews

‘Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools’ is a doctoral research study is being carried out by Rachael Byrne under the supervision of Dr Regina Murphy, Dr Una McCabe and Dr Francis Ward of the School of Arts Education and Movement within the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. This research seeks to explore an approach to music education founded on active, play-based methods for teachers within Irish primary schools.

Contemporary research points to the value of active, child-centred and play-based teaching and learning in primary schools and it is important that we begin to establish its potential for support the teaching of music in Irish primary schools by non-specialist (Music) teachers, especially since much of the research in the field of music education has focused on the teaching of music by specialists as opposed to mainstream class teachers.

Given your recent experiences teaching music through active, child-centred and play-based strategies, your views and strategies in relation to this area would be very beneficial to this research. I am conscious that your time is precious, so if you choose to participate in this aspect of the research, you will asked to take part in an interview, at location of your choice and at a time and date that suits your schedule. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

Your privacy will be protected and any reference made to anything you say in the interview will be associated with a pseudonym. With this in mind, there will be no indicators regarding you or your school that will impact the level of confidentiality I can assure within the research at a global level. However, given the small group of teachers involved, the use of blurred photographs and references that will be made to the class level you are teaching, at a more local level, there will be certain limitations to the level of confidentiality I can assure in relation to this study. I will record the interview proceedings and will send a copy of the transcripts for your attention, such that if you wish, you can make any amendments or comments you would like, or remove anything from the record, if you so choose.

Data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research and any related conference proceedings or subsequent publications. Data will be stored securely and disposed of after a period of five years following completion of the research. They will be stored in line with data protection guidelines, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in keeping with, and subject to legal requirements. It is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions.

You are entirely within your rights to change your mind regarding participation in the study and to withdraw at any time.

When the project is completed, I will send a synopsis of the results to yourself and all other participants and arrange for a group meeting to go through the results in more detail.

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: The secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Music Education - Professional Learning Community

Plain Language Statement

‘Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools’ is a doctoral research study being carried out by Rachael Byrne under the supervision of Dr. Regina Murphy of the School of Arts Education and Movement within the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. This research seeks to explore the potential to generate and implement an approach to music education founded on active, play-based methods for teachers within Irish primary schools.

Contemporary research points to the value of active, child-centred and play-based teaching and learning in primary schools and it is important that we begin to establish its potential for support the teaching of music in Irish primary schools by non-specialist teachers, especially since much of the research in the field of music education has focused on the teaching of music by specialists.

It is hoped that participating in this professional learning community will offer you lots of useful resources, ideas and supports as you begin to implement an active, play-based approach to music education in your classroom. I am conscious that your time is precious, so let me outline the time commitments related to participation in this research study.

You will be asked to provide written reflections based on your experiences teaching music and to take some pictures that demonstrate this approach in action in your classroom context. The research will involve meeting as a group at least once a month, for up to one hour, at a time and place that suits all participants. At these meetings, you will be asked to share your experiences implementing this approach in your classroom and to listen to others. It is expected to be an open and collaborative group where participants can offer support and advice to one another, without judgement, to aid understanding in the potential to use this approach in Irish classrooms. These meetings will be video recorded to support and inform the research process. At the end of the research, all of your reflections from the beginning until the end of the process will be returned to you and you will be asked to provide a reflection on your journey.

Your evaluations will be anonymous, your privacy will be protected and any reference made to anything you have written will be associated with a pseudonym. With this in mind, there will be no indicators regarding you or your school that will impact the level of confidentiality I can assure within the research at a global level. However, given the small group of teachers involved, the use of blurred photographs and references that will be made to the class level you are teaching, at a more local level, there will be certain limitations to the level of confidentiality I can assure in relation to this study.

Data collected will only be used for the purposes of this research and any related conference proceedings or subsequent publications. Data will be stored securely and disposed of after a period of five years following completion of the research. They will be stored in line with data protection guidelines, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in keeping with, and subject to legal requirements. It is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions.

APPENDIX N: INFORMED CONSENT/ASSENT DOCUMENTATION

Informed Consent Form for Parents of Pupils

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE

‘Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools’

Rachael Byrne (Doctoral Student)
Dr. Regina Murphy (Principal Supervisor)
School of Arts Education and Movement
Dublin City University
0857849739
rachael.byrne68@mail.dcu.ie

CLARIFICATION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Your child is being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to give consent for your child to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to develop an active, play-based approach to music education and explore teachers’ experiences implementing this approach in their classrooms within the Irish primary school context.

CONFIRMATION OF REQUIREMENTS

Parent of Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No in each case)

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)	Yes/ No
I understand the information provided	Yes/ No
I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study	Yes/ No
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions	Yes/ No
I am aware that my child’s picture will be taken, with all faces and crests blurred out	Yes/No

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

My child’s participation in this study is voluntary. I, or he/she, may choose to withdraw this participation at any point.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Data will be confidential, faces and crests will be blurred out and pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of all participants and schools. Once photographs have been edited for confidentiality, originals will be deleted immediately. All data will be kept securely within encrypted and password protected files and drives, and accessed on an encrypted laptop.

Informed Consent Form for Pupils

RESEARCH PROJECT TITLE

'Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools'

Rachael Byrne (Doctoral Student)
Regina Murphy (Supervisor)
School of Arts Education and Movement
Dublin City University

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS RESEARCH?

You are being asked to take part in a research project. Before you decide if you would like to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will mean for you. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you have any questions.

This research project is about trying to make music as fun and enjoyable as possible for primary schools in Ireland.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO?

1. Read these sentences
2. Colour in the happy face if the sentence is true
3. Colour in the sad face if it is false

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)



I understand what I have read and been told about this research project



Music Education - Professional Learning Community

Informed Consent Form

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE

‘Exploring an active, play-based approach to music education for Irish primary schools’

Rachael Byrne (Doctoral Student)

0857849739

rachael.byrne68@mail.dcu.ie

Dr. Regina Murphy (Principal Supervisor)

School of Arts Education and Movement

Dublin City University

CLARIFICATION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to develop an active, play-based approach to music education and explore teachers’ experiences implementing this approach in their classrooms within the Irish primary school context.

CONFIRMATION OF REQUIREMENTS

Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No in each case)

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)	Yes/No
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I understand the information provided	Yes/No
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I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study	Yes/No
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I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions	Yes/No
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I am aware that our meetings will be video-recorded	Yes/No
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APPENDIX O: CODEBOOK 1 - CONSTANT COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Stage 1 - Inductive Category Coding [295 initial codes]	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
A teaching moment	1	1
Active learning	1	2
Adaptation	1	1
Attitudes to singing	2	15
Behaviour of class	1	2
Boys	1	2
Bringing pupils together	1	1
Challenge	1	4
Child-centred	1	1
Class prior experiences of music education	2	9
Classroom management	2	2
Competition	1	1
Completing more advanced work	1	3
Convenience	1	2
Convenience (2)	1	1
Differentiation	2	3
Discussion	1	1
Dynamics	1	1
Enjoyment	1	15
Experiential	1	1
Fights	1	1
Groupwork	2	8
Humour	1	2
Instruments	1	2
Instruments of the orchestra	1	1
Learning	2	4
Methodology Deployed	28	609
A Free_constructive activity	9	82
Dramatic-Role Play	7	99
Gamification	12	169
Movement - Clapping rhythms	1	3
Singing or Circle Game	15	256
More Singing	1	2
Opposite of music theory class	1	1
Other approaches to music education	1	5
Peer assessment	1	1
Planning	1	1
Play-based learning	10	19
Considerations	2	7
Play-based music education	1	1
Active learning	1	1
Active music across the school	1	1
Alignment with the curriculum	2	2
An all-round approach	1	1
Bogged down	1	1
Core introductory games for teachers not confident in music	1	1

Did on teaching practice	1	2
Easier way to teach	1	1
Enjoyment	1	1
Fun with a view to teaching content	1	1
Games	1	2
Grabbing pupils' attention	1	2
How we should be teaching music to primary kids	1	2
ICT	1	1
Integrated	1	1
Little songs	1	1
More focused	1	1
More planning for teachers	1	2
Movement	1	1
Natural	1	1
Requirements for teachers	1	2
Resources	1	1
Time constraints	1	1
Train teachers in this way	1	1
Units of work could be helpful	1	1
prize	1	1
Pupil Feelings	1	1
Pupil teacher relationship	1	1
Pupils attitudes	2	8
Repetition	1	2
Resources	2	17
Scaffolding	2	6
School conrezt	1	2
Senses	1	1
Singing outside of classs time	1	2
Social	1	1
Space	1	3
Special needs	1	4
Structure	1	1
Teacher feelings	1	1
Teachers focused on PD	2	4
Teachers' toolkit	2	5
Teaching one another	2	3
Thoughts before beginning to use strategies in classroom	1	1
Time management	1	1
Transferring skills to instruments	1	1
Unique learning context	1	2
Watching each other	1	1
whole class	1	1
work vs play	1	2

Stage 2 - Refining Categories [192 codes]	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Play-based music education	33	2300
Practicalities	33	745
Resources	32	272
Learning contexts	30	178
Need for planning and preparation	17	62
Assessment	13	25
Supporting teachers in play-based music education	13	74
Expectations v reality	11	39
Flexible to use	11	30
Classroom management, safety and noise level	10	19
Teacher feelings, confidence and enjoyment	9	22
Time management	7	13
Fewer chances to guess	1	1
Confusion	1	1
Curricular and holistic learning	33	597
Curricular learning	33	485
Broader development	25	112
Game-based elements	32	520
Fun and enjoyment	30	148
Motivation and engagement	20	50
Challenge, competition and progression	19	49
Purposeful and Meaningful	17	44
Rules	15	34
Freedom	10	24
Repetition	8	11
Game first then music	6	8
Team	6	7
Making mistakes	5	11
Attainable	4	4
Natural	4	5
Luck	1	2
Modelling and Scaffolded Learning	28	91
Sequential - Building on current practice and prior experiences	8	13
Peer modelling	6	6
Inclusion and differentiation (incl boys)	20	64
Teachers out of comfort zone	17	118
Pupils voice	12	44
Need for familiarity with content	8	17
Behaviour of class	6	19
Flexibility of teachers	3	6
No need for this with resources	1	1
Relationship to previous teaching and more formal teaching	16	122
Easier way to teach	10	15
Prior play-based music teaching and experience	6	13
How we should be teaching music to primary kids	4	6
Easier for children to experience success and capable of more advanced work	4	9
Instruments and instrumental teaching	3	7
Play	11	37
Play-based education	5	10

Music and play not seen as related	4	4
Universal	2	4
Structured play	1	4
A teaching moment	3	4
Worked across the board	1	2
Methodology Deployed	27	50

Stage 3 - Exploring Relationship and Patterns Across Categories	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Practices of Playful Music Pedagogy	33	1399
Meaningful Engagement	32	368
Meaningful Engagement, Anticipation and Participation	27	141
Inclusion, SEN, differentiation	22	79
Fun and enjoyment	30	148
Holistic Learning	32	660
Scaffolding and Modelling	28	91
Curricular learning	32	406
21st Century Skill Development, Well-being and Broader Learning	25	163
Classroom Culture Shift and Transformation	31	371
Informal Learning	27	112
Continuum of ownership	21	117
Comfort zones	20	101
Challenging stereotypes	11	39

APPENDIX P: CODEBOOK 2 - DIRECTED CONTENT ANALYSIS

Stage 1 - Preparation	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Methodology Deployed	24	37
Musical Games-Play	20	28
Singing or Circle Game	13	13
Gamification	10	17
Guided Musical Play	8	9
Dramatic-Role Play	3	3
A Free_constructive activity	5	6

Phase 2 - Organisation	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Methodology Deployed	24	37
Teacher led	20	28
Gamification	10	17
Role for the teacher	14	65
Selecting resources	11	36
Co-participant	5	6
Pre-teaching	5	5
Reminding of rules	5	5
Scaffolding and modelling	4	5
Teacher leading group and differentiating	4	5
Assessment	2	2
Planning	1	1
Resources	11	36
Game types	10	15
Space	4	4
Percussion instruments	3	3
Rules	3	3
Small object	2	3
Mini-whiteboards	1	2
Coats	1	1
Game template and counters	1	1
Hula hoops	1	1
Lesson plan	1	1
Musical excerpts	1	1
Simplified sheet music	1	1
Classroom organisation	24	30
Whole class - Circle game	22	24
Individual - Sitting at desks	5	5
Groupwork	6	6
Photographs	5	5
Singing or Circle Game	13	13
Role for the teacher	16	114
Selecting resources	13	46
Songs	12	19
Small objects	6	6
Space	4	6
Time	3	3
Ground rules	1	1
Scaffolding and modelling	15	38
Practice beforehand	4	6
Teacher understanding and skill	3	5
Co-participant	10	11
Assessment	6	6
Rules and classroom management	5	5
Differentiating	2	4
Facilitating and adapting	4	4
Resources	13	46
Songs	12	19
Small objects	6	6

Space	4	6
Time	3	3
Ground rules	1	1
Classroom organisation	25	42
Whole class - circle game	16	18
Collaborative Groupwork	11	16
Playing outside the classroom context	6	7
Pupils watching each other	1	1
Photographs	14	14
Child directed	8	9
A Free_constructive activity	5	6
Role for the teacher	7	37
Selecting resources	6	13
Percussion instruments	4	4
Sufficient time	3	3
Writing utensils	2	3
Paper and pencil	1	1
Whiteboard	1	1
Hula hoops	1	1
Space	1	1
Story	1	1
Scaffolding and modelling	3	5
Facilitating	3	4
Assessment	2	3
Consolidating	2	3
Differentiating	3	3
Classroom management and rules	1	2
Planning	2	2
Co-participant	1	1
Pre-teaching	1	1
Classroom organisation	10	13
Collaborative Groupwork	9	10
Individual, desk-based activity	2	2
Whole class	1	1
Resources	6	13
Percussion instruments	4	4
Sufficient time	3	3
Writing utensils	2	3
Paper and pencil	1	1
Whiteboard	1	1
Hula hoops	1	1
Space	1	1
Story	1	1
Photographs	4	4
Dramatic-Role Play	3	3
Classroom organisation	9	18
Small group	5	5
Outside the classroom context	4	4
Whole class	3	3
Performing for others	2	2
Individual	1	1
Role for the teacher	5	11

Selecting resources	3	9
Musical excerpts	3	3
Space	2	3
ICT	1	1
Co-participant	1	1
Facilitating	1	1
Resources	3	7
Musical excerpts	3	3
Space	2	3
ICT	1	1
Photographs	6	6