

		Scoil Mhuire Maigh Cuilinn PLEAN SCOILE CEOIL MUSIC PLAN 2026			
1.		Réamhrá/Introduction			
The school’s Music Plan was revised at the end of the 2025/26 school year. The plan sets out the school's approach to Music education, reflecting reflects the aims and principles of the Primary Music Curriculum, incorporating the principles and methodology of the Colourstrings Music Programme.					
2.		Réasúnaíocht/Rationale			
We see Music as a central part of every child's holistic development. Active participation in the Music lesson, i.e. in singing, listening, performing, composing, improvising and responding to music fosters creativity, confidence, and a lifelong love of and appreciation for music. The Colourstrings approach provides a structured, sequential and child-centred framework that develops musical literacy through singing, movement, games and high-quality musical experiences. Since 2013, Scoil Mhuire’s partnership with Maoín Cheoil na Gaillimhe has allowed us to provide specialist music instruction while supporting class teachers in reinforcing musical learning throughout the week. This collaborative approach ensures that pupils receive consistent, high-quality music education in a graduated, inclusive and developmentally appropriate way that aligns with the aims and learning outcomes of the Primary Music Curriculum. Our partnership with Maoín Cheoil na Gaillimhe also contributes to teachers' professional learning and to the development of a sustainable whole-school culture of music.					
3.		Fís agus Aidhmeanna/Vision and Aims			
3.1		Fís na Scoile/School’s Vision			
Our vision is to foster a culture of Music where every child is helped encouraged and to develop his/her musical potential, creativity and confidence through the experience of high-quality music education. Since 2013, our long-standing partnership with Maoín Cheoil na Gaillimhe has been central to achieving this vision. Through the expertise of visiting Colourstrings specialist teachers and the ongoing support of class teachers, pupils experience a rich, collaborative music programme that is aligned with the Primary Music Curriculum. The school is committed to developing musically literate, confident and enthusiastic learners who appreciate music as a means of personal expression, communication, creativity and wellbeing. Through the					

Colourstrings philosophy, pupils develop strong foundations in singing, rhythm, movement, listening and music reading, preparing them for lifelong engagement with music.

The School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process for 2025–2026 saw the introduction of the recorder as a foundational classical instrument for pupils in Third to Sixth Class with a view to meaningful participation in the Colourstrings Orchestra, enabling progression to more advanced woodwind instruments, where appropriate, and continued engagement with music at post-primary level and beyond.

3.2 Aidhmeanna/Aims

Through this Whole-School Music Plan, we aim to:

- expose pupils to high-quality music education consistent with the aims and learning outcomes of the Primary Music Curriculum
- build upon our long-standing partnership with Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe to deliver a high-quality, progressive and sustainable music programme for all classes
- implement the Colourstrings approach to develop pupils' musicianship through singing, movement, listening, musical games, creativity and active music-making
- foster a lifelong enjoyment and appreciation of music in our pupils
- develop pupils' musical literacy through the sequential teaching of rhythm, pitch, solfa, hand signs and standard music notation
- foster pupils' confidence and creativity through composing, improvising, performing and responding to music
- develop pupils' ability to sing and perform confidently
- support teachers' own musical confidence and professional development through collaborative practice with the visiting Colourstrings teachers;
- afford pupils the opportunity to learn a foundational classical instrument to instrumental through the school's recorder programme for pupils in Third to Sixth Class
- enable pupils to develop music-reading skills and instrumental technique through the recorder as a foundation for future learning;
- prepare pupils to participate meaningfully in Maoin Ceoil na Gaillimhe's Colourstrings Orchestra
- encourage pupils with an interest and aptitude in music to progress to the study of orchestral woodwind or other instruments and to continue their musical learning at post-primary level
- celebrate and promote Traditional Irish Music through the school's Grúpa Ceoil
- support pupils' wellbeing, cultural awareness and holistic development through Music
- cultivate a whole-school culture of music

This vision and these aims reflect the school's belief that sustained, high-quality music education—delivered through the successful partnership between Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe, specialist Colourstrings teachers and class teachers—provides children with the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm to become confident, independent musicians and lifelong participants in music.

3.3 Prionsabail Threoracha/Guiding Principles

Teaching and learning will:

- be child-centred
- be inclusive
- encourage creativity
- promote active learning
- value process as well as performance
- foster musical independence
- prioritise progression from year to year

4. An Curaclam Ceoil/The Music Curriculum

The school's music programme is based on the strands and strand units of the Primary School Curriculum: Music (1999). The Colourstrings Programme provides the sequential methodology through which pupils experience, develop and achieve the learning objectives of the curriculum.

Music learning is cumulative. New concepts are introduced by the visiting Colourstrings teachers from Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe and are reinforced and extended by class teachers during weekly follow-up lessons. This approach allows pupils to reinforce their understanding and practice their skills as they progress through the school.

The three Strands of the Primary School Curriculum are:

1. Listening and Responding
2. Performing
3. Composing

Listening and Responding

- listen actively
- identify musical elements
- discuss music
- respond through movement, drawing and discussion
- experience Irish and international music
- explore live and recorded performances

Performing

- sing frequently
- develop pitch accuracy
- maintain steady beat
- perform action songs

- play classroom percussion
- accompany songs
- perform independently and collaboratively

Composing and Improvising

- create rhythmic patterns
- improvise melodies
- compose using known notes
- create soundscapes
- use graphic notation
- notate simple compositions

4.1 An Clár Colourstrings/The Colourstrings Programme

The school delivers its Music curriculum through the Colourstrings Music Programme, an internationally recognised, Kodály-inspired approach to music education.

Colourstrings places singing at the heart of musical learning and develops children's musicianship through a carefully sequenced programme of songs, games, movement, listening, rhythm, solfa, hand signs and music reading.

Musical concepts are experienced first through active participation before being introduced in symbolic form, enabling pupils to become confident, musically literate learners. This approach aligns closely with the aims of the Primary School Curriculum and supports the school's vision of providing every child with a rich, inclusive and progressive music education.

4.2 Dul Chun Cinn Scoile Uile/Whole-School Progression

Class Level	Listening & Responding	Performing	Composing	Colourstrings Focus
Junior Infants	Listen to environmental sounds, songs, rhymes and contrasting music. Respond through movement and discussion.	Singing games, action songs, beat, pulse, voice exploration, movement, body percussion.	Explore sound-making, invent simple rhythms, musical play.	Singing, steady beat, movement, musical games, inner hearing, musical enjoyment.
Senior Infants	Recognise loud/soft, fast/slow, high/low. Listen attentively to short musical pieces.	Accurate singing, rhythm games, echo singing, simple ostinati, percussion.	Create simple rhythmic patterns, respond through movement and drawing.	Pulse, rhythm awareness, pitch development, preparation for solfa.
First Class	Identify rhythm, beat and melodic contour. Listen to	Solfa singing (so-mi-la), Curwen hand	Improvise simple rhythmic and melodic	Introduction to musical literacy

	Irish and international music.	signs, rhythm syllables, pentatonic songs, percussion.	phrases using known notes.	through singing before notation.
Second Class	Recognise phrase, tempo, dynamics and simple musical form.	Extend solfa, introduce staff notation, partner songs, simple two-part work, tuned percussion.	Compose rhythmic and melodic patterns using known notation.	Reading and writing simple music; developing musical independence.
Third Class	Listen analytically to a range of musical styles and identify musical elements.	Fluent music reading, recorder introduced, ensemble playing, rounds, part singing.	Compose melodies and accompaniments using recorder and notation.	Recorder programme begins; music literacy strengthened through instrumental performance.
Fourth Class	Recognise structure, texture and expressive features in music.	Develop recorder technique, ensemble playing, harmony, tuned percussion, choir.	Compose longer rhythmic and melodic pieces; explore form.	Increasing musical fluency and ensemble awareness.
Fifth Class	Analyse Irish, classical and world music using appropriate vocabulary.	Confident recorder performance, part singing, orchestral preparation, expressive performance.	Compose using notation; arrange simple pieces; improvisation.	Developing musicianship and preparation for orchestral participation.
Sixth Class	Critically evaluate music from a variety of genres and traditions.	Confident ensemble performance, independent music reading, recorder repertoire, leadership opportunities.	Compose and notate original pieces using learned musical concepts.	Independent musicianship, preparation for post-primary music and further instrumental study.

4.3 Forbairt Litearthachta Ceoil/Development of Musical Literacy

The Colourstrings programme develops musical literacy through a carefully planned sequence appropriate to children's language development.

Junior and Senior Infants

Children develop musical understanding through:

- singing every lesson
- musical games
- listening
- movement
- body percussion
- beat and rhythm activities
- pitch awareness
- musical memory

No formal notation is introduced until children have experienced musical concepts aurally.

First and Second Class

Children begin to develop musical literacy through:

- movable-do solfa
- Curwen hand signs
- rhythm syllables
- inner hearing
- simple music reading
- music writing
- pentatonic repertoire
- improvisation

Third to Sixth Class

Musical literacy develops through:

- fluent reading of standard notation
- recorder performance
- melodic and rhythmic dictation
- ensemble playing
- composition
- harmony

The recorder provides an authentic context for applying notation skills and deepening pupils' understanding of rhythm, pitch, phrasing and musical expression.

4.4 Dul Chun Cinn Uirlise/Instrumental Progression

The school's instrumental programme reflects the Colourstrings philosophy that musical literacy should precede and support instrumental learning.

Class Level	Instrumental Focus
Junior Infants	Body percussion, untuned percussion, singing voice
Senior Infants	Tuned and untuned percussion, singing
First Class	Tuned percussion, solfa, preparation for instrumental playing

Second Class	Tuned percussion, music reading, instrumental readiness
Third Class	Recorder introduced through SSE
Fourth Class	Developing recorder fluency and ensemble skills
Fifth Class	Advanced recorder repertoire, ensemble performance
Sixth Class	Confident recorder performance, preparation for Colourstrings Orchestra and progression to woodwind instruments
5.	Cur i bhfeidhm an Churaclaim Ceoil/Delivery of the Music Curriculum
5.1	Planning
The Class Teacher and the Colourstrings Teacher will work collaboratively in delivering Music lessons. The Colourstrings Teachers plans in accordance with the Colourstrings programme, ensuring learning experiences align with the strands and strand units of the Primary School Curriculum: Music (1999) Plans include: • Introduction of new musical concepts • Selection of age-appropriate songs, games and listening activities • Development of pupils' musical literacy through singing, rhythm, solfa and notation • progressive recorder instruction for pupils in Third to Sixth Class • lesson content to support follow-up teaching by the Class Teacher The Class Teacher plans a separate weekly follow-up lesson. Plans includes: • revision and reinforcement of the musical concepts introduced by the Colourstrings teacher • practice of songs, rhythm activities and musical games • consolidation of solfa, hand signs and music-reading skills; • reinforcement of recorder skills and repertoire in Third to Sixth Class; • integration of music with other curricular areas Each Class Teacher prepares a concise Scéim Coicíse and Cuntas Míosúil.	
5.2	Delivery
Two visiting Colourstrings teachers from Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe visit the school one day each week. Each class receives one 30-minute specialist Colourstrings lesson each week, taught by one of the visiting Colourstrings teachers.	

The Senior Colourstrings Teacher will teach 3rd to 6th Class.
The Junior Colourstrings Teacher will teach Junior Infants to 2nd Class.

One additional 30-minute follow-up lesson each week, taught by the class teacher at a separate time, reinforcing the musical concepts, songs/tunes and skills introduced by the Colourstrings teacher.

This collaboration aims to ensure ensures continuity of learning, reinforcement of new musical concepts and opportunities for pupils to consolidate their musical understanding and skills.

The Colourstrings teacher and class teacher work in partnership to provide a coherent and progressive music programme for all pupils.

5.3 Methodology

Music is taught through a combination of specialist instruction and classroom reinforcement.

Colourstrings Teachers introduce new musical concepts using the Colourstrings methodology. Lessons include:

- singing (Folk-song-based repertoire)
- musical games
- solfa and hand signs Movable Do solfa and Curwen hand signs
- movement
- rhythm activities
- musical literacy
- listening
- improvisation
- creative musical activities

Class Teachers:

- revise songs learned during the specialist lesson
- practise rhythm and pulse activities
- reinforce solfa and hand signs
- revisit musical games
- consolidate music-reading skills
- develop confidence through repetition
- integrate music with other areas of learning where appropriate

This collaborative teaching model promotes consistency, progression and long-term retention of musical learning.

5.4 Assessment

Primary responsibility for assessment lies with the Class Teacher. Assessment methods used by the Class Teacher include:

Teacher Observation

- participation

- confidence
- rhythm
- pitch
- creativity

Assessment Tasks

- Performing (singing and/or playing the Recorder)
- composing
- improvising
- listening responses (verbal, written or graphic)

Self-Assessment

Children reflect on:

- what they have learned
- their own performance

Feedback from the Colourstrings Teacher

5.5 Integration with Other Curricular Areas

Music affords opportunities for cross curricular learning. Teachers will make appropriate links with other curricular areas to enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Examples of integration include:

- Language (English and Gaeilge): songs, rhymes, poetry, oral language, vocabulary and storytelling
- Drama: role-play, movement, expression and performance.
- Physical Education: movement, dance
- Visual Arts: responding to music through drawing, painting and creative design
- Digital Learning: using digital technologies to record performances, listen to music, compose and support musical learning where appropriate.

5.6 Idirghealú agus Rochtain Chomhionann/Differentiation and Equality of Access

The school aims to allow every pupil to have access to high-quality music education. Teaching and learning activities are differentiated for pupils with differing needs and abilities. Through the inclusive principles of the Colourstrings programme, appropriate support, challenge and adaptation allows every child to participate, experience success and develop their musical potential. Colourstrings Teachers and Class Teachers collaborate to help and encourage all pupils to participate in Music to the best of their abilities.

5.7 Áiseanna/Resources

The school collaborates with Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe in providing and maintaining a range of resources to support the delivery of the Music Curriculum. These include Colourstrings Teaching Materials, percussion

instruments, recorders, audio equipment, digital resources, song collections and other age-appropriate musical equipment.

5.8 Sláinte agus Sábhailteacht/Health and Safety

The school seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment for all musical activities. Pupils are encouraged to handle and store musical instruments with care and to use them responsibly.

Particular attention is given to the hygienic use of Recorders. Each pupil is assigned their own recorder, which is clearly labelled and is not shared with other pupils. Pupils are encouraged to clean their recorder regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance, and instruments are stored safely and hygienically when not in use. Teachers supervise the handling, storage and use of instruments to ensure good hygiene, prevent damage and encourage respect for school property.

6. FMS 2025/26/SSE 2025/26 The Recorder

The School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process for the 2025/26 school year saw the introduction of the recorder as a foundational classical instrument for pupils in Third to Sixth Class.

The recorder is an accessible and versatile musical instrument that strengthens pupils' music-reading skills, ensemble playing and overall musicianship. By providing every child with the opportunity to learn the recorder, we aim to establish a pathway towards participation in the Colourstrings Orchestra, progression to more advanced woodwind instruments where appropriate, and continued engagement with music at post-primary level and beyond.

Aims of the Recorder Programme

The Recorder Programme aims to:

- improve pupils' ability to read music fluently
- develop understanding of rhythm, melody, phrasing and musical expression
- allow every child to learn a musical instrument as part of the classroom music programme
- develop confidence in solo and ensemble performance
- afford pupils the opportunity to participate meaningfully in Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe's Colourstrings Orchestra
- establish a strong musical foundation that will support progression to more advanced woodwind instruments in the future
- encourage continued participation in music throughout post-primary education and beyond

Organisation

The recorder programme is delivered collaboratively through the school's partnership with **Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe**.

Each week the Senior Colourstrings Teacher introduces new recorder techniques, repertoire and music-reading skills during the weekly 30 minute lesson
the class teacher revises, practises and reinforces this learning during the separate 30-minute classroom music lesson.

This dual-teaching approach provides pupils with regular opportunities to consolidate their learning and develop confidence through consistent practice.

Collaborative Learning

An important feature of this initiative is that class teachers learn the recorder from the Colourstrings Teacher alongside their pupils. This shared learning approach:

- models lifelong learning
- promotes a positive learning culture
- helps teachers to reinforce recorder skills

Expected Outcomes

By the end of Sixth Class, it is expected that pupils will:

- read age-appropriate musical notation
- perform confidently on the recorder both individually and as part of an ensemble
- demonstrate understanding of rhythm, pitch and musical form
- participate actively in school performances and the Colourstrings Orchestra
- have the musical knowledge and practical skills to continue learning more advanced woodwind instruments
- have a solid foundation for studying music at post-primary level and for lifelong engagement with music

Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of this SSE initiative will be evaluated through:

- teacher observation
- pupil self-assessment and reflection
- feedback from the Colourstrings teachers, class teachers, pupils and parents

Success Criteria

- Pupils in Third to Sixth Class demonstrate measurable progress in recorder playing and music reading and progression in music-reading and recorder skills
- Pupils participate confidently in whole-class and ensemble performances
- Class teachers confidently reinforce the recorder as part of weekly music lessons

- Pupils leave primary school with the musical literacy and instrumental skills to continue studying music at post-primary level
- Pupils progress to other orchestral woodwind instruments
- Increased numbers of pupils participate in the Colourstrings Orchestra

The findings will inform future whole-school planning for music and support the continued development of instrumental learning across the school.

7. Ceol Traidisiúnta/Traditional Irish Music

Irish traditional music is an important part of Moycullen's cultural heritage and the school is committed to fostering an appreciation of Irish traditional music through extracurricular activities and its links with The Moycullen Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE **Mhaigh Cuilinn**) which performs for pupils during Seachtain na Gaeilge and Seachtain na Féile Ealaíne.

The school has a vibrant **Grúpa Ceoil**, which meets weekly at lunchtime to give pupils the opportunity to learn new tunes and play together in an informal and enjoyable traditional music session. These sessions are led on a voluntary basis by members of the teaching staff who themselves have an interest in Irish Traditional music. The Grúpa Ceoil performs at Communion and Confirmation ceremonies, concerts and special school events.

8. Cór na Scoile/School Choir

The School Choir affords pupils the opportunity to develop their singing and performance skills in a supportive and enjoyable environment. The choir is led by the member of the School Leadership Team **with** curricular responsibility for Music and rehearses at lunchtime every other week.

The School Choir performs at important school events, including school celebrations, concerts, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Seachtain Chultúr, Seachtain na Féile Ealaíne and at religious ceremonies such as the Annual School Mass and First Communion and Confirmation ceremonies. Participation in the School Choir fosters confidence, teamwork, and a sense of belonging, while contributing to the rich musical life of the school.

9. Rólanna agus Freagreachtaí/Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Supports implementation of the policy
- Ensures visiting Colourstrings Teachers from Maoin Ceoil na Gaillimhe are Garda Vetted by the school and that other relevant Child Protection and Safeguarding measures are in place

- Facilitates professional development
- Allocates resources

Music Coordinator

- Liaises with Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe and Colourstrings Teachers
- Leads whole-school planning
- Organises resources
- Supports Class Teachers
- Coordinates performances and events

Class Teachers

- Implement the Music Curriculum and Colourstrings methodology.
- Assess pupils' progress
- Collaborate with the Colourstrings Teacher in planning and implementing the Music programme
- Foster an inclusive and positive musical environment

Colourstrings Teachers

- Introduce new musical concepts through singing, movement, musical games, solfa, rhythm, listening and music literacy
- Teach and develop the Recorder programme for pupils in Third to Sixth Class as part of the school's School Self-Evaluation
- Collaborating with class teachers in planning and assessment
- Advise and mentor class teachers on the content to be revised and reinforced during follow-up lessons
- Promote an inclusive, positive and enjoyable learning environment

10. Critéir Rathúlachta/Success Criteria

The success of the Music Plan will be evident when:

- singing and playing of musical instruments is heard regularly throughout the school
- pupils participate enthusiastically in Music lessons
- musical skills progress systematically
- children demonstrate increasing musical literacy
- children perform confidently and enthusiastically
- teachers consistently implement the Colourstrings approach

11. athbhreithniú agus Daingniú/Review and Ratification**Review**

This Music Plan will be reviewed as necessary, to reflect updates to the Primary Curriculum Framework, national guidance, and developments within the Colourstrings Programme.

Ratification

This Music Plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 19th October 2026



Chairperson
Board of Management



Principal

