

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MUSIC LIFE SKILLS  
IN SCHOOLS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

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## **Abstract**

This mixed methods study explores the implementation of Music Life Skills in Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs) in New South Wales, focusing on the perceptions of educators and their programming methods, in order to determine the suitability of this program for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. Case studies of two schools were conducted. Participants were students with special needs and their classroom teacher. In these settings, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers and observations of music lessons. Additional questionnaire data were collected from educators at a selection of SSPs. Data were analysed through open and axial coding. Three common themes emerged from the data: experience and perceptions of educators; programming and teaching strategies; and student responsiveness. The findings of this study contribute to the limited body of research in regard to Music Life Skills and programs available for students with disabilities in Australia. Recommendations are made for further study, including implementation of Music Life Skills in other contexts, such as the inclusive setting.

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## **Abbreviations**

BOS:	Board of Studies
DET:	NSW Department of Education and Training
KLA:	Key Learning Area
IEP:	Individual Education Plan
MLS:	Music Life Skills
NSW:	New South Wales, Australia
SSPs:	Schools for Specific Purposes

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

“It is necessary to continue focusing on the needs, interests and abilities of each student when planning a program for secondary schooling” (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 6). Access to education for all students is essential, and for those with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders, education is necessary for personal growth and cognitive development (Ashman & Elkins, 2005). Depending on the severity of their disability and at the discretion of parents or carers, students are placed in a school which caters for their needs, by providing a program of study which “meets the particular needs, goals and priorities” of the student (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 40).

In 1999, Music Life Skills (MLS) was introduced in NSW, to provide an opportunity for senior secondary students with disabilities to finish their schooling (Board of Studies, 1999). It was further developed for junior secondary years, as a component of the Music Years 7-10 Syllabus, allowing students to continue their learning from one phase of secondary schooling to the next (Board of Studies, 2003, 2009a). According to the BOS (1999), by giving teachers a structure to follow they can “foster the intellectual, social and moral development of students” (p. 5) and prepare them for their future as active citizens and for potential employment.

Within these programs, teachers are provided with a variety of outcomes, guidelines, standards and suggestions for content, which they can adapt for each student depending on the severity of their disability and individual needs. These programs can therefore be implemented in a variety of contexts, including the inclusive or segregated classrooms (Foreman, 2008; Jellison, 2006). Segregated contexts, such as Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs) and support units in regular schools, provide a nurturing environment for students with moderate to severe disabilities and developmental disorders, where they can fulfill the outcomes of programs such as MLS with a greater amount of support and assistance from their teacher (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009).



The National Review of School Music Education recognised that all students should have access to music education, including those students with special needs (Pascoe et al., 2005). It is essential to create and successfully implement a music education program suitable for students with disabilities. Music education is one of the many options provided to students in both inclusive and segregated settings, and includes content which benefits not only each student's musical ability, but also assists in developing various behaviours, cognitive abilities and communication, as suggested by research in music education and music therapy (Bunt, 2006; Delaney, 2000; Nevalainen, 2002; Schellenberg, 2005). The Life Skills component of the syllabus for senior secondary students not only incorporates music education, which could be defined as "focusing primarily on music related goals" (Adamek & Darrow, 2008, pp. 102-103), such as performing, composing and analysing music, but also music therapy, which allows students to achieve non-musical goals and develop as individuals.

### **Focus of the Study**

This study explores how MLS is implemented in SSPs, with a focus on teachers' perceptions and their choice to include particular content and achieve specific outcomes. Teacher familiarity has also been discussed to address the research problems identified. In many cases modified outcomes and content may be needed for one or more students. However, if the educator is unfamiliar with MLS, they may not be willing to implement it or may have difficulty creating an appropriate student-centred program. Research has expressed these concerns of music educators who are required to work with students with special needs (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Darrow, 1999; Scott, Jellison, Chappell, & Standridge, 2007). Additionally, this study examines student responsiveness during lessons that are programmed according to the MLS content and outcomes.

Previous research has shown the benefits of music education for students, particularly with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders (Delaney,

2000; Donnell, 2007; Kim, Wigram, & Gold, 2008). However, these studies tend to focus primarily on music therapy and are less inclined to assess the implementation of a music education program, particularly in NSW after the introduction of MLS. This study concentrates on the implementation of one specific music program in NSW, Life Skills, which can be used for students with a range of disabilities.

This mixed methods study explores the implementation of MLS at two SSPs that cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. Observations and interviews at these schools were used to determine the experience and perceptions of educators, student responsiveness and implementation of MLS, including the means of achieving a selection of outcomes. Additionally, questionnaires were sent to a selection of SSPs from across NSW, to obtain further data in regard to educators' perspectives on programming. The aim of this study is to ensure that all educators are more familiar with programming and therefore more willing to offer it to students who may require it in their class, either in an inclusive or segregated setting.

## **Research Questions**

The central question for this study is quite broad, while the subquestions address more specific areas that arise when researching the implementation of a particular program.

### **Central question:**

How is Music Life Skills implemented?

### **Subquestions:**

How does previous experience in music and special education affect educators' perceptions of Music Life Skills?

What teaching strategies do educators use to achieve the Music Life Skills outcomes?

How do students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders respond to the Music Life Skills content?

To answer these questions, both video recordings and field notes collected from observations of the two case study schools implementing MLS were used. Additionally, transcribed data from audio recorded interviews with the class teachers at the two case study schools were used alongside questionnaire responses from educators at a selection of SSPs across NSW. Exploring the implementation of a music education program designed for those with disabilities will allow educators to become familiar with the program's content and how to best cater for their students' needs (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 13).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to provide educators in NSW with a greater understanding of the MLS content and outcomes, which they can access for students with a range of disabilities who may not be able to fulfil the requirements of the regular syllabus. As music is beneficial to those with disabilities, this study discusses the means of creating a music program suitable for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders, so that special education teachers who are not trained in music and music educators who are not trained in special education, have access to information regarding programming and how to go about selecting outcomes for their students to achieve.

Minimal research discussing the implementation of music education programs in SSPs has been undertaken in comparison with research focusing on music therapy and its benefits. There is no evidence of research that has been conducted specifically in regard to MLS in music education contexts, therefore providing educators who program using MLS, or those who would like to use it, with limited knowledge regarding its effectiveness with particular students or within specific settings. Suggestions for further research in regard to MLS and curricula for students with disabilities will also be addressed.

As Life Skills was introduced relatively recently into the Music 7-10 Syllabus in 2003 (and the original 1999 program for senior secondary students was amended in 2009), it is a particularly relevant time to obtain feedback from those who have, or are currently using MLS, so that educators who use the program in the future are aware of the suitability of its content and outcomes for students (Board of Studies, 1999, 2003, 2009a). Further developments to MLS could also be made from recommendations presented, which will benefit not only the teachers, but also the students. It is hoped that the results from this study will provide those involved in special education with a greater understanding of the content available and how to implement it.

### **Definition of Terms**

Developmental disorder:

Any severe and chronic condition, attributable to a mental or physical impairment evident before age 22, which results in limitations in life activities such as learning, mobility, self-care and expressive language, such as Autism (Batshaw, Pellegrino, & Roizen, 2007).

Intellectual disability:

Limitation in intelligence and some problems in functional behaviour. Also referred to as 'learning disabilities' (Foreman, 2008).

Life Skills:

A program introduced into the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) curriculum in 2003, in the Music Years 7-10 Syllabus, in accordance with the K-10 Curriculum Framework. This followed the introduction of the Music component (Module 3) of the Stage 6 Creative Arts Life Skills Syllabus in 1999, which was amended in 2007 and later in 2009. Teachers are able to access the Life Skills modified content and outcomes to develop a relevant and meaningful program for the student if they feel that the content of the Music Years 7-10 Syllabus is not appropriate.

Music education:

Education focusing on music-related goals such as learning to sing, perform, compose and analyse music. (Adamek & Darrow, 2008).

Music therapy:

The use of music to achieve non-music goals and to address students' development in cognitive, behavioural, physical, emotional, social, and communication domains. (Adamek & Darrow, 2008).

Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs):

Schools from pre-school to Year 12, that provide a specialised educational setting in which learning support plans are collaboratively developed, implemented and monitored. (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009).

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Students with disabilities should always have access to a music education program that is relevant and suited to their needs (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Board of Studies, 2003; Pascoe et al., 2005). The MLS content and outcomes provide educators in NSW with an opportunity to create a varied program for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disabilities. While Stage 6 MLS has evolved since its introduction in 1999, the awareness of MLS among educators and their willingness to implement it is unclear (Board of Studies, 1999).

The purpose of this review is to first discuss special education, including its presence in Australia and the educational settings where it is currently offered (Elkins, 2005; Foreman, 2008; Jellison, 2006). Music and its place in special education will also be discussed, particularly focusing on the roles of music education and music therapy (Ockelford, 2008). This review will define Life Skills, discuss the development of its content and explore the available resources and documentation, as provided by the BOS (1999, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009). Finally, special education music curricula developed and implemented in other countries will be examined to provide a comparison to MLS and emphasise the need for student-centred programming (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Jacquiss & Paterson, 2005).

### **Special Education**

“Students with disabilities have developmental needs that must be addressed by schools and school systems working in partnerships with parents” (Elkins, 2005, p. 39). Due to a significant change to the special education system in Australia during the last 30 years, parents are provided with educational options for their children with disabilities that were not available prior to the 1980s in NSW. Inclusion has become increasingly popular for students with mild disabilities. Foreman (2008) discusses the concept of inclusion as one that extends beyond the school environment or education, and into society itself. Inclusion is used to describe “the education of students with disabilities in general educational settings” (Foreman, 2008, p. 14),

where a majority of their learning occurs in the general classroom while other special services are available (Foreman, 2008; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2007).

Inclusion, as a movement and philosophy, is a subject of extensive debate due to the implications for educators regarding the process of including students, as discussed by Foreman (2008). Inclusive education provides opportunities for students as well as a sense of community, which are arguably greater than if students attend SSPs. However, music educators have expressed concerns about their ability to teach students with special needs and particularly those with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders within inclusive settings (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Darrow, 1999; Delaney, 2000; Scott et al., 2007; VanWeelden & Whipple, 2007; Wilson & McCrary, 1996).

Much of the MLS support documentation, provided by the BOS, is relevant to students with mild intellectual disabilities who can learn within the inclusive classroom (Board of Studies, 2004, 2006, 2007b). The Stage 6 Case Studies document only suggests implementing MLS in SSPs for one student with significant physical and intellectual disabilities, while the remaining four case studies are students who learn within the inclusive classroom (Board of Studies, 2007b). MLS, according to BOS syllabus documents (2003, 2009a), can be implemented in either an inclusive or segregated school.

Research regarding the implementation of music education programs in segregated schools, which cater for students with more severe disabilities, has not been explored due to the increasing notion of inclusion. Therefore, this study focused on the implementation of MLS in these segregated schools, also referred to as SSPs in NSW. As more schools begin to offer places for students with disabilities, principals of SSPs are enrolling students with more severe disabilities, who may have previously been excluded from school (Elkins, 2005).

Students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, and particularly developmental disorders, are potentially unable to participate if placed in a regular classroom as part of inclusion. This is due to the discrepancy between teaching strategies, such as complex vocal instructions, and the way students with a range of disabilities learn (Carnahan, Musti-Rao, & Bailey, 2009). Segregated schooling, including support units and SSPs, allow these students to engage in learning with teaching methods devised to suit the individual, usually in small group situations. By segregating a student, depending on the severity of their disability, their communication skills and academic skills can be improved in a supportive environment, which assists not only the student, but also the teacher when creating meaningful programs (Trevarthen, Aitken, Papoudi, & Robarts, 1996).

### **Music in Special Education**

The presence of music in the education of a child or young adult with an intellectual disability or developmental disorder, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, has been suggested by research to be vital in their development (Accordino, Comer, & Heller, 2007; Boso, Emanuele, Minazzi, Abbamonte, & Politi, 2007; Bunt, 2006; Farnan, 2007; Nevalainen, 2002). Adamek and Darrow (2008) discuss the two distinct disciplines involved in music, in relation to special education, as music education, which involves learning music-related goals such as composing and performing, and music therapy, which can be used to address and develop students' cognitive ability, behaviours and communication. Ockelford (2008) further divides the discipline of music therapy into "clinical music therapy, which is concerned with the needs of clients that pertain to basic functioning and survival" (p. 41), and educational music therapy, which has a focus on aspects such as personal and interpersonal learning, in addition to subconscious learning through music.

Music education is often confused with music therapy when discussing special education (Booth, 2004). There is a considerable overlap between the two disciplines of music in special education, which calls for the implementation of programs that allow educators to access the content of both disciplines, and therefore view collaboration between the music therapist and music educator as something essential



to maximise student development and learning (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Ockelford, 2008). Interestingly, the only evidence of prior research on MLS was conducted with the aim of creating a music therapy assessment tool, using some of the outcomes from MLS and other BOS documents (Langan, 2009). The benefits of both music education and music therapy are accessed by educators using MLS, which suggests that other aspects of school and community life be implemented into the program to fulfil the outcomes (Board of Studies, 2003, 2009a).

### **Music Life Skills**

The Life Skills content and outcomes were introduced into the NSW BOS curriculum in 2003 in the *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus*, in accordance with the K-10 Curriculum Framework (Board of Studies, 2003). This followed the introduction of the *Stage 6: Special Program of Study: Creative Arts Life Skills Course Syllabus* in 1999, which was amended in 2007 and again in 2009 when it was released as the Music component (Module 3) of the *Stage 6 Creative Arts Life Skills Syllabus*, in preparation for 2010 (Board of Studies, 1999, 2007c, 2009a). Teachers are able to access the Life Skills content and outcomes to develop a relevant and meaningful program for the student if they feel that the content of the regular syllabus is not appropriate.

Within ‘Section 8’ of the *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus*, the Life Skills content is outlined and involves performing, composing and listening, similar to the regular syllabus (Board of Studies, 2003). The format of the Life Skills component of the syllabus is similar to the regular component, although fewer objectives are often listed to enable educators to devise more specific objectives for individual students, which can be completed with or without assistance. Limited examples of how to implement the chosen content and achieve each of the ten outcomes are provided as suggestions. To allow educators to create a meaningful program, “schools may integrate Music Life Skills outcomes and content across a variety of school and community contexts” (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 40), which can include other musical experiences such as music therapy.

The music component (Module 3) of the *Stage 6 Creative Arts Life Skills Syllabus* consists of content that follows on from the *Music Years 7-10 Syllabus*, therefore containing outcomes that are noticeably similar, although reworded to cater for a wider range of students (Board of Studies, 1999, 2003). An example of an outcome suitable for a student with an intellectual disability and/or developmental disorder would be “Outcome LS.4: A student experiments in making musical sounds”, where “Students learn to: experiment with voice to produce musical sounds, eg. whisper, talk, sing, whistle, hum” (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 43).

Educators have access to a select range of documentation and resources for the Life Skills courses. These include a *Profile of Student Achievement* for the Stage 6 course (Board of Studies, 2009b), *Stage 6 Case Studies* which focus on students with mild intellectual disabilities (Board of Studies, 2007b) and section 7 of the *Assessment Certification and Examination Manual*, which summarises the requirements and discusses the need for collaborative curriculum planning in Stage 6 (Board of Studies, 2006).

Documentation specific to MLS is the *Life Skills Years 7-10: Advice on planning, programming and assessment* (Board of Studies, 2007a). Although this document makes reference to other support documents for students with mild disabilities (Board of Studies, 2004), it contains a detailed program grid on the topic of Australian Music, which can be modified to suit students in a variety of settings (Board of Studies, 2007a, pp. 182-189). This grid is particularly relevant to this study and gives one educator’s perspective of programming for MLS. Further research into programming for MLS would provide educators with a greater understanding of how to appropriately plan for their class or individual students, while still achieving the chosen music education outcomes.

### **Curricula for Students with Disabilities**

“The dominant form of curriculum is devised by education authorities with reference to the age of students (or the number of years they have attended school), often with

no regard to the diversity of student achievements” (Elkins, 2005, p. 53). However, as student diversity in the classroom increases, special education curricula provide broader guidelines for educators to create student-centred programs. Elkins (2005) also discussed the importance of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) as a competency-based approach, devised by special education and is used for students with disabilities to achieve appropriate goals for their level of understanding, in line with mainstream curricula that may not be suited to their needs and ability.

Examples of music curricula implemented outside Australia includes the National Curriculum for Music and the National Standards of Music Education, used in the United Kingdom and the United States respectively (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Jacquiss & Paterson, 2005; Ockelford, 2008; Perry, 1995). Ockelford (2008) conducted research in the United Kingdom on the ‘Provision of Music in Special Education’ (PROMISE), for students with severe and profound multiple learning difficulties, to identify areas of concern, learn about the availability of resources, gain insights into teacher expertise and look at other aspects of the curriculum. Results indicated that some educators felt that the curriculum was not detailed enough to enable effective teaching of students with intellectual disabilities, while others believed that music education was not seen to be as important as literacy and numeracy, and therefore educators were not provided with as many resources (Ockelford, 2008). This research also notes the use of performing, composing and improvising as effective musical techniques for participation and learning by students with complex needs.

Jacquiss and Paterson (2005) provide suggestions and planning advice for teachers in the inclusive classroom who are required to teach music to one or more students with a range of disabilities in their class. The United Kingdom’s National Curriculum for Music employs a range of levels and outlines how to implement these for students with special education needs, particularly those with severe learning difficulties (Jacquiss & Paterson, 2005).

Furthermore, Adamek and Darrow (2008) discuss effective implementation strategies for the United States' National Standards of Music Education for students with mild intellectual disabilities in the inclusive setting. However, the need for music education classes in segregated settings for those with moderate or severe disabilities is also recommended and ideas for collaborative programming alongside music therapists are provided (Adamek & Darrow, 2008, pp. 102-103). Additionally, Delaney (2000), completed research at a time when Stage 6 MLS had only just been introduced, therefore providing details on a range of music education and music therapy programs available in NSW other than MLS.

### **Conclusion**

Music in special education is beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. The provision of effective and meaningful music programs results in students developing skills and achieving both musical goals, such as composing, performing and listening, and non-music related goals, including the development of their cognitive abilities and communication skills (Adamek & Darrow, 2008). To enable a greater understanding of implementation of MLS by educators, research discussing the programming of the content and achievement of outcomes would be valuable for both educators and students.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

A mixed methods approach was adopted for this study to explore the implementation of MLS in SSPs. This study predominantly employed qualitative methods, which emphasises the validity of multiple meaning structure and holistic analysis (Burns, 2000; Denscombe, 2007). Qualitative research enables the researcher to have interest in the uniqueness of an individual case, the variety of perceptions of the case and understand events from the viewpoints of the participants (Bresler, 1992). This study has an ethnographic focus, where observations were made in the chosen settings and field notes recorded (Burns, 2000; Grills, 1998). Additionally, interviews were conducted and a questionnaire was sent to a wider sample of participants to provide perspectives on MLS and its implementation, using open-ended and scaled responses (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2009). Ethics approval was received prior to commencing this study (see Appendices D, E and H to M for documents).

### **Methodological Design**

The methodological design of this study foremost involved a dual case study. The dual case study seeks to discover the processes and methods of implementation within each case individually, rather than draw comparisons or focus on a result (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). The selected settings that were involved in the case study research were valuable in their own right as a unique case, although these settings also assisted in establishing generalisations about the wider population to which the case belongs (Burns, 2000).

### **Case Study Description**

Non-probability sampling was used to identify potential participants for observation and interviews in the case study (Burns, 2000). Burns (2000) also notes that “crucial to any successful case study of a group is the definition of the group which separates it in some way from the general population” (p. 462). This was achieved by selecting participants through purposive sampling that have characteristics that best establish their group definition.

The two case studies selected, Northcrest Special School and Brunswick Road Special School<sup>1</sup>, represent the group definition as initially formed by the researcher. The schools were required to be located in NSW, consisting of secondary education (Years 7 to 12), either as part of a larger school that also incorporates primary education or only secondary education. Schools selected were also DET, systemic Catholic or independent SSPs that cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. Finally and most importantly, the school needed an established music program and pre-existing music classes, which implement MLS for one or more students. It is essential to note that the purpose of this study was not to influence the implementation of MLS, therefore it was necessary that the observed classes were pre-existing.

Within each school, one class was selected and four lessons observed to explore the methods of implementation of MLS, as used by the classroom teacher or specialist music educator. In both cases, the educator responsible for teaching MLS was the classroom teacher (refer to Table 1 and Table 2 for class and participant details). Both teachers were willing to have their methods of implementation observed, in addition to discussing aspects of MLS and their programming during a semi-structured interview.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Several data collection methods were used to explore the implementation of MLS in SSPs. Questionnaires were sent to a range of SSPs that cater for students with intellectual and/or developmental disorders, while observations and interviews occurred at the two case study schools. The observation of music classes and interviews with teachers also provided data specific to that particular setting.

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<sup>1</sup> To ensure anonymity of all participants and schools, pseudonyms have been used.

**Table 1: Marie's class, Northcrest Special School**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Syllabus / Program</b>	<b>Intellectual Disability</b>	<b>Developmental Disorder</b>	<b>Verbal Ability</b>
Belinda	12	K-6: Stage 3	Severe	-Angelman Syndrome	Non-verbal
Nick	14	MLS 7-10: Stage 5	Severe	-Autism Spectrum Disorder -Significant Global Developmental Delay	Non-verbal
Ben	15	MLS 7-10: Stage 5	Severe	-Cerebral Palsy	Some verbal ability
Christopher	17	MLS 11-12: Stage 6	Severe	-Angelman Syndrome	Non-verbal

**Table 2: Cynthia's class, Brunswick Road Special School**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Syllabus / Program</b>	<b>Intellectual Disability</b>	<b>Developmental Disorder</b>	<b>Verbal Ability</b>
Bradley	12	K-6: Stage 3	Severe	-Global Developmental Delay	Verbal
Jessica	12	K-6: Stage 3	Severe	-Global Developmental Delay	Verbal
Max	12	K-6: Stage 3	Severe	-Autism Spectrum Disorder -Language/Speech Delay	Non-verbal
Lachlan	12	LS 7-10: Stage 4	Severe	-Down Syndrome -Cerebral Palsy	Some verbal ability
Nadia	13	LS 7-10: Stage 4	Moderate	-Global Developmental Delay -Language/Speech Issues	Verbal
Lisa	13	LS 7-10: Stage 4	Moderate	-Autism Spectrum Disorder	Verbal
Alex	14	LS 7-10: Stage 4	Severe	-Down Syndrome -Autism Spectrum Disorder	Verbal

## **Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are one of the most common forms of data collection, and in this study they provided the researcher with an overview of the implementation of MLS by educators, in reference to the research questions (Cohen et al., 2000). The questionnaire formed the initial method of data collection in this study and was completed by educators anonymously and at a time that is suitable for them, between the period of February 26th to March 31st 2010 (Burns, 2000). A selection of 15 open-ended questions, in addition to scaled responses using a Likert scale, were used to gather data (Burns, 2000). Participants were not required to complete all questions, although the variety of response styles enabled participants to select which questions they answered, based on their experience and willingness to openly discuss their ideas (Burns, 2000; Cohen et al., 2000).

A list of 64 schools was produced, through accessing the DET School Locator website and Catholic systemic schools website, and additionally through contacting the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS). These schools were chosen based on the group definition used for the case study schools, although a music program did not need to be currently in place for schools to be contacted. No Catholic systemic schools fulfilled this group definition. Questionnaires were distributed to educators at a total of 41 NSW DET and 7 NSW Independent schools, after the researcher communicated in late February 2010 with relevant staff, (including classroom teachers, music therapists and principals) at each school via telephone. The remaining 16 schools of the initial 64 that fulfilled the group definition were not sent questionnaires, as 11 reported that music was not taught at their school, while five could not be contacted.

The school's email address, or individual educators' email addresses, were obtained from participants and an email was forwarded, which included a brief description of the study, the participant information statement and a hyperlink to the web-based questionnaire. Other means of completion were also offered, including sending a hard copy of the questionnaire by fax or reply-paid mail, which some participants elected rather than receiving the email (see Appendix F).



During the telephone call to each school, coercion of potential participants did not occur, as each was provided with the same details regarding the study, and asked the same questions, including obtaining their permission to send a reminder email prior to the web-based questionnaire closing (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Open and axial coding were used to analyse the data provided by the open-ended questions and identify themes present, while basic quantitative data analysis methods were used to summarise the number of participants that responded to the scaled questions in a particular way (Ezzy, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

### **Observations**

According to Burns (2000), “the basic ethnographic approach involves the observation, organisation and interpretation of data” (p. 404). Observation enables the researcher to record behaviour as it occurs and allow participants to go about their usual routine without being required to articulate their actions, which is particularly relevant when collecting data on students with disabilities (Burns, 2000).

The observations at both case study schools were recorded through field notes and video recordings, enabling further analysis after each lesson. Appropriate consent was provided by both the educators and parents of the students involved in the study (Gall et al., 1996). The researcher adopted the role of non-participant observer, although to a degree, the non-participant observer is participating, as the setting is altered and often participants, particularly children, will respond differently when a unfamiliar adult is present (Burns, 2000; Phillips, 2008). However, as a non-participant observer, the researcher is able to observe the lesson as a whole, noting different aspects of the lesson that may have not been evident if participating. The researcher also spent additional time with both classes, in the classroom and playground settings, to establish trust with each of the student participants (Burns, 2000).

## **Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher involved in the dual case study at the conclusion of the four observed lessons (see Appendix G). A semi-structured interview provides direction, but also allows flexibility, so that the participant can discuss in detail their own experiences (Burns, 2000). Additionally, Burns (2000) states that the participant has equal status to the researcher and therefore can use language natural to them, rather than trying to follow and understand the concepts of the study.

Interviews with both educators participating in the case study were audio recorded, and approximately thirty minutes in length. The interviews provided the researcher with background information on each educator's prior use of MLS and other programs, in addition to information on how they currently program for music and student responsiveness to their lessons. The interview also enabled the researcher to ask the educator to expand on responses from the questionnaire and discuss any documentation they have access to or have created for their class. During this time, the researcher also collected program documentation and further information on the abilities and needs of the students in each class.

## **Triangulation**

Triangulation contributes to verification and validation of qualitative analysis, by using two or more methods of data collection, in the study of some aspect of human behaviour (Burns, 2000; Cohen et al., 2000). According to Burns (2000), this is achieved by "checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods" (p. 419) in addition to checking the consistency of different data sources within the same method. Triangulation between methods was used in this study through multiple forms of data collection, including a questionnaire, observation and interviews (Cohen et al., 2000). Completing a dual case study and sending the questionnaire to a selection of settings provided multiple perspectives provided, enabling triangulation within methods (Burns, 2000; Cohen et al., 2000).

## **Analysis of Data**

Prior to analysing the data collected through interviews and observation, transcripts were made of the audio recordings of interviews conducted (Creswell, 2009). Grounded theory was adopted to analyse the data collected from this study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Interview and observation data were coded using open and axial coding to identify and organise themes (Ezzy, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The questionnaire was predominately analysed through similar methods to the interviews and observation. Open-ended questions were coded using open and axial coding, although some quantitative methods were used for scaled and close-ended questions, noting participants' level of familiarity with MLS (Denscombe, 2007; Ezzy, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Creswell (2009) encourages systematic coding in categories such as “codes on topics that readers would expect to find, based on the past literature” (p. 186), unusual codes of interest and codes that were of surprise and not anticipated to arise at the beginning of the study. While approximately 40 codes were defined, three themes that are central to the study arose. These themes are the experience of educators in regard to special education, music and Life Skills; programming and the teaching of lessons involving MLS; and as a result of the two prior themes, the responsiveness of students to these lessons. These themes and the research findings will be explored in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 4: Research Findings**

This study explored the implementation of the MLS content and outcomes in schools for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. A dual case study of two SSPs, including a semi-structured interview with each classroom teacher, in addition to a questionnaire where 29 of 48 participants responded from SSPs across NSW, provided qualitative and quantitative data for this study. The research findings are categorised into three main sections: experience and perceptions of educators; programming and teaching strategies; and student responsiveness. Whilst the primary focus of this study is to discuss the implementation of MLS, it is also necessary to examine educators' experience in special education and the responsiveness of students during lessons incorporating MLS so that the benefits and effectiveness of this program can be assessed.

### **Experience and Perceptions of Educators**

Participants' experience in special education varied substantially. Quantitative questionnaire data revealed that the 29 participants had been involved with teaching in SSPs for an average of 14 years, with the least experienced having taught for half a year, while the most experienced noted 30 years experience. Participants were chosen to complete the questionnaire provided that they currently use, or have used music in special education, which caters for but is not limited to secondary students, with an intellectual disability and/or developmental disorder. Results indicated that 26 of the 29 participants have had experience teaching music as a KLA (Key Learning Area), while three use music in other activities such as 'morning circle', but do not have music allocated as a KLA.

### **Musical Competency and Teaching Students with Special Needs**

Case studies were conducted in Marie's class at Northcrest Special School, and in Cynthia's class at Brunswick Road Special School<sup>2</sup>. It was evident when observing a series of four music lessons in each class that both educators demonstrated a degree

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<sup>2</sup> To ensure anonymity of all participants and schools, pseudonyms have been used.

of musical competency. Examples of musical competency included singing, demonstrating how to play untuned percussion instruments, clapping to the beat of an accompanying recording, creating a variety of rhythmic ostinatos to be imitated by students, and dancing or moving to reflect the nature of the music.

It is necessary to explore both participants' previous experiences with music, prior to teaching special education, to establish their understanding of music education and understand how comfortable they are teaching music. Both educators reported to have musical experiences as children (through learning an instrument) but no longer play an instrument.

Cynthia: As a child I played an instrument, but not very well... I couldn't play it now if I wanted to.

Marie: I had music lessons when I was in primary school. I started having piano lessons when I was seven until probably nine or 10, and then... I did cello... for two and a half years.

Despite learning two instruments, in addition to completing music theory exams Marie does not feel particularly 'knowledgeable' in regard to 'music theory'. While Cynthia has had 25 years of experience in special education, Marie has had eight years experience in disability services for both adults and children, in addition to two and a half years teaching special education. Both educators feel comfortable teaching music, however believe that some form of music training would be beneficial, especially for educators who have had little musical experience or do not like singing, for example.

Marie: It would be nice to have some training... probably [on] the more theoretical side of things.

The need for training, or further musical experience, before teaching MLS in SSPs, is emphasised by educators including Julie, the RFF (Release from Face to Face) teacher, librarian and facilitator of music programs at Lake View Special School.

Julie: I'm not a music specialist ... However I have a lot of teaching experience and have been a part of some excellent programs devised by some excellent musicians and communication experts (Personal communication, March 2, 2010).

By understanding music at a higher level, educators of students with special needs are able to devise a program suited to each student's needs, by setting realistic expectations and teaching with confidence in their own musical ability. Despite Cynthia and Marie demonstrating similar musical competencies, each educator used particular musical abilities that they felt most confident with. For example, Cynthia feels comfortable singing and leading her class, most of whom are verbal and respond well to singing. Marie will often sing small phrases of songs for students in her class to listen and identify, as the class is predominately non-verbal.

The qualifications of both Cynthia and Marie are directly related to their experience in special education (see Table 3). In addition to Marie's qualifications as stated, she also completed behaviour management units regarding 'Applied Behaviour Analysis' (ABA) and 'Behaviour Modification Techniques' as part of a course associated with The University of Sydney, NSW.

**Table 3: Teacher Qualifications**

Teacher	Qualifications
Cynthia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education (Rider University, New Jersey, USA)</li> <li>- Master of Education in Special Education (Trenton State University, New Jersey, USA)</li> </ul>
Marie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bachelor of Education: Visual Arts major and Religious Education (Australian Catholic University, NSW, Australia)</li> <li>- Graduate Certificate in Special Education (Charles Sturt University, NSW, Australia)</li> </ul>

Cynthia has been teaching at Brunswick Road Special School for approximately 13 years and has had experience with a range of music programs, including MLS, which was introduced into the Stage 6 curriculum from 1999 and Stage 4 and 5 curricula in 2003. Marie has been teaching at Northcrest Special School for two and a half years and has always used MLS. Despite her qualifications in art education and preference to teach it as a KLA, Marie does not currently teach art. While Cynthia currently teaches five days a week and is responsible for teaching all KLAs, Marie teaches for

two days per week and shares her class with another teacher who is responsible for teaching other KLAs, including art.

Although neither Cynthia or Marie were given a choice of which Creative Arts KLAs to teach, both feel confident teaching music in their current school.

Cynthia:           Because I like music and I enjoy doing it, I don't find [teaching] it a threat.

Marie:             The first couple of terms at [Northcrest Special School] I was a bit like 'how do I approach this?' But now I've sort of got a method to it... but if I was to go say, to another school and have a different [student] ability level, I would feel that I would need a bit more support.

It appears that the amount and level of experience in teaching music to students with special needs can influence an educator's level of confidence in planning and implementing programs including MLS.

### **Familiarity and Perceptions of Music Life Skills**

A five-point Likert scale was used to determine participants' familiarity with MLS, with one being 'not at all familiar' and five being 'very familiar'. Nine participants indicated that they were only somewhat familiar with MLS, while a further 14 were very familiar with the program. Interestingly, only four of 29 participants indicated that they were not at all familiar with MLS. However, one of these participants remarked that after completing the questionnaire they would investigate aspects of MLS and determine if it is transferable for use in music therapy. Of the 25 participants who indicated some degree of familiarity, 13 stated that they have been familiar with MLS for more than three years.

Of the 29 participants, 17 stated that they would be teaching music in 2010 using MLS. The reasons provided for using MLS could be defined into two categories: educator perceptions and school policy. Educator perceptions include the benefits of using this particular document, as described by the educator, such as one educator's reason for using MLS in 2010:

It is very specific to the needs of my students and allows them to participate in the curriculum. It makes programming much easier (Participant #22).

However, other participants simply remarked that they had ‘no other choice’ or referred to the school policy on using the documents:

As a departmental school we follow the Life Skills syllabus in all Key Learning Areas (Participant #11).

Most participants chose to reflect on their positive perceptions of the MLS outcomes, with few referring to school policy or alternatively both categories:

Mandatory hours of study in music is a requirement of the School and Higher School Certificate awarded to our students... The documents are well suited to our SSP setting. I have heard the Stage 6 document is going to be replaced - I hope not as I find this document very workable for our senior students (Participant #08).

The MLS Stages 4, 5 and 6, along with the K-6 Creative and Performing Arts curriculum were reported to be used by the 26 participants who have taught music as a KLA, although one participant stated previous use of the ‘Curriculum for Students with a Severe Intellectual Disability,’ which was introduced in NSW in 1988, while other participants stated that they have used, or still use their own devised programs, which they believe to be more suited to their students’ needs.

Suitability of MLS for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders is of foremost importance. Participants were asked to express their thoughts on how well MLS is suited to their students’ needs. Of 25 participants, eight stated that it was very suitable, suggesting reasons for this view including that it provides a broad range of outcomes that can be achieved by students with higher levels of disability, but it also ‘provides enough scope’ for the more able students in the class. A further 15 participants indicated that they felt it was suitable or only somewhat suitable, as it is broad enough for their students but requires improvements:

The Life Skills are written in a way that is broad and covers anyone. I would prefer more rigour and accountability (Participant #14).

Brunswick Road Special School teacher, Cynthia, further emphasised this notion, although when asked if all outcomes were achievable, she explained that not all were



suitable for all students in her class, which results in implications for students with particularly high support needs or low ability.

Cynthia: You wouldn't be able to do [all the outcomes] and they wouldn't be applicable to [the students in my class].

While no participants indicated that MLS was not at all suitable, two noted that it was not particularly suitable for their students. Marie, from Northcrest Special School, suggested that MLS is not necessarily suited to her students' abilities:

Marie: The outcomes of MLS are fairly general and do give a lot of room to program to cater to students' needs, however they are not student-centred. I personally feel teaching students with the level of disability which they have at my school, that I have to be very creative and make a lot of compromises in my teaching. Content seems to be a higher priority than the students.

Marie's class consists of students with severe intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders (refer to Table 1). Other participants who teach in a similar context also felt that MLS was not particularly suitable to their students needs:

It seems to be aimed at students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities – most of the students I teach have moderate to severe disabilities (Participant #24).

Participants were asked to suggest how MLS could be improved so that it would suit the needs of their students. While several participants stated that they were happy with the current documents or did not know how it could be improved, many emphasised the need for further recognition of students with moderate to severe disabilities:

Develop more outcomes for students who are functioning at a lower level with diverse and high support needs (Participant #19).

However, of 26 participants, 20 stated that 100% of the students in their class required MLS, rather than the regular Stage 4 to 6 outcomes. Alternatively, music therapy outcomes were used for students in classes where not all students required MLS.

## **Programming and Teaching Strategies**

Programming using the MLS content and outcomes was explored in depth at both Northcrest Special School and Brunswick Road Special School, through individual interviews with Marie and Cynthia. Observations of each of their classes took place to consolidate the data collected from the interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data from questionnaires were also used to support the findings.

### **Programming of Content and Outcomes**

Educators who teach students with special needs have reported various methods of programming using MLS content and outcomes. It is this versatility of the content and outcomes, and the educators themselves, which reflect the diverse student needs that can be catered for. Qualitative data collected from questionnaires and interviews suggest that a majority of educators program using MLS with content being of foremost importance:

I use the unit plans and topics provided by the school, then design the content in line with the music therapy sessions to include rhythm work, movement and watching/listening to the music style nominated by the curriculum, e.g. Jazz (Participant #27).

Meanwhile, other educators address the outcomes that are achievable for their class, and devise a varied program based on a specific theme:

After assessing each student's individual needs and abilities I choose outcomes that best suit their stage of development and physical ability. I write indicators that suit the student and what I want them to achieve. Content is embedded in other subject areas (e.g. listening to music from a certain country) as well as dedicated music sessions covering music appreciation, playing instruments, movement, and accessing music via adaptive technology such as switch activated CD players and computer programs (Participant #21).

Both Marie and Cynthia plan their programs beginning with content, although are aware that several suitable outcomes should be achieved within each lesson. Due to the mixed ages and abilities of students in each class, Marie and Cynthia also program using Stage 3 from the K-6 Creative and Performing Arts Syllabus for some students. Additionally, Marie uses the Stage 6 MLS module for one student.

Marie: [I] program sessions so that there are opportunities for students to fulfil outcomes [and] try to plan activities that require some form of interaction from students that is reasonable and realistic.

Cynthia indicated that content holds somewhat more importance when programming as she believes that the achievement of outcomes can be determined during, or at the end of a lesson.

Cynthia: It's more about the content over saying 'well, I'm going to have them do this today so... I can tick that off,' because in the end [the outcomes] tick off anyhow.

Interestingly, while Marie's school provided her with a specific topic for music, Cynthia used themes from other KLAs, resulting in a 'cross-curriculum' focus, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

In order to create an effective and suitable program for each class, the school and BOS require documentation to demonstrate how and what each student is learning. IEPs present goals and indicators, as well as strategies to be used with each student, which are referred to during the planning process for MLS. In addition to this, various forms of data collection and programming notes are used, that are related specifically to the music program for each term. Outcomes, or 'desired results' must be noted, along with details about assessment requirements and examples of learning experiences. Northcrest Special School also requires an outline of what content is going to be implemented in each week of the term and the resources needed for the activities to take place (see Appendix A<sup>3</sup>). Examples of programming notes were also provided by Julie from Lake View Special School (see Appendix B<sup>4</sup>).

To enable clear articulation of the MLS content and the outcomes to be achieved during each term in these programming documents, educators have a method of planning and collecting resources.

Marie: One of the first things I do is... think about the group I am teaching to... and I thought ok, I want songs... that they can easily relate to. I

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<sup>3</sup> Permission provided by Marie to use selected programming notes on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Permission provided by Julie to use selected programming notes on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

brought in more for Ben's benefit, a range of different types of Australian music... more modern music, just to give them exposure to that sort of music.

Marie's inclusion of Ben's preference of music when programming ensures that students in her class will receive an individualised program (refer to Table 1).

Similarly, Cynthia ensures that she is familiar with the content and activities, such as Auslan or Makaton signing (Johnston, 2007; The Makaton Charity, 2010), and that all resources are available before programming the lessons.

Cynthia: Sometimes I will research something for myself, especially when we do the song signing. I've got to check all the signs and make sure I know what [the students] are doing and get the music.

A student-centred approach to programming is popular among educators teaching music to students with special needs, and proves to be beneficial. Marie and Cynthia have chosen to accommodate the individual and diverse needs of the students in their class, by including different activities to suit each student. The use of signing in Cynthia's music lessons enables several students, in particular Max, to communicate more effectively and students like Bradley, to improve their fine motor skills (refer to Table 2).

The accommodation of individual student needs can be somewhat difficult in a program that aims to achieve musical goals. All 10 of the Stage 4 and 5 MLS outcomes could be defined as musical goals, or having the student achieve forms of music appreciation. A concern voiced by several participants was the need for non-musical goals to be recognised as an essential part of the program. Non-musical goals including communication skills, turn taking, demonstrating choice and building self-confidence as a result of MLS, were revealed in questionnaire and interview data, and particularly during observations.

The concept of teaching music, particularly using the outcomes of MLS, appeals to most, as it appears to benefit most students.

Cynthia: It's non-threatening and... [students] can passively participate... There's no right or wrong.

Through observation of a series of Cynthia's music lessons, it was evident that a large number of music-related goals were achieved during each lesson. Non-musical goals are also emphasised, although they are not as integral to the lessons as they are in Marie's lessons. This is partially due to the overall higher level of functioning of students in Cynthia's class. Marie shares Cynthia's view of music as an accessible form of communication and enjoyment, although also feels strongly about the importance of non-musical goals during lessons involving MLS.

Marie: [MLS needs to be] more centred on the needs of the student and their disability and how it affects them. [It is] very difficult to expect one syllabus to cover the many individuals who are educated with Life Skills. [MLS] needs to be shaped to fit [the students], as it is an impossible task to mould students to the requirements of the syllabus.

Throughout observation at Northcrest Special School, it was evident that Marie used a variety of resources to ensure each student's non-musical goals and musical goals were being addressed, often simultaneously. However, at some points throughout the series of lessons that were observed, particular students found it difficult to participate in activities that achieved musical goals, such as hitting a drum to the beat of the music being played from a CD. At this time, despite the musical outcome not being achieved, Marie would ensure that a non-musical goal had been practised, such as demonstrating a choice of which percussion instrument to play.

### **Resources and Support Materials**

In addition to the syllabus documents containing MLS content and outcomes, the BOS has also released a variety of support documents that can be accessed online (Board of Studies, 2004, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2009b). These documents include examples of programs, along with further explanation of MLS and how to achieve selected outcomes. Furthermore, the documents are available at no cost, which many participants suggested was necessary for assisting them in successful implementation of MLS.

However, due to many educators not being aware of the availability of these support documents, when a question regarding the amount of MLS resources was posed, six of 26 questionnaire participants stated that there were not enough resources available

and overwhelmingly, 15 participants indicated that only limited resources were available. Only five found that there were many resources they could access. Furthermore, when asked what resources they thought were needed to assist in effectively programming using MLS, many responded that they were not aware of any online BOS documents, and felt the need for support documents available for download, in addition to musical resources for their school:

[I] would like to see a lot more affordable access to musical resources. We are a small school with very limited funding and experience in the musical arts, so some quick and easy resources we could download would be beneficial (Participant #20).

Most commonly, participants requested example lesson content, but also remarked that the usefulness of the resources would depend on the students' level of disability, resulting in some of the support documents already available being deemed useless. Marie also suggested the need for specialised training, more examples of programming and additionally emphasised the importance of research, such as this study, on teaching using MLS to special needs students.

Marie: More training from specialised sources, examples of successful programs... [and] information from research based on teaching special needs students.

Other educators were satisfied with the amount of resources available and suggested that professional development and sharing of resources within their school assisted their programming:

Our staff are very good at supporting and sharing when new or relevant, usable resources are found (Participant #08).

Questionnaire data confirmed that many participants had not yet accessed the online BOS support documents. Of the 29 participants who answered a question based on how often they access the BOS MLS online documents, 23 indicated that they rarely or never access the documents. A total of six participants have used the documents, two of which stated that they use them often, although no participants indicated that they use the BOS online support documents very often.

Being unaware of the BOS MLS online support documents was one reason why the participants did not use these resources, although other reasons included that they are too difficult to find or are not useful for particular contexts. While half of the 20 participants who chose to answer the question found the documents easy or very easy to locate, the remaining 10 participants indicated that they found the documents relatively difficult to locate. Of 21 participants, 10 stated that the BOS MLS online support documents were only somewhat useful for their programming, while seven indicated that the resources that they located were not at all useful or only slightly useful in their contexts. Only four indicated that the support documents that they have located and use are particularly useful for programming. Data also revealed that several participants were unaware of the availability of the BOS support documents prior to answering questions regarding these documents. However, after completion of the questionnaire, these participants indicated that they would attempt to locate these resources for use when programming.

### **Implementation of Music Life Skills in the Music Classroom**

Within the music classroom, MLS content can be expressed in a variety of ways. Depending on available resources and the time allocated to teach music, a range of learning experiences can be used, including whole school music sessions, listening and performing, and learning the music of another culture, such as African drumming lessons. According to questionnaire data, most participants taught two 30-minute music lessons each week. However, music therapy sessions were also often used to achieve outcomes, therefore adding an additional 30 minutes or one hour of music per week.

Cynthia usually teaches music twice a week, while Marie teaches one or two music lessons each week, with students also engaging in a music therapy session with a qualified music therapist once per week. During the four lessons observed at Brunswick Road Special School, Cynthia used a variety of learning experiences that

she had devised and planned (see Appendix C<sup>5</sup>). During the first observed lesson, it was evident that prior learning and reference to past experiences, both in the music classroom and in other classes, played a significant role in student involvement in the lesson. Students engaged in a range of listening and performing activities, demonstrating familiarity with the music and percussion instruments that they played, with many achieving approximately five MLS outcomes during each lesson, as observed and determined by the researcher. All students also demonstrated non-musical goals, such as turn taking and choice, at various stages during the lesson.

In the following weeks Cynthia demonstrated a variety of activities that allowed each student to achieve up to eight outcomes per lesson. Most students in this class are receptive to change and new activities, which enabled Cynthia to teach a diverse range of music and complete several unrelated activities. Resources such as CDs and DVDs, percussion instruments and a parachute, were used during music lessons in the classroom and playground. At all times, a teacher's aide was also present to assist students with their learning and completion of activities. Throughout the four lessons, all students were provided with opportunities to listen to, perform, improvise and move to music, enabling a well-rounded musical experience.

To effectively teach the prepared, yet diverse, content, Cynthia structured each lesson so that there was a clear introduction, followed by activities and a conclusion, which often included students recalling facts about the music, or discussing likes and dislikes about particular instruments or songs. During each lesson, Cynthia would use teaching strategies such as questioning, obtaining eye contact, individual and group instruction, repetition of instructions, encouragement, correction and demonstration, to ensure all students were involved and achieving the task to the best of their ability. Expressing musical goals through movement, such as reaching toward the ground when singing low and raising hands when singing higher, was also evident throughout the observed lessons. This enabled students to associate the

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<sup>5</sup> Permission provided by Cynthia to use selected programming notes on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010.



actions with meaning, therefore understanding the activity to some degree, without being explicitly told.

Previous experiences, relating content to other school activities and student preference, were also demonstrated in the four lessons observed at Northcrest Special School. However, the linking of prior learning from lesson to lesson became more evident as the weeks progressed, as in three of the four lessons, the same CD and accompanying resources were used. This appeared to be particularly beneficial for the students in Marie's class, who have severe intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders. The structure of each lesson remained similar, which allowed students to feel comfortable and familiar with the content being taught, providing them with opportunities to achieve a variety of outcomes.

Up to six outcomes were achieved by students during each lesson, although this was dependent on how much individual and group instruction occurred. Due to the challenging behaviours of some students in Marie's class, during one lesson in particular, the teaching of music content was limited, however a selection of non-musical goals were achieved. Resources used by Marie included CDs, instruments and laminated picture cards with Velcro backing (which could be put on a felt board in the room to indicate choice of music). Similarly to Cynthia's class, a teacher's aide was present to assist with individual instruction and assistance to achieve activities set by the teacher.

Despite three of the four students being non-verbal, Marie utilised questioning, along with other teaching strategies such as individual and group instruction, encouragement and praise, association of pictures and music, obtaining eye contact, repetition and demonstration, to enable students to achieve both music appreciation and non-music goals. In particular, communication skills were emphasised throughout each lesson, and activities were altered and exceptions made if one student was having difficulty with a task, so that they would achieve a non-musical goal. A well-rounded musical experience was also provided for students in Marie's class, allowing students to participate in listening, performing, improvising and

movement activities. Questionnaire responses also addressed the need for particular teaching strategies, with one stating:

You need a lot of enthusiasm and energy. You need to do a lot of repetition for students to become familiar with music chosen, chants taught, beats [and] rhythms [used], using for example, echo clapping. You also have to change activities at least two or three times in a lesson as keeping the students focused can be [a] challenge. We also do a lot of activities in a circle to keep all students concentrating on [the] activity (Participant #15).

### **Assessment and Reporting**

All assessment of students in both Cynthia and Marie's classes occurs through observation. During each lesson, both teachers observed the level of participation of each student and which outcomes were being achieved. An important aspect of the achievement of MLS outcomes is whether they have been achieved with or without assistance from the teacher or teacher's aide. If a student requires assistance holding a drum stick and beating it in time with the music, such as 'hand-over-hand', teachers can note this as completion with assistance of music outcome, "LS.1: uses movement, vocalisation or instruments to respond to a range of music" (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 40). The student can then be encouraged to complete this task without assistance in future lessons.

Evidence of learning is required to illustrate each student's participation in lessons using MLS. Documenting student achievement and understanding after each lesson is essential so that future lessons and units of work can be programmed to best benefit the student's needs. Marie and Cynthia provide opportunities towards the end of each lesson for the students to demonstrate what they had learnt. Additionally, Marie made a point of noting what song choices each student had made during the lesson, so that these could be compared to choices made in future lessons. This resulted in Marie determining if just the non-musical goal of 'choice' was being achieved, if the student was making an informed decision based on what music they knew related to the picture, therefore achieving a musical goal and a specific MLS outcome, or if the student just picked a picture at random.

Marie: We keep notes from lesson to lesson as to how they responded... We take anecdotal records and then I'm also looking for other things, like... their responsiveness to me.

These notes are then compared with each student's IEP to ensure that the student's individual goals for that term are being reached. Although assessment of students with special needs is possible, it becomes difficult to accurately measure the specific level of each student in the class when their needs and abilities are so diverse.

### **Achievement of Outcomes in Other Facets of School Life**

Students can also achieve MLS outcomes in other areas of school life, such as participation in assembly, music therapy sessions or other KLAs. Of 29 participants, 26 discussed other facets of school life where they believe their students are achieving MLS outcomes. A total of 23 participants indicated that students achieve MLS outcomes during school performances and school assembly. School performances often take place in collaboration with local schools or as private performances for parents and friends. Cynthia and other staff from Brunswick Road Special School regularly organise dances to be included for these performances.

Cynthia: We've taught the students a dance routine that they've performed on stage in front of four or five hundred people [at local performance venues] and also at school to all the parents.

School assemblies also provide students with opportunities to respond to music such as standing when the music to the Australian National Anthem starts.

Furthermore, 15 participants indicated that music therapy also provided opportunities to achieve MLS outcomes. Although schools such as Brunswick Road Special School, are no longer able to employ a music therapist, Cynthia believes that it is possible to achieve all the outcomes that are suitable for her students during her own music lesson time and in other school activities. Six participants reported that band or choir participation were available at their school, while only four indicated that learning an instrument was available for students to achieve more outcomes.

Participants also suggested other KLAs and areas of school life where they felt the MLS outcomes were being completed, including small group performances and fundraising opportunities:

I take varying groups of students to perform at assemblies at mainstream schools - and my students love that! We also perform at some Old Age Residential care places. We also perform at our fundraising ball every year and our fundraising ladies lunch every year. We have also been asked to perform at other fundraising events, such as the [local] shopping centre fashion show (Participant #15).

Other participants stated that students also engage in music to achieve additional MLS outcomes, such as during library sessions (for example, playing 'Singstar' on a Playstation console); 'morning circle' or welcoming songs prior to class starting; dance practices or dance groups; recess and lunchtime when they are able to listen to a range of pop music by choice; and also during 'free choice' time in class, which was demonstrated in Cynthia's class. Following the conclusion of one music lesson, Cynthia gave students the option of 'free choice' for approximately fifteen minutes before the end of day bell rang. Of the six students present, five immediately requested the music of a dance they had been practising for an upcoming school performance.

A significant number of KLAs other than music provide opportunities for students to achieve MLS outcomes, including mathematics, where counting beats and singing games can be used; English, where rhymes, as well as reading the lyrics of songs are used; personal development and health, where music is used in behavioural management; physical education, including dance, movement and hydrotherapy; science, where music technology is studied; as well as in history and languages.

Through observations at Northcrest Special School and Brunswick Road Special School, in addition to data collected from questionnaires, it was evident that other KLAs were used during music lessons, resulting in cross-curriculum content. For example, during one of Cynthia's music lessons, the students were given two claves each, and the total number of these handed out was counted. At the end of the lesson, students were asked to return the claves, one at a time, counting from one to sixteen as each was returned. Cynthia then asked the class how many claves had been

returned as opposed to how many were handed out, making students aware of basic addition and subtraction.

## **Student Responsiveness**

Student responsiveness to MLS content is dependent on the individual ability of each student and their learning context. The intellectual disability and/or developmental disorder that the student has can also affect their willingness to participate, due to aspects of their disorder such as noise-sensitivity. The level of student responsiveness can also be linked to how well the educator programs a series of lessons and how each lesson is presented.

### **Individual Student Needs and the Benefits of Music**

There is a diverse range of student needs within a special education classroom. Despite Marie's class having only four students, and Cynthia's consisting of seven students, each student has a different level of intellectual disability and/or developmental disorder, which needed to be acknowledged and catered for, so that learning could occur.

Marie has found music lessons to be particularly beneficial for three of the four students in the class. Belinda and Christopher, two of the three students who appear to benefit during music lessons, function at a similar level as they both have Angelman Syndrome, a developmental disorder, and are both non-verbal. Music has been an opportunity for these students to demonstrate improvement in communication skills and an enjoyment of music.

Marie:           A student like Belinda... it's an opportunity for her [to learn] skills... like taking turns, which is very hard for Belinda and Christopher... an aspect of those with Angelman's that is difficult, is that they want things straight away.

While Belinda and Christopher achieved musical and non-musical goals at a lower level, Ben, the third student in the class who reacts positively to music lessons, is at a 'whole different level' as described by Marie. Ben has Cerebral Palsy and a moderate to severe intellectual disability, which results in him having only some verbal ability.

It is evident that he thoroughly enjoys music, is mostly willing to participate in a range of activities and can complete more difficult tasks.

Marie: I feel that [music] is an area that [Ben's] got talent in and I think it would be interesting if he was able to have some individual music lessons and just see what he was capable of doing, because with the other students, I'm just trying to get them to respond to the music, whereas Ben can respond and he can keep time.

With three of the four students in Marie's class responding well to music, but at different levels and with different goals, it is difficult to accommodate for each student. This is made somewhat more challenging with the fourth student, Nick, who is also non-verbal, but has a milder, yet still moderate to severe intellectual disability, although experiencing noise-sensitivity due to his Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Marie: With Nick... I'm not sure whether he can cope with the noisiness, like the percussion instruments... I don't know if there's a different approach... on occasion, he will get involved in, you know, the atmosphere of everything.

Although Marie feels that music benefits all the students to some degree, as it is accessible to all, regardless of their level of intellectual disability, she finds that it is confusing and overwhelming for some students and therefore the MLS outcomes may not necessarily suit all students.

Marie: [MLS] is fairly general and so it is adaptable... but once you have the level that say Belinda, Christopher and Nick are at, I think that there are other needs that have a higher priority than achieving the outcomes. I can see how... it's also serving students that are in... the high school situation that can't reach the level of those academic music subjects, so they need something, so Life Skills is catering to them and then catering to my students. There's a very big range there.

The view that music is beneficial and that students achieve a range of goals when MLS is implemented, even though it may not be suitable, is emphasised:

[The students] respond very positively but it is not because of the way the syllabus is written (Participant #14).

Cynthia is also aware of the benefits of music and feels comfortable teaching a variety of KLAs and activities using music. On most days, the majority of her class are extremely receptive to music lessons.

Cynthia: Students with disabilities respond exceedingly well to lessons involving music therapy, songs, movement or actions. Music can be used to teach across the curriculum... it gets their attention and maybe puts them in a better frame of mind.

While most of the students in her class thoroughly enjoy music and can adequately respond to a range of musical activities, some student's needs are higher than others, for example Max, who is non-verbal and has a moderate intellectual disability.

Cynthia: [Max] doesn't speak, but he's starting to respond a bit more... he's learning his signs and he's learning to participate more.

Bradley is another student who can become easily distracted and finds it difficult to participate due to his moderate intellectual disability. Although he is verbal, he has difficulty with his fine motor skills, which can be partially addressed using music.

Cynthia: [Using the signing] helps Bradley with his fine motor... Learning to use the signs [and] learning to play the instruments all helps his fine motor development.

The remaining five students in Cynthia's class, Jessica, Nadia, Alex, Lachlan and Lisa, all have varying levels of intellectual disability, while some also have developmental disorders, however, they generally responded when prompted and within each lesson are able to achieve a variety of musical goals and MLS outcomes.

### **Participation and Means of Achievement**

In both Marie and Cynthia's classes, all students participated to some degree and demonstrated both positive and negative responses during the music lessons. Overwhelmingly, 84% of questionnaire participants felt that students at least somewhat positively or very positively responded to MLS. Of 25 participants, only four found their students' responsiveness to not be positive.

When asked how their students respond to MLS, participants discussed a wide range of musical activities that students can complete, including dancing, singing, listening, chanting, body percussion, playing xylophones, drums and percussion instruments. Other participants also noted the way in which the students respond:

They achieve the minimal required outcomes through one to one staff support with the relevant adaptations (Participant #19).

Another participant noted the role of the MLS content, opposed to the benefits of music in general:

While they initially respond to any music, structuring lessons around syllabus outcomes focuses their response (Participant #25).

During observations of Marie's class and Cynthia's class, positive responsiveness was indicated through facial expressions, particularly by non-verbal students, although all students demonstrated a positive response to an activity at some point during the series of four music lessons. Positive facial expressions, such as smiling, were often accompanied by laughter or body movement, such as clapping, raising arms and shaking. Verbal students also responded positively to particular tasks by expressing their excitement by pronouncing "yay!" or "yes!" or even discussing their level of enjoyment to the student next to them. Positive responsiveness was also gauged by the level of participation the student demonstrated. For example, if the student continued to make eye contact with the teacher and attempted to complete the activity. Often, positive responsiveness would be followed by praise and encouragement from either the teacher or teacher's aide. During stages of positive responsiveness, several students would engage in student interactions, such as talking to the student next to them about the activity, making eye contact with another student or moving towards other students to play the instruments in a similar way.

In contrast, negative responsiveness was often indicated foremost by verbalisation or making noises such as whimpering. While negative responsiveness occurred somewhat less than positive responsiveness, verbal students would still indicate if they were not interested in completing an activity or listening to a song. Simple verbal reactions such as "no" and questioning the teacher in a negative tone of voice when asked to repeat the actions to a song were used to indicate a negative response. Physical movements such as using their hands to push away a percussion instrument were also demonstrated. Not attempting to complete the activity by sitting still when the other students were standing and moving, looking the other way or not being present in the room by choice, all indicated levels of negative responsiveness to the music lesson.



Students can achieve any of the MLS outcomes with or without assistance from a teacher or teacher's aide. Many students were able to achieve outcomes without assistance, although more difficult outcomes (such as responding to a piece of music by playing a percussion instrument and keeping a beat) required some form of assistance. Usually, the teacher or teacher's aide would state instructions or demonstrate what they wanted the student to do, and if the student was having difficulty, they may use 'hand-over-hand' to show the student the feel of hitting the beat on the drum for example. When the teacher or teacher's aide feels that the student is capable of completing the task to a satisfactory level, they would allow the student to attempt the activity by him or herself again, under supervision.

During each music lesson, Marie and Cynthia observed students that needed additional assistance and attended to them, while still allowing them to attempt the activity to the best of their ability. Furthermore, completing an activity with assistance is not limited to physical activities such as playing a drum or signing. For example, towards the end of each lesson in Cynthia's class, students would be asked to answer a question, such as "which instrument did you like playing the best?" and students would either point to the instrument or say its name if they could. Under pressure, Nadia finds verbalising difficult, so if she chose to point to the tambourine, Cynthia would assist with her answer by sounding out the word 'tambourine' while Nadia responded. Allowing students to complete the MLS outcomes with or without assistance enables them to experience a wider range of activities and achieve a larger amount of outcomes during each lesson.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

This study explored the implementation of MLS in SSPs that cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders. The contribution of this study to the limited body of literature available on MLS was a key motivator for conducting research in this field. The research design consisted of a dual case study, including observations and interviews at two SSPs, in addition to collecting questionnaire data from 29 educators in NSW involved in special education and teaching music.

### **Summary of Research Findings**

Three themes arose from the qualitative and quantitative data collected during this study: experience and perceptions of educators, programming and teaching strategies, and student responsiveness. These themes identified the need for evaluation of MLS from a variety of perspectives and also enabled reflection on methods of implementation.

#### **Experience and Perceptions of Educators**

Participants' experience in special education and their musical experiences varied substantially, along with their familiarity and perceptions of MLS. Concerns of these educators, regarding MLS and its implementation, included their level of musical competency and understanding, in addition to the lack of training and resources available to successfully implement an appropriate program. These issues are addressed in the literature, specifically the National Review of Music Education, which suggests that there are gaps in some Australian music education documents in regard to students with special needs, and furthermore states that "effective teacher education is essential" (Pascoe et al., 2005, p. vi). Educators who taught students with more severe intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders felt that MLS was less suited to their students' needs, while some educators expressed the notion that the outcomes were of such a broad nature that they would be completed provided that some form of music education took place (Board of Studies, 2003; Darrow, 1999).

### **Programming and Teaching Strategies**

A selection of programming methods were reported by participants. Some choose to create a program around a topic provided by the school, while others focused on the achievement of MLS outcomes, with reference to both musical and non-music related goals. IEPs and the option to have students achieve the outcomes with or without assistance proved to be beneficial for both educators and students, allowing a student-centred program to be devised. Music was also seen as a beneficial KLA to be enjoyed by a majority of students, as supported by the literature (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Delaney, 2000; Ockelford, 2008).

The concept of a cross-curriculum focus was also discussed, with many educators not only including other content, such as mathematics and counting songs, in their music lessons, but also utilising the suggestions of MLS to achieve the outcomes in other facets of school life (Board of Studies, 2003, 2009a). Observation and note taking following each lesson, and the subsequent comparison of these to previous lessons enabled assessment of student achievement.

### **Student Responsiveness**

As referred to in the literature, and apparent in both case studies during observations, a student's responsiveness to a lesson using MLS content can vary depending on the severity of their disability and aspects of their developmental disorder, such as noise sensitivity (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Perry, 1995). While some students responded positively to music lessons by following instructions and indicating enjoyment through smiling or laughing, others found the noise overwhelming and found some tasks too difficult. Differing levels of students' musical ability within each class resulted in educators creating a program that accommodates for those who have difficulty in music, as well as students who display levels of musical proficiency.

## **Implications for Special Education**

As the movement of inclusion becomes more prominent, educators in both regular classrooms and segregated settings will require greater awareness and understanding of special needs music education. In particular, pre-service educators obtaining qualifications in either music education or special education should be aware of students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders that may be present in their class, and become knowledgeable about how to implement a suitable music program and assess a student's achievement (VanWeelden & Whipple, 2007). A greater focus is required on the presence of music education in SSPs, which is often mistaken for music therapy (as discussed in the literature), resulting in a failure to provide educators who are not trained in music education in this setting with enough training and resources, resulting in limitations on student learning (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Langan, 2009).

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

Due to the limitations of this dual case study and the limited body of literature available regarding MLS, further research on the implementation of MLS in a variety of contexts would be beneficial for both educators and students. Observing the implementation of MLS at a selection of SSPs for a longer duration would provide further details of how educators implement a series of lessons on a particular topic, and the activities they devise to encourage the completion of both music and non-music related outcomes.

As this study specifically looked at the implementation of MLS in SSPs that cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders, it would be of interest to explore how programs are devised in SSPs for students with physical disabilities and high support needs. Additionally, secondary schools in NSW that practice inclusion or offer support units for students with a range of special needs could be the focus of future research, as inclusion continues to become widely accepted and utilised (Foreman, 2008). A study of this nature would be particularly beneficial for music educators who are required to program using the Life Skills

component or module of the syllabus, in addition to the regular Stage 4 and 5, or Stage 6 syllabus.

Furthermore, this study analysed the perceptions of educators who are already involved in special education and music. It would be beneficial to conduct a study that explores the awareness and perceptions of pre-service music educators, who will potentially have students with special needs in their primary and secondary music classes. Links between the outcomes achieved in music therapy programs and MLS could offer suggestions to both music teachers and music therapists in regard to successful implementation (Adamek & Darrow, 2008; Langan, 2009). A larger sample, potentially across all states and territories of Australia, looking at the availability of other curricula that cater for students with special needs would provide a comparison of these programs in a wide variety of contexts.

## **Conclusion**

There is a continual need for research regarding MLS and its implementation. This study supports findings that music education is beneficial for a large number of students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders, and that education should be available to all students through programs such as MLS. The research findings of this study have contributed to the limited body of literature available, however further research is required to provide awareness and a deeper understanding of MLS, so that students with disabilities benefit from its implementation.

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## Appendix A: Northcrest Special School Example Program

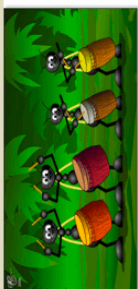
### KLA CONTENT 2010 MUSIC

WEEK	CONTENT	RESOURCES
1	<u>Introduction to unit of work</u>  <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to music</li> </ul>	CD Player Various CD's
2	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be introduced to "The Goanna Gang" compilation of Australian songs. Students will listen to various songs on the CD.</li> </ul>	Camera CD Player "The Goanna Gang" CD
3	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will listen to "The Goanna Gang" compilation of Australian songs. Students will listen to various songs on the CD and as they do so will be shown images that match the song or represent the song in some way.</li> </ul>	Camera CD Player "The Goanna Gang"
4	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will listen to "The Goanna Gang" compilation of Australian songs. Students will listen to various songs on the CD and as they do so will be shown images that match the song or represent the song in some way.</li> </ul>	Camera CD Player "The Goanna Gang"
5	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making an Australian Musical Instrument</li> </ul>	Camera CD Player Bottle tops Google pictures of Australian instruments Cardboard and Cardboard tubing.
6	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be introduced to a compilation of songs that span the history of Australian music. Students will listen to various songs on the CD.</li> </ul>	Camera CD Player Compilation CD
7	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u>	Camera CD Player

	Students will be introduced to a compilation of songs that span the history of Australian music. Students will listen to various songs on the CD	Compilation CD
<b>8</b>	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> Students will be introduced to a compilation of songs that span the history of Australian music. Students will listen to various songs on the CD. Students will try on items of clothes eg hats or use other props that relate to separate pieces of music on the CD.	Camera CD Player Compilation CD Hats, soft toys, jar of vegemite, flag and other props relating to songs.
<b>9</b>	<u>Music depicting the Australian Heritage</u> <u>Activity:</u> Students will be introduced to a compilation of songs that span the history of Australian music. Students will listen to various songs on the CD. Students will try on items of clothes eg hats or use other props that relate to separate pieces of music on the CD.	Camera CD Player Compilation CD
<b>10</b>	Consolidation of unit of work	

## Appendix B: Lake View Special School Example Program

### African Drumming.- The practice and performance group has Stage 4/5 and Stage 6 High School Students.



**Rationale:**

Music provides opportunities for students to listen and respond to a range of musical styles and to make and perform music individually. Students can develop their own musical interests in playing instruments and organising sound. Music forms an integral aspect of society and provides an important means of communication and personal expression.

**IS THE LEAD DRUMMER WHO ORGANISES AND CREATES THE RHYTHMS AND LEADS THE GROUP**

Outcome	Students learn about:	Students learn to:	Resources
<p><b>Stage 6</b> 1.3 Uses instruments to respond to music individually and as part of a group</p> <p>1.5 Plays instruments individually and as part of a group in formal and informal situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-interacting with others through music</li> <li>-responding to features of music using instruments</li> <li>-playing instruments individually</li> <li>-playing instruments as part of a group informally</li> </ul>	<p>Begin the session with greetings, collection of each musical instrument</p> <p>Play instruments ...</p> <p>Correctly - posture, care of instrument, technique</p> <p>As directed - loudly or slowly or use silence when required</p> <p>Respond as part of a group using their instrument...</p> <p>Clapping rhythms - Adams family, Genie, African Paligo</p> <p>Drumming rhythms - Peanut butter-vegetable, Sofah, Peterborough Rhythm,</p> <p>Practice performance pieces as a section (Drums, Bells or sticks) within the group.</p> <p>Learn new rhythms as a section within the group.</p> <p>Play a different rhythm as part of a section with in a group.</p>	<p>For practice: 24 Students 30 chairs in a circle.</p> <p>The group plays in three sections:</p> <p><u>African drums</u> djembe dun dun</p> <p><u>Bells</u> large and small cow bells, go-go guiro</p> <p><u>Rhythm sticks</u></p>
<p><b>Stage 4/5</b> LS3 Vocalises, sings or plays an instrument as part of a group.</p> <p>LS 5 Experiments in organising sounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-playing instruments as part of a group in a formal setting</li> </ul>	<p>Perform in front of an audience as part of The Peterborough Drummers Group ...</p> <p>In School settings: assemblies, ceremonies, at other schools</p> <p>In Community settings: where ever we are invited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nan Tien Temple, clubs, for community groups</li> </ul>	<p>For a performance: 15 students Drummers on chairs Bells/Sticks stand behind</p>

## *Whole School Music. – Stage 2/3/4/5/6 Primary and High School Students*

### **Rationale:**

Singing/vocalising provides opportunities for students to listen and respond to a very wide range of musical styles and to make and perform music individually. Students can develop their own musical interests in singing/vocalizing/signing/listening and moving to a variety of music. Music forms an integral aspect of society and provides an important means of communication, personal expression and individual preference.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Students learn about:</b>	<b>Students learn to:</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>Stage 6</b> 1.4Vocalises or sings in informal situations  1.6Experiments in organising musical sounds  1.7Listens to a variety of music for enjoyment suited to a range of post school environments  <b>Stage 4/5</b> LS1 Uses vocalization, movement, instruments to respond to a range of music.  LS2 Vocalises, sings or plays an instrument  LS8 Communicates responses to a variety of music.  <b>Primary</b> MUES1.1 Participates in simple singing and moving activities	Singing means singing/vocalising/signing/moving (dependent on individual disability)  -interacting with others through music  -responding to features of music using body movement  -performing as part of The School Signing Choir  -singing individually  -singing as part of a group.  -playing instruments as part of a group  -individual musical preference	Most activities are complete when students sing/sign to a CD. On occasions the piano is also used Begin the session with greetings and singing an "old favourite" –teacher selected.  Learn words and actions to 1 or 2 new songs each term Term 1 - Like It Like That by Guy Sebastian -Flippers by Arts Vs Science Term2 - Term 3 Term 4  Learn words and signs to a new signing song each term: Term1 – Lean on Me by Club Nouvea Term2 Term3 Term 4  Make a choice of song/s from the choice board Sing/sign/move to familiar songs  Sing a known round or chorus as part of larger group.  Respond as part of a group using an instrument... Clapping stick songs, bells (Xmas), rain sticks Signing songs  Select favourite music from home to bring in to share as students listen then pack away and leave the room.	Chairs set up in room C.D player  Variety of CDs- Known songs Current songs being learnt –two each term  Theme songs -Aussie -Food -Sport -Popular -Rock  Words on charts Key word signs  Instruments Clapping sticks Piano Percussion

## Appendix C: Brunswick Road Special School Example Program

### Whole Class Programming

**KLA/ Activity:** Music

**Term:** 1,2,3,4

**Date:** March 2010

#### Step 1: IDENTIFY DESIRED RESULTS

**Learning outcomes (from syllabus documents):** *either list outcomes OR specific stages OR KLA areas*

Talking / listening TS2.1 Communicates in informal and formal classroom activities in school and social situations for an Increasing range of purposes on a variety of topics across the curriculum.  
 TS3.1 Communicates effectively for a range of purposes and with a variety of audiences to express well-developed, well organized ideas dealing with more challenging topics

Creative Arts LS.1 Uses movement , vocalization or instruments to respond to a range of music  
 LS.2 Vocalises, sings or plays an instrument  
 LS.3 Vocalises, sings or plays an instrument as part of a group  
 LS.4 Experiments in making musical sounds  
 LS.7 Experiences music from a variety of social, cultural and historical contexts  
 LS.8 Communicates responses to a variety of music  
 LS.9 Appreciates a variety of music  
 LS.10 Engages in performing, composing and listening experiences for enjoyment

**Knowledge:**

As a result of this unit of work, students will know:

- Music is a means of communication
- Music has a beat and rhythm
- Music depicts a variety of social, cultural and historical contexts

**Skills:**

As a result of this unit or work, students will be able to:

- Move all or part of body to music
- Listen to a variety of music
- Participate in performing music group
- Make a sound to accompany music
- Respond to range of music
- Vocalise to a range of music

#### Step 2: DETERMINE ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

**Assessment:** Participate in music lesson  
 Demonstrate awareness and appreciation variety of music  
 Observation

#### Step 3: PLAN LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND INSTRUCTIONS

**Learning experiences and resources:**

- Play traditional Aboriginal Music – body movements/body percussion/instruments – didgeridoo/clap sticks
- Play traditional folk music – Waltzing Matilda/We are Australian/Kookaburra, etc – sing/accompany lyrics/sign songs
- Sounds of Australia – bird calls/waterfalls/ animal noises/ city noise – identify sounds/ reproduce sounds/ accompany sounds with instruments/body movement
- Popular song Bille Jean /Beatles or other popular music – accompany with group percussion band
- Auslan Signing – listen to different songs /learn the words then pair the vocal with Auslan signs – We are the Champions / Octopus Garden / Faith of the Heart/ From a distance / Imagine / What a wonderful World
- Karaoke Singing
- Music to accompany physical activities – sports / parachute play/games/dancing
- Free dancing
- Singing for enjoyment
- Music for leisure – listening/singing/dancing/reading words etc.

Name: Student IEP	KLA: C/A	Module/s: Music	Date:
Current skills/ baseline: Participates in classroom and music therapy groups and is part of the school dance group.			
Outcome	Indicators	Learning experiences and resources	Assessment
<p><b>Stage 3</b></p> <p>MU3.1 Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, individually and in groups, demonstrating knowledge of musical concepts.</p> <p>MUS3.4 Identifies the use of musical concepts and symbols in a range of musical styles.</p> <p><b>Stage 4</b></p> <p>LS.1 Uses movement, vocalisation or instruments to respond to a range of music</p> <p>LS.2 vocalises, sings or plays an instrument</p> <p>LS.3 Vocalises , sings or plays an instruments as part of the group</p> <p>LS.4 experiments making musical sounds</p> <p>LS.&amp; Experiences music from a variety of social, cultural and historical contexts</p> <p>LS.8 Communicates responses to a variety of music</p> <p>LS.9 Appreciates a variety of music</p> <p>LS.10 Engages in performing, composing and listening experiences for enjoyment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sings songs developing a sense of beat ,pitch, tone colour and structure</li> <li>• Moves to a variety of music, individually and in groups, to gain understanding of musical concepts and as a form of self-expression.</li> <li>• Plays music using body percussion, percussion instruments and other sound sources to explore and demonstrate the concepts of duration, tone colour, pitch, dynamics and structure</li> <li>• Listens to music and responds by moving to the beat doing some actions when different sections are played – clapping on the chorus, walking on the verse</li> <li>• Play and cease playing an instrument on cue</li> <li>• Use non-melodic percussion instruments to keep the beat of the music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhythm stick group – grade activity</li> <li>• Classroom singing</li> <li>• Choir</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Listening to music on the playground</li> <li>• Performing Arts Dance group – dancing a routine with students from across the school</li> <li>• Percussion band to accompany popular song – Bille Jean</li> <li>• Choreography dance steps to music</li> <li>• Auslan signing to songs – From a Distance/ We are the Champions/ We are One/ What a Wonderful World/ Octopus Garden/ Faith of the Heart</li> <li>• Parachute routine – using popular music to perform a routine using the parachute</li> <li>• Karaoke singing</li> <li>• Rhythm sticks – Aboriginal music appreciation / accompany Aboriginal music</li> <li>• Free dance / moving to popular songs</li> </ul>	<p>Observation Participation</p>

## Appendix D: HREC Ethics Approval Letter



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

**Human Research Ethics Committee**

Web: <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ethics/>

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Marietta Coutinho**  
Deputy Manager  
Human Research Ethics Administration

Telephone: +61 2 8627 8176  
Facsimile: +61 2 8627 8177  
Email: [marietta.coutinho@sydney.edu.au](mailto:marietta.coutinho@sydney.edu.au)

**Mailing Address:**  
Level 6  
Jane Foss Russell Building – G02  
The University of Sydney  
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA

Ref: IM/PR

13 January 2010

Assoc Prof Kathryn Marsh  
Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
Greenway Building - C41  
The University of Sydney  
Email: [kmarsh@usyd.edu.au](mailto:kmarsh@usyd.edu.au)

Dear Associate Professor Marsh

I am pleased to inform you that the Executive Committee of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at its meeting held on 17 December 2009 approved your protocol entitled **“The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes with music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual and/or developmental disorders”**.

Details of the approval are as follows:

**Ref No.:** 12-2009/12277  
**Approval Period:** December 2009 – December 2010  
**Authorised Personnel:** Assoc Prof Kathryn Marsh  
Miss Sarah Ashton

The HREC is a fully constituted Ethics Committee in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans-March 2007* under Section 5.1.29

The approval of this project is **conditional** upon your continuing compliance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*. We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed.

### **Special Conditions of Approval**

Please forward the ethics approval letter from the Department of Education and Training when available. Please also forward permission letters from the list of schools of involved.

**Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities to ensure that:**



- (1) All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
- (2) All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
- (3) The HREC must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the protocol. All changes must be approved by the HREC before continuation of the research project. These include:-
  - If any of the investigators change or leave the University.
  - Any changes to the Participant Information Statement and/or Consent Form.
- (4) All research participants are to be provided with a Participant Information Statement and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee and the following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Statement. *Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, University of Sydney, on +612 8627 8176 (Telephone); +612 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or [ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au) (Email).*
- (5) Copies of all signed Consent Forms must be retained and made available to the HREC on request.
- (6) It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.
- (7) The HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the Approval Period stated in this letter. Investigators are requested to submit a progress report annually.
- (8) A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely,



*Associate Professor Ian Maxwell*  
**Chairman**  
**Human Research Ethics Committee**

cc: Sarah Ashton, 63 Excelsior Ave, Castle Hill NSW 2154  
 email:sash7838@uni.sydney.edu.au

Encl. Approved Participant Information Statement – Teacher, updated  
 Approved Participant Information Statement – Parent/Guardian, updated  
 Approved Participant Information Statement – Teacher Questionnaire, updated  
 Approved Dialogue Statement – Students  
 Approved Participant Consent Form – Teacher  
 Approved Parental (or Guardian) Consent Form  
 Approved Principal Invitation Letter  
 Approved Questionnaire  
 Approved Interview Topics

## Appendix E: DET Ethics Approval Letter

### STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION BUREAU



Miss Sarah Ashton  
63 Excelsior Avenue  
CASTLE HILL NSW 2154

DOC 10/24327

Dear Miss Ashton

SERAP Number **2009176**

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in New South Wales government schools entitled *The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual and/or developmental disorders*. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 31-12-2010.

The following researchers or research assistants have fulfilled the Working with Children screening requirements to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research for the period indicated:

Name	Approval expires
Miss Sarah Ashton	31-12-2010

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in New South Wales government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau  
New South Wales Department of Education and Training  
Level 2, 4 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst NSW 2010 - Locked Bag 93, Darlinghurst NSW 1500  
Telephone: 02 9244 3319 - Fax: 02 9238 5233 - Email: [serap@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:serap@det.nsw.edu.au)

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to General Manager,  
Planning and Innovation, Department of Education and Training, GPO Box 33, Sydney, NSW  
2001.

Yours sincerely



Dr Max Smith  
**Senior Manager**  
**Student Engagement and Program Evaluation**  
15 February 2010

**Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau**  
**NSW Department of Education and Training**  
Level 3, 1 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst NSW 2010 – Locked Bag 53, Darlinghurst NSW 1300  
Telephone: 02 9244 5619– Fax: 02 9266 8233 – Email: [serap@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:serap@det.nsw.edu.au)

# Appendix F : Questionnaire



## Questionnaire

### The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.

This questionnaire seeks information about the implementation of the Life Skills music content and outcomes (from the Music Years 7-10 Syllabus and the Stage 6 Creative Life Skills Syllabus) in your school and from this point forward will be referred to as **Life Skills Music**. The completion of this questionnaire is voluntary and all responses will be anonymous. We would be grateful if you would agree to take part in our study by answering all questions.

1. **How many years have you been involved with teaching special education?**  
\_\_\_\_\_ years.

2. **Have you taught *music* to students with special needs?**  
Yes No

**If yes, for how many years and what syllabus or program(s) have you used?**

\_\_\_\_\_ years, using \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Will you be teaching music this year at your current school?**  
Yes No

**If yes, how many music sessions a week will you teach and for what duration will these sessions last?**

\_\_\_\_\_ sessions per week, each lasting \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

4a. **How familiar are you with Life Skills Music?**  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
Not at all Very much

b. **Approximately how long have you been familiar with Life Skills Music?**  
 < 1 yr  1 yr  2 yrs  3 yrs  > 3 yrs

5. **Do you currently teach music using the Life Skills syllabus?**  
Yes No

**Please describe, or list reasons, why you use this syllabus or not:**

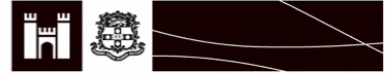
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6. **How often have you used Life Skills Music in the past?**  
 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  
Not at all Very much

7. **Approximately, what proportion of the students in your class(es) require Life Skills Music, and which syllabus or program(s) do the other students use?**  
 0%  20%  40%  60%  80%  100%

Students in my class who do NOT use Life Skills Music use the following syllabus or program(s):

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8. **Do you feel that the Life Skills Music is suited to your students' needs?**  
 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  
Not at all Very much

**Please explain:**

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9a. **Do your students respond positively to this syllabus by achieving the required outcomes?**  
 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  
Not at all Very much

b. **Please explain how your students respond:**

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10. **In what ways do you think Life Skills Music could be improved to suit the needs of students with special needs?**

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In other subjects, please list:

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In other aspects of school life, please list:

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**15. Please use the space below for any comments you have about teaching music to students with disabilities:**

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

Please leave your details below if you agree to be contacted.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details (please indicate preferred method of contact)

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Mob.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G : Interview

### Teacher Interview Questions

1. To begin, I would just like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. As you know, I am currently researching the implementation of Life Skills Music programs in special schools, using (school name) as one of my case studies.
2. Firstly, could you please tell me how long you have been teaching (in general) at (school name) ?
3. How many years have you been using Life Skills (in any subject) at this school?
4. Have you taught at any other special school or otherwise?  
[If yes] Did you use Life Skills or another program at those schools?
5. At any schools in which you have taught (including your present school), have you been given a choice to use Life Skills or another program depending on student ability in your class?
6. Speaking specifically about music, could you please tell me how much experience you have had with music in general – whether it be recreationally, through formal education or related to teaching?
7. How long have you taught Life Skills Music at (school name) ?
8. Were you given a choice of what subjects to teach from the Creative Arts Life Skills Syllabus?  
[If yes] Why did you choose music rather than dance or art, etc.?
9. At present, do you feel comfortable teaching Music using Life Skills as you do other Life Skills subjects, or would music specific training help?
10. What about when you first began teaching Life Skills Music – did you feel comfortable and knowledgeable about achieving the outcomes and planning for content?
11. Could you briefly explain individual students' responsiveness to your Life Skills Music lessons? (eg. positive, negative, interactions, achievements, etc.)
12. Do you feel that all of the students in your class are benefiting from Life Skills Music, or do you think that it is only suited to students with a particular level of disability?
13. Do you think that a form of student assessment is necessary for students?



14. Do you currently use any forms of assessment or reporting to gauge student responsiveness or achievement?
15. I would now like to discuss how you program for each term and plan for each lesson.  
Firstly, do you plan with **content** as of foremost importance or with the type and number of **outcomes** that you want to achieve as priority – or a combination of both?
16. Could you please outline the steps you take during the process of programming a set of lessons for the term?  
  
(Only if needed: eg. such as looking up information on the topic, collecting resources, noting which outcomes will be achieved.)
17. Later, would I be able to view and possibly copy or take notes on your programming documents for this term?
18. Do you feel that music therapy or other aspects of school life such as assembly are necessary for a variety of the Life Skills Music outcomes to be achieved (or can you cover all the outcomes you feel relevant in class time)?
19. Now I would like to discuss some of your responses from the questionnaire. (See personalised questions...)
20. Now that you are familiar with what my research is about, is there anything you feel I should have asked, but didn't, or do you have any comments or questions?

# Appendix H : Teacher Participant Information Statement

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
www.music.usyd.edu.au  
ABN 15 211 513 464

Postal: Building C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
www.usyd.edu.au

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT Research Project

### TEACHER

Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
Lecturer in Education  
Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
E: jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au

**Title: The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.**

#### (1) What is the study about?

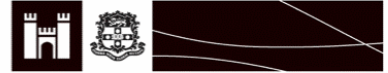
This study will explore educators' awareness and perceptions of the New South Wales (NSW) Board of Studies (BOS) Life Skills content and outcomes in music programs. The research will also assess in which contexts the course appears and why particular students require the outcomes presented in Life Skills. Implementation of this syllabus component in specialist schools which cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders in Sydney will also be examined in regard to programming and student responsiveness within lessons which use the Life Skills music outcomes.

#### (2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Sarah Ashton and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) (Honours) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Rowley.

#### (3) What does the study involve?

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire, either through a web-based survey or complete a hard copy which is to be returned to the researcher. As your school has elected to participate in a case study, your class may be observed and recorded using audio and video taping, provided that you consent to this. You may be also asked to participate in audio recorded interviews, particularly if you are a teacher of one class chosen to be observed and these will take place at a time convenient for you.



**(4) How much time will the study take?**

The questionnaire should take between 20 – 30 minutes. Observation will take place during class time and will last for the duration of the music lesson. Interviews prior to the study commencing at your school will take approximately 30 minutes and any interviews which discuss evaluation of classes taught will last approximately 15 minutes.

**(5) Can I withdraw from the study?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

Submitting a completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You can withdraw any time prior to submitting your completed questionnaire. Once you have submitted your questionnaire anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

**(6) Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

**(7) Will the study benefit me?**

This study may indirectly benefit you by providing information in regard to the broad range of ways Life Skills music programs are implemented and provide additional information to your school which may benefit both students and teachers. This study will also address recommendations for improvements to the syllabus in the future, which therefore may benefit your students.

**(8) Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are free to tell other people about this study.



**(9) What if I require further information?**

When you have read this information, Sarah Ashton will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Dr. Jennifer Rowley, Lecturer in Education, 9351 1328.

**(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?**

**Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or [human.ethics@usyd.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@usyd.edu.au) (Email).**

This information sheet is for you to keep

# Appendix I : Parent Participant Information Statement

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
www.music.usyd.edu.au  
ABN 15 211 513 464

Postal: Building C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
www.usyd.edu.au

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT Research Project

### PARENT/GUARDIAN

Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
Lecturer in Education  
Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
E: jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au

**Title: The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.**

#### (1) What is the study about?

This study will look at educators' awareness and perceptions of the New South Wales (NSW) Board of Studies (BOS) Life Skills course and how it is implemented in specialist schools.

#### (2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Sarah Ashton and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) (Honours) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Rowley.

#### (3) What does the study involve?

As your child's school has agreed to participate in our study, your child's class may be chosen to be observed and recorded using audio and video taping, after obtaining your consent. With a teacher present, short interviews will be conducted with selected students who are willing and able to participate, and these will also be audio recorded. Interviews will take place at the school at a time convenient to the teacher and student, and will not disrupt your child's schooling.

#### (4) How much time will the study take?

Observation will take place during class time and will last for the duration of the music lesson. Interviews with students will be between 10 – 15 minutes.



**(5) Can I withdraw from the study?**

Your child can choose to discontinue the interview at any point, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

Your decision whether or not to permit your child to participate will not prejudice you or your child's future relations with the University of Sydney. If you decide to permit your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your child's participation at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

**(6) Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

**(7) Will the study benefit me?**

This study may benefit you or your child by providing information in regard to the ways the Life Skills music course is implemented. Additional information about programming for Life Skills will be given to your school, which may also benefit your child's education.

**(8) Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are free to tell other people about this study.

**(9) What if I require further information?**

When you have read this information, Sarah Ashton will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Dr. Jennifer Rowley, Lecturer in Education, 9351 1328.

**(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?**

**Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or [human.ethics@usyd.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@usyd.edu.au) (Email).**

This information sheet is for you to keep

# Appendix J : Questionnaire Participant Information Statement

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



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www.music.usyd.edu.au  
ABN 15 211 513 464

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The University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
www.usyd.edu.au

Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
Lecturer in Education  
Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
E: jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT Research Project

### TEACHER - QUESTIONNAIRE

**Title: The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.**

#### (1) What is the study about?

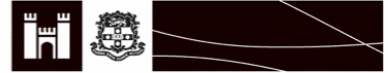
This study will explore educators' awareness and perceptions of the New South Wales (NSW) Board of Studies (BOS) Life Skills content and outcomes in music programs. The research will also assess in which contexts the course appears and why particular students require the outcomes presented in Life Skills. Implementation of this syllabus component in specialist schools which cater for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders in Sydney will also be examined in regard to programming and student responsiveness within lessons which use the Life Skills music outcomes.

#### (2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Sarah Ashton and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) (Honours) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Rowley.

#### (3) What does the study involve?

You will have the option to complete an anonymous questionnaire regarding the implementation of the Life Skills music course, which can be completed as a web-based survey, or sent to you as a hard copy with a reply paid envelope enclosed. Even if you are unfamiliar with Life Skills, we would be grateful if you would still complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire is completely



voluntary and you are not required to answer every question if you choose not to.

**(4) How much time will the study take?**

The questionnaire should take between 20 – 30 minutes.

**(5) Can I withdraw from the study?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are not under any obligation to complete the questionnaire. Submitting a completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You can withdraw any time prior to submitting your completed questionnaire. Once you have submitted your questionnaire anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

**(6) Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

**(7) Will the study benefit me?**

This study may indirectly benefit you by providing information in regard to the broad range of ways Life Skills music programs are implemented and provide additional information to your school which may benefit both students and teachers. This study will also address recommendations for improvements to the syllabus in the future, which therefore may benefit your students.

**(8) Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are free to tell other people about this study.

**(9) What if I require further information?**

When you have read this information, Sarah Ashton will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Dr. Jennifer Rowley, Lecturer in Education, 9351 1328.





**(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?**

**Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or [human.ethics@usyd.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@usyd.edu.au) (Email).**

This information sheet is for you to keep

## Appendix K : Dialogue Statement

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
[www.music.usyd.edu.au](http://www.music.usyd.edu.au)  
ABN 15 211 513 464

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Postal: Building C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
[www.usyd.edu.au](http://www.usyd.edu.au)

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Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
Lecturer in Education  
Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
E: [jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au)

### DIALOGUE STATEMENT

#### STUDENTS

My name is Sarah Ashton and I'm from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. I will be watching your music class today and other music classes during this term, to see what sort of things you do in music. I am also interested in the other ways that you participate in music during the school day, like at assembly or in other classes.

I will be using a video camera during your music classes to record what happens. Your teacher knows about this and all of your parents have provided permission for me to video record you. If you do not want to be video recorded, please let your teacher know.

# Appendix L : Teacher Consent Form

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
www.music.usyd.edu.au  
ABN 15 211 513 464

Postal: Building C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
www.usyd.edu.au

## PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

### TEACHER

Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
Lecturer in Education  
Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
E: jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au

I, .....[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project

**TITLE: The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.**

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.
3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.
4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.
5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.
6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.



7. I consent to:

- |                |     |                          |    |                          |
|----------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| i) Observation | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Interviews | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |

I consent to being:

- |                         |     |                          |    |                          |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| i) Audio recorded       | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Video recorded      | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) Receiving Feedback | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you answered YES to the "Receiving Feedback Question (iii)", please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

**Feedback Option**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Date:** .....

# Appendix M : Parent Consent Form

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



Macquarie Street  
 Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
 www.music.usyd.edu.au  
 ABN 15 211 513 464

Postal: Building C41  
 The University of Sydney  
 Sydney NSW 2006 Australia  
 www.usyd.edu.au

Dr. Jennifer Rowley  
 Lecturer in Education  
 Tel: + 61 2 9351 1328  
 Fac: + 61 2 9351 1287  
 E: jennifer.rowley@sydney.edu.au

## PARENTAL (OR GUARDIAN) CONSENT FORM

I, ..... agree to permit ....., who is aged ..... years, to participate in the research project –

**TITLE: The implementation of the New South Wales Board of Studies Life Skills content and outcomes within music programs in specialist schools catering for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disorders.**

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. I have read the Information Statement and the time involved for my child's participation in the project. The researcher/s has given me the opportunity to discuss the information and ask any questions I have about the project and they have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I can withdraw my child from the study at any time without prejudice to my or my child's relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.
3. I agree that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published provided that neither my child nor I can be identified.
4. I understand that if I have any questions relating to my child's participation in this research I may contact the researcher/s who will be happy to answer them.
5. I acknowledge receipt of the Information Statement.

I consent to my child participating in:

- |                |     |                          |    |                          |
|----------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| i) Observation | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Interviews | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |

I consent to my child being:

- |                    |     |                          |    |                          |
|--------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| i) Audio recorded  | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Video recorded | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | <input type="checkbox"/> |

.....  
 Signature of Parent/Guardian

.....  
 Please PRINT name

.....  
 Date

The implementation of Life Skills within music programs in specialist schools.  
 Version 4, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010

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