"THROWN IN THE DEEP END":
INFORMAL LEARNING IN A PRIMARY MUSIC CLASSROOM

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Abstract

In recent years an increasing number of music educators have drawn attention to the dichotomy between in- and out-of-school learning, and studies exploring the range of informal learning outside schools and institutions have resulted in the identification of implications for classroom teaching practice. Green's Informal Learning approach aims to foster student agency by immersing secondary school learners in the informal practices of popular musicians. Conducted as an ethnographic case study, this project explored the implementation of Green's Informal Learning approach in a primary school in the South-West of Sydney. Thirty children aged 10 to 12 years took part in ten researcher-led music lessons which were based on Green's five Informal Learning principles and data were collected through researcher observation, focus group interviews and audio-visual recordings of student activities whilst engaged in the project. Children responded to the pedagogy's inherent learner agency in an enthusiastic manner and all friendship groups were observed to be positively engaged in a range of meaningful music making activities. The data revealed that pedagogy of this nature provides teachers with an opportunity to "connect the contexts" between children's music learning at home and at school. The results of this study support the need for teacher reconsideration of the place of informal learning approaches in primary school music.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Music is a universally accessible, participatory activity and has been demonstrated to provide opportunities for the growth of children's social, language, literacy and cognitive skills. Extensive research has left little doubt of the power of music in children's personal, social and cognitive development (Ellison & Creech, 2010).

In schools, music plays an integral role in developing students' creativity, identity formation, capacity for self-expression and satisfaction. Recent pedagogical attention has focussed on classroom music experiences that empower students with musical understanding and develop their ability to use music as a means of personal expression (Wiggins, 2009). Primary school music education plays a crucial part in every child's musical development, and should aim to develop positive attitudes towards music, providing children with musical experiences, knowledge and skills that will be of value for the rest of their lives (Board of Studies NSW, 2000).

However, constraints imposed by resource pressures, classes being taught by generalists rather than music specialists, and the lack of status of music in the primary curriculum have led to difficulties in implementing primary music programmes that engage students in personally relevant music education (Pascoe et al., 2005; Temmerman, 2005). Additionally, surveys of primary students' attitudes towards school music suggest there is a need for engaging, student-oriented activities which value children's interests and prior experiences (De Vries, 2010; Griffin, 2009). The last decade has seen blossoming interest in the informal learning practices demonstrated outside the music classroom, and research by Lucy Green (2001, 2005, 2006, 2008) shows the potential benefits of music pedagogy based on principles of Informal Learning. However, because implementation of this pedagogy has largely occurred in secondary school settings, there are few studies that explore this approach within a primary school context.

Primary School Music in NSW

NSW is currently one of the few states in Australia to have compulsory music education at the primary school level (Temmerman, 2005). The NSW Board of Studies *Creative Arts K-6*

Syllabus specifies that in music, students "develop knowledge, skills and understanding in performing music of different styles and from different times and cultures by singing, playing and moving, and in organising sound into musical compositions using musical concepts" (Board of Studies NSW, 2000, p. 7). In classroom music, students typically engage in a range of musical activities structured in various ways (from whole class learning to group and individual learning) which promote the development of perceptive and responsive listening and enable students to efficiently talk and write about music (Glover & Young, 1999). The syllabus is designed to be used by either a music specialist employed by the school, or the classroom teacher whose responsibility it is to teach all six *Key Learning Areas*[1], the latter being more commonly the case in NSW primary schools (Temmerman, 2005).

A comprehensive assessment of the current state of music education in Australia was provided by the *National Review of School Music Education* (Pascoe et al., 2005), which investigated factors affecting the "success" of school music programmes across Australia. One common issue raised by many primary schools was that of the difficulties in recruiting teachers with sufficient musical training, because of resource and financial limitations associated with the employment of music specialists. Hardcastle (2009) also explored this notion, stating that while it is widely agreed that a specialist should be employed, schools often lack access to funding and appropriately trained specialist teachers. However, research suggests that some specialist music teachers may also have difficulty creating lessons that engage students with child-oriented, practical musical activities (De Vries, 2010), indicated by several European surveys of students' attitudes towards school music (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall & Tarrant, 2003).

Significance of the Study

The NSW Department of Education and Communities[2] recognises the value of quality pedagogy, stating that "of all the things that schools can control, it is the quality of pedagogy that most directly and most powerfully affects the quality of learning outcomes that students demonstrate" (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003, p.4). The *Quality*

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[1] See glossary at the end of the chapter.
[2] Formerly known as the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)

Teaching in NSW Public Schools model (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003) was developed as a framework for teachers' professional self-reflection and for school improvement practices in NSW. The model comprises three pedagogical dimensions (Intellectual Quality, Quality Learning Environment and Significance) and is based on sound research-based understanding of how teaching improvements can promote enhanced student learning. Intellectual quality refers to pedagogy which focuses on activating deep understanding of important, substantive concepts, skills and ideas, while quality learning environment denotes teaching that enables productive, positive and meaningful learning experiences. The third pedagogical dimension, significance, refers to pedagogy that helps make learning meaningful to students by drawing clear connections with students' prior knowledge and identities. These three areas represent features of classroom practice that have been linked to meaningful learning indicated by improved student outcomes (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003).

The value of quality pedagogy is similarly discussed by Jeanneret and Degraffenreid (2012), who posit that classroom pedagogy which seeks to attain best practice represents a means of maximising music learning for specialist and generalist teachers alike. Zemelman, Daniels and Hyde's (2005) model of best practice consolidates ideas from a number of educational theorists, leading to the conclusion that classrooms should be student-centred, experiential, holistic, collaborative and challenging. When this model is considered with regard to music pedagogy, it has been suggested that learning should be student-centred, should include music of students' own choosing, and should build on the experiences that students bring to the classroom (Jeanneret & Degraffenreid).

Student engagement has been identified as a particularly valuable indicator of quality pedagogy. According to McFadden and Munns (2002), students who are engaged tend to value their education, environment and achievements, take part in activities and feel that they belong in school. In music education literature, attention has been drawn to the dichotomy between children's in- and out-of-school musical experiences, and how a disjunction between the differing contexts of musical experiences can negatively impact on student engagement, motivation and commitment to learning in music classes (Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves, 2001; Griffin, 2009; Harwood, 1998; Harwood & Marsh, 2012). As suggested by a number of

studies, these negative attitudes are particularly prevalent in the upper primary age group (Bowles, 1998; Ruismaki & Tereska, 2008).

Research by Lucy Green (2001, 2008) has attempted to close the gap between the negative musical experiences students experienced inside the (predominantly secondary) classroom, and the positive ones outside it. Green (2001) has explored the informal learning practices utilised by popular musicians, speculating that such practices could be transferred to the music classroom in order to address issues of low student engagement and disillusionment with school music.

From her study in 2001, Green developed a set of five Informal Learning[3] principles, designed to have the potential to be implemented in a music classroom environment. In summary, these principles were as follows:

1. Learning should begin with music that learners choose for themselves
2. Learning should involve aurally copying recordings
3. Learning takes place both alone and in friendship groups
4. Learning takes place in haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways
5. Learning should involve an integration of listening, performing, improvising and composing

In a trial program in English secondary schools, the approach was demonstrated to address issues of pupil engagement, ownership of curricula and commitment to learning in music classes. Students participated in meaningful music making which focussed on the acquisition of personal performance skills and the pedagogy was demonstrated to be an effective and engaging teaching and learning strategy (Green, 2008), as will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

This thesis documents an ethnographic case study which focussed on the implementation of the Informal Learning approach with children aged 10 to 12 years in a primary school in the South-West of Sydney. I undertook the project as teacher-researcher in order to investigate whether this approach has the potential to address areas of concern related to the teaching of

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[3] See glossary at the end of the chapter.

music in the primary school (as previously outlined), as few studies have explored this area (Jeanneret, 2010). Additionally, a small number of research publications (Davis, 2012; Harwood & Marsh, 2012) are strongly suggestive of the potential benefits of this kind of approach in primary school classrooms, and this study sought to explore some of the recommendations presented in these articles through trialling practical implementation. The dominant areas of focus in the study revolved around responses of children to the different approach and the challenges for both learners and teachers, as outlined in the research questions below.

Research Questions

The research questions examine the effect of Informal Learning pedagogy from the perspectives of both students and teacher, in order to present a holistic view of learning experiences from different "stakeholders" in a primary music classroom.

1. How do primary school students respond to the increased ownership and responsibility for their learning inherent in the Informal Learning approach?
2. What challenges do students and teachers face when Informal Learning is implemented in a primary music classroom?

By exploring the possibilities of innovative music pedagogy, results and information gained from this study will assist both music specialist and generalist educators in their teaching of primary school music in the future. In documenting children's responses to the learner responsibility and ownership inherent in the pedagogy, the project aimed to explore the learning practices of children as they arose in this context with limited teacher direction, and the learner engagement associated with this agency. Additionally, the study aimed to contribute to the current field of Informal Learning research by providing perspectives from a primary school music learning context. Informal Learning of music in this context is currently only in its initial stages of exploration, although there have been recent developments in this area, as will be discussed in the following literature review chapter. The review is divided into main topic areas, including children's attitudes towards school music; music and activity preferences; and informal learning and its relevance to primary school music.

Glossary

To minimise ambiguity, the following definitions will be adhered to throughout this thesis, as outlined below.

informal learning: This term (represented by lower-case letters) describes the ways in which people learn outside the classroom. It is distinct from the "formal" learning which takes place in classrooms, universities and other formalised educational institutions. Informal learning of a musical nature is enacted by people all around the world, and often features aural learning as a dominant learning practice. Examples of informal learning include young people rehearsing in a garage band with friends, an individual accessing YouTube clips in solitary instrumental learning and children learning a playground song by mimicking their peers. A learning practice often utilised by popular musicians, informal learning was the focus of Green's research in 2001, and was the basis of the Informal Learning approach detailed by Green (2008).

Informal Learning approach: This term (represented by upper-case letters) describes the pedagogical approach to teaching classroom music as developed by Lucy Green (2008) based on the learning practices of popular musicians. The approach incorporates five underlying principles of informal learning designed to be implemented in the music classroom.

Key Learning Area: This term, used in NSW primary education, denotes a subject area which has been identified as integral to the education of primary school students and therefore has been included in the NSW K-6 Curriculum. The NSW K-6 Curriculum is divided into six Key Learning Areas (English; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Personal Development, Heath and Physical Education; Creative Arts; Human Society and its Environment). Music is one of four strands which comprise the "Creative Arts" Key Learning Area. Teachers are also expected to include Dance, Drama and Visual Art in their yearly programs.

Music specialist teacher: This term denotes a teacher employed by a primary school to teach music to all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. The teacher generally specialises in music to some degree, and teaches each class once a week, often in a designated music classroom.

In NSW, the teacher develops lessons in consideration of the Board of Studies *Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus*, with activities which focus on listening, performing and "organising sound" (the term used to describe creative activity).

Generalist teacher: This term relates to a primary school teacher who is responsible for teaching all six Key Learning Areas to one class for an entire year. Generalist teachers may have little or no experience with performing or teaching music, and may feel a lack of confidence when teaching music and other performing arts subjects (Temmerman, 2005).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The age-phase of middle to upper primary school (generally 7-12 years old in NSW schools) is a time of great opportunity in children's musical development, as students' enthusiasm and curiosity is matched by growing competence and capacity for the development of new skills (Glover & Young, 1999). As children undergo the transition from childhood into early adolescence, music becomes a social and emotional force with which they associate identity, enjoyment and meaning (Lamont, 2002). In designing music learning experiences for children within this age-phase, teachers should strive to foster the progressive development of students' musical self-esteem and identities by ensuring that learning activities are effective and engaging.

Effective primary music education has been identified as that which engages students through child-centred curricula and activities that nurture children's musical and social development and self-expression (Stavrou, 2006; Wiggins, 2009). A consideration of children's engagement and attitudes towards music in and out of school is integral in assessing the effectiveness of musical curricula and activities. Such engagement and attitudes have been the focus of a number of quantitative studies (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall & Tarrant, 2003). Researchers have identified a gradual shift in student attitudes towards music as they progress through primary school, with studies suggesting that students become increasingly negative towards music classes as they near the end of primary school (Bowles, 1998; Ruismaki & Tereska, 2008). Indeed, in some instances music has been classified as one of the least preferred subjects (Stavrou, 2006). The upper primary school age group (Years 5 and 6 in NSW) has been identified by teachers as being particularly challenging (De Vries, 2010; Lamont et al., 2003), with teacher statements suggesting that students in their final year of primary school pose particular difficulties (De Vries, 2010). Reasons proposed for these negative attitudes have been both complex and varied, but a number of researchers have suggested that the failure of schools to address student engagement with particular musical styles and activity types has resulted from the lack of integration between the cultural contexts of school, home and the community (Harwood & Marsh, 2012; Sloboda, 2001; Stavrou, 2006).

Connecting the Contexts

Children's musical play literature suggests that the ways children interact with music outside of school have many implications for classroom teaching practice. The complexities of children's musical experiences were explored in detail by Campbell (2010), who documented a broad range of musical activities in children's daily lives, exploring the meaning of children's "musical utterances", "rhythmicking" behaviours and other musical interactions. Investigation of children's playground games suggests common features of such games include rhythmic text, associated movement and an emphasis on sociality; their transmission practices are examples of playground learning and have been of particular interest to music educators (for example, Marsh, 2008).

Such research has highlighted the need for teachers to consider the diverse musical experiences children bring with them from outside school (Glover & Young, 1999) and how the contexts associated with their experiences influence the intrinsic meaning children ascribe to their activities. From her investigation of children's playground music, Harwood (1998) proposed that a child's ability to demonstrate a skill is affected by the context within which it is assessed, and that children display greater skill in contexts which are meaningful to them. A disjunction between children's perceptions of different contexts of music-making was observed by Griffin (2009). Conversations with individual children indicated an unconscious separation between music in students' daily lives ("small 'm' music") and music in school ("big 'M' music", Griffin, 2009, p. 172). Research into the function of music in the lives of children similarly suggests boundaries between music in school and out of school. After exploring the cognitive, emotional and social functions of music for individuals, Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001) determined that the function of children's music listening at home was primarily for emotional and social reasons, and that school music represented a predominantly cognitive function.

While the specific context of a child's musical experience may influence their perception of the "authenticity" of the experience itself, it has been suggested that this in turn is dependent on both the perceived "control" of the learner, and the musical styles which dominate particular contexts (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003). In their investigation of student and teacher attitudes, approaches and levels of engagement with music, Hargreaves & Marshall

suggested that children's and teenagers' involvement with music is strongly linked to their sense of personal identity, and that their engagement depends on the level of ownership and sense of autonomy associated with their music-making. This notion has also been articulated by De Vries (2010), who discovered that the upper primary school students in his study valued choice in classroom, extra-curricular and informal music activities alike.

In discussing the "less than ideal" state of Australian primary music education, Temmerman (2005) proposes that student musical experiences at school, home and in the wider community should be connected in order to appeal to a student's personalised sense of musical identity. She emphasises the need for connecting different contexts to enhance positive attitudes towards music making, and proposes two specific schemes (the inclusion of a curriculum statement which addresses meaningful cultural connections and the development of coordinated school-community/industry partnerships) aimed to link cultural contexts. An understanding not only of the musical identities of students, but also the congruence between the musical identities of pupils and teachers, is thought to be an influential factor in the success of school music (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003). However, a child's "musical identity" is by no means stable. In her representation of American 5th graders' musical habits, Minks (1999) suggested that the musical identities of the primary school students in her study were multi-layered and fluctuating, dependent on the perceived values of different social environments. By acknowledging the influence of children's complex musical identities in their music making, educators can develop learning sequences which are relevant and meaningful to the learners themselves.

From a Child's Perspective: Music and Activity Preferences

The inclusion of children's preferred music in school music lessons as a means of facilitating greater enjoyment has been suggested by several researchers (De Vries, 2010; Griffin, 2009; Harwood, 1998; Harwood & Marsh, 2012; Marsh, 2008; Stavrou, 2006). Music preference literature indicates that early adolescence is often accompanied by an inclination towards popular music over other styles (De Vries, 2010; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Lamont et al., 2003). The trend of young adolescents favouring popular music, whilst simultaneously rejecting and/or demonstrating a lack of interest in "traditional" forms such as Western "classical" music has been suggested by Lamont et al. In their study of students and teachers

from 21 schools in the United Kingdom (one of the most comprehensive studies of this nature to date), adolescents' experiences of music in and out of school were explored with the purpose of investigating the perceived problems of school music. It was concluded that student and teacher attitudes towards school music were generally very positive, but that teachers should recognise the validity of their students' musical identities with the aim of bestowing "the confidence to partake in musical activities in whatever personal or social context they choose" (p. 240).

However, it is not only adolescents who demonstrate a preoccupation with popular music as disseminated by the media. Children's interactions with popular music were explored in an ethnographic study carried out by Minks (1999). The overwhelming majority of fifth-graders in her study were "avid fans" of the popular music promulgated by the American radio station "Kiss 95.7", and Minks recognised that children consumed popular music as a participatory experience, which was manifested in the social and emotional meaning children ascribed to their activities. Harwood & Marsh (2012) note that children's interaction with music derived from media sources "goes beyond passive reception and reproduction to creative manipulation" (p. 331), and the authors cite examples of children's activities which have been appropriated globally and thus transformed contextually and musically.

It is clear that for many young people, playing instruments is a preferred means of participating in music in and out of school (Bowles, 1998; Lamont et al., 2003; Ruismaki & Tereska, 2008). The unexpected popularity of playing an instrument outside of school was reported by Lamont et al., who attribute this to the impact of the British curricular emphasis on practical music-making. They label this music-making as "informal", and suggest that pupils responded particularly positively to school situations which "blurred boundaries" between home and school (p. 239).

Such consideration of classroom activities preferred by primary school children may assist in planning engaging modes of musical activity which most successfully achieve set objectives (Bowles, 1998). As will be examined below, pedagogy based on informal learning represents a means of incorporating learner-controlled repertoire and instrumental playing in classroom activities, thus potentially addressing the issues identified above.

The Next Step: A New Pedagogy?

In the last few decades, attempts to increase participation and motivation in classroom music lessons have fuelled the integration of more student-oriented music within existing curricula, particularly in secondary school environments (Green, 2008). Attempts to "close the gap" between traditionally valued Western "classical" music and the more mainstream realm of popular music have led to a recognition of students' personalised musical worlds, and the need to include these choices in classroom music activities so that students may assert a sense of "ownership" over their learning (Green, 2008, p. 3). As discussed, research suggests that many adolescents prefer popular music over other forms, and this has led to much concern regarding how popular music may be integrated within the music classroom (Westerlund, 2006). However, popular music has posed many problems for music educators, primarily because it does not adhere to the principles and methods of formal musical instruction.

It has been argued that while much student-oriented music has found its way into existing curricula, teaching practices based on the Western "classical" tradition have remained entrenched in music education (Green, 2005, 2008; Harwood & Marsh, 2012). Contemporary genres like popular music have been treated in the same way as works from the classical canon. However, the last two decades have seen blossoming interest in the consideration of not only formal learning situations but also the many kinds of informal learning situations present in the world outside schools and institutions (Folkestad, 2006). For example, Vadeboncoeur (2006) utilised a multiphase research approach to examine the experiences of young people engaged in different types of informal learning in community after-school programs, focusing on the learning in performing arts venues, museums and science centres. Recently, this interest in informal learning has been extended to the consideration of pedagogy as a means of addressing issues such as student engagement, commitment and ownership of learning.

Informal Music Learning: The Development of *Musical Futures*

In proposing her ground-breaking program, Lucy Green (2008) discusses the merits of a pedagogy based on the "informal" learning processes utilised by popular musicians, as

investigated in her book *How Popular Musicians Learn* (2001). From this initial research, Green hypothesised that such learning practices could be transferred to the context of classroom music, and would positively influence student motivation and engagement. Her findings provided the groundwork for the development of a pedagogical project detailed in *Music, Informal Learning and the School* (2008) which trialled the implementation of Green's Informal Learning approach in 21 schools in the UK commencing in 2002. By recognising the differences between "formal" music education and the "informal" practices of popular musicians, the performance-based project aimed to involve young people in the practices of real world musicians (Jeanneret, 2010). The five underlying principles of the project (learner-chosen music; importance of aural learning; self- and peer-learning in friendship groups; concepts learnt in meaningful, holistic ways; and integration of musical experiences) were developed from Green's previous study (2001), and represent the project's aims of increasing student engagement, motivation and musical development.

When implemented in the United Kingdom, this approach came to be known as *Musical Futures*, and, assisted by funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, became more widely available to different schools throughout the UK, disseminated as codified practices published in teacher instruction manuals and in various online forms. As a pedagogical approach which has continuously evolved over the past ten years, the published resources reflect Green's original five tenets in varying degrees, although the aim of recovering school music learning from pedagogies of "compliance, coercion and control embedded in institutional music education" (Lines, 2009, p. 2) has been a central concern in the pedagogy's continual implementation.

Responses to Informal Learning Pedagogy

This work is not without criticism. Several scholars have criticised Green's theory for a number of reasons, some pertaining to her five underlying principles. Espeland (2010) highlights Green's role in the debate over formal/informal learning and presents a highly critical view of Green's third principle (learning with friends). He claims that this principle is not in line with the current perception of "schooling as democratic education" (p. 135) because the notion carries with it the assumption that effective learning can only occur in friendship groups.

One response to Green's earlier research (2001) has been to argue the necessity of considering non-western perspectives of music learning (Folkestad, 2006) in order to recognise the importance of cultural diversity in music education. Indeed, in deconstructing Green's philosophical framework, some published peer criticism interrogates key concepts that underpin Green's project, such as notions of situational authenticity and "naturally arising learning practices" (Green, 2008, p. 41), and the assumption that there is a "fundamentally similar" learning approach in every culture which can be grasped by all learners (Väkevä, 2009). However, such criticism tends to be juxtaposed with the potential for informal learning to revitalise music education (Rodriguez, 2009), and thus such constructive dialogue provides stimuli for the continual development of Green's Informal Learning approach.

It has been argued that informal music learning has become increasingly associated with popular music genres as a result of Green's highly influential pedagogy. In discussing this conceptualisation of informal music learning, Thorpe (2009) poses the question of whether formal and informal music learning is genre specific. When considered with regard to Green's approach, it may be asserted that genre-independence is suggested by the final two learning stages (informal learning with Western classical music), in line with Green's aim of recreating "real" learning processes, rather than specific musical content or styles (Väkevä, 2009).

Several studies expand on the findings of Green's initial research into how popular musicians learn (2001), and explore concepts such as the value of learning from student rock bands. The ethnographic study undertaken by Jaffurs (2004) is one example of this. The author investigates students' musical and social interactions in a "garage band", reflecting on the effects their experiences have on her conception of informal music learning and its translation to the classroom. Another related concept of study is the integration of informal music learning into existing school curricula, and issues which arise (such as means for assessment and the validity of "collective ownership") as explored by Thorpe (2009) and Gower (2012).

The outline by Green (2008) of what developed into the *Musical Futures* program has been followed by the inclusion of the Informal Learning approach in educational environments all over the world (Musical Futures, n.d.). Initial research in the UK (Hallam, Creech &

14

McQueen, 2010) demonstrated an effective method for evaluating the impact of the program, and this model was utilised in evaluating an Australian *Musical Futures* pilot program held in 10 Victorian government schools (including one primary school) as documented by Jeanneret (2010). Through an investigation of the impact of the *Musical Futures* approach on students and teachers in the pilot schools, she concluded that two school terms of the program had a profound impact on teachers' confidence and pedagogy, and on students' engagement, social learning and musical skills.

Informal Learning in the Primary School

While Informal Learning pedagogy was originally developed to engage secondary school students, in recent years the focus has been extended to the upper primary school age group. The *Musical Futures Transition Project* in the UK is a contemporary example of this extension, aiming to assist students' transition from primary school to secondary school music. The project involves the creation of a whole class arrangement of a set song ("The Passenger") in Year 6 classes, with the aim that the same activity will be recreated by early secondary teachers to assist newly-arrived students' familiarity with the musical context of secondary school (D'Amore, 2011). However, the use of a set song departs considerably from the notion of student chosen repertoire, one of the five tenets of Informal Learning determined by Green. A project of this nature is indicative that there have been forays into the primary school, but that these models have sometimes entailed significantly modified versions of the original pedagogy.

In relation to primary school music, Davis (2012) states that "the social constructs that generate informal learning are fertile ground for formal teaching, given the intrinsically social nature of music-making in both in and out of school settings" (p. 421). As proposed by Harwood and Marsh (2012), there are commonalities between children's playground learning and the "informal" learning styles of popular musicians (Green, 2001). Learning principles commonly associated with children's informal learning styles have also been suggested by Harwood & Marsh, and include concepts such as shared responsibility for learning within a community, legitimate peripheral participation (participants choosing when they wish to perform and when they wish to listen), aural/oral transmission and holistic learning. When Harwood & Marsh's suggested classroom learning framework is compared with Green's five

Informal Learning principles (2008), a number of similarities arise, in particular those of learner-chosen repertoire, holistic learning and learning taking place in friendship groups, which suggest a need for a reconsideration of teaching and learning practices in the primary school.

Additionally, Davis (2012) highlights potential benefits of incorporating informal learning practices in primary school instrumental ensembles as a further means of engaging children. She emphasises the value of integrating both learner- and teacher-directed activities as a means of "fostering a musical say" (p. 428), and articulates the need for teachers to "incorporate [children's] experiences, their musical choices and their strategies as part of relevant and authentic pedagogical design" (p. 430).

Research of this nature is suggestive of the possibilities of informal music learning in the primary school. However, there is a dearth of studies which investigate the implementation of pedagogy of this nature in primary schools. The Victorian pilot program discussed above (Jeanneret, 2010) is the only study (to date) undertaken in the UK and Australia which investigates the effects of a pedagogy based on informal learning principles in the context of upper primary school.

Conclusion

From the above review, it is clear that much research literature has identified the need for engaging, student-oriented musical activities in the primary school, but few studies have investigated attempts to implement such activities. The merits of music pedagogy based on Informal Learning within a high school environment have been investigated thoroughly and have been demonstrated to address issues of pupil engagement, commitment and ownership of curricula, but within a primary school context research of this nature is limited. This deficiency suggests a need for research which investigates the effects of such pedagogy in a primary school environment. The following chapter outlines the research methodology employed in this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

As a project investigating Green's Informal Learning approach in the primary music classroom, this study is of an exploratory nature and is well suited to the qualitative paradigm. Qualitative methods can be used to explore, illuminate and understand context-specific phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) from the unique perspectives of the participants (Bresler, 1992). In carrying out this study, I sought to immerse myself in the children's learning environment, collecting data which related to all aspects of student social and musical activities in a primary classroom from the perspectives of both students and teacher. Rather than using an action research design, in which reflexive action strategies are instigated with the aim of bringing about positive changes to a particular situation (Somekh, 2006), it was decided that a single ethnographic case study was the most appropriate methodological design, in line with this study's aim of observing contextual phenomena without necessarily enacting a change in practice.

With the potential to generate rich subjective data regarding phenomena, processes and relationships in an individual unit (Burns, 2000), a single ethnographic case study (or "single in-depth study" as described by Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) was the appropriate medium for this form of comprehensive research. In ethnographic research, a case is recognised as a concatenation of different contexts (for example, physical, social, aesthetic), with complex, situated relationships and issues. In order to examine these complexities, this project was approached in a holistic way (Stake, 2010), utilising descriptive data collection as the basis for analysis (Burns, 2000). In an ethnographic study, data analysis involves detailed interpretation of the meanings, functions and consequences of human actions and how these are implicated in their individual context (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Research Context and Participants

The chosen research site for this study was a Department of Education and Communities (DEC) primary school situated in Sydney's South-West. Purposive sampling was used to select this school as the single "unit" to be observed in this case study (Burns, 2000). It was determined that my previous employment as K-6 Music Specialist Teacher in this school

would assist my aim of observing the children in as naturalistic a setting as possible, due to an already established relationship between the students and myself.

Stage 3 classes were selected as the focus of this study for two reasons. Firstly, Green's Informal Learning approach was conceived for secondary school students in the UK (age range of 11-15 years) and this overlaps with the ages of Stage 3 students in Australia (10-12 years). Secondly, the issues outlined in the previous literature review suggest potential benefits of incorporating informal learning approaches in the upper primary school. In order to facilitate a comprehensive, in-depth study focussing on a particular context, only one of the school's three Stage 3 classes was invited to take part in the study. The weekly music lessons took place in the participating children's classroom, adjacent classroom, computer lab and school hall to provide multiple spaces for group learning as modelled in Green's Informal Learning project.

All thirty students in the participating class took part in the series of ten, weekly 45 minute music lessons based on the Informal Learning approach in Terms 1 and 2, 2012. Throughout the project, students worked in friendship groups as listed in Table 3.1. I took responsibility for running and teaching the lessons in the role of teacher-researcher, and therefore was an active participant in the study[4]. Additionally, each lesson was supervised by the class's generalist teacher who assisted in data collection and provided valuable information regarding student learning needs, cultural backgrounds and previous formal music experiences.

Participant Characteristics

The participating class was a composite class comprising thirty children from both Years 5 and 6. As outlined in Table 3.1, they represented a diverse range of cultural backgrounds (including one child of Aboriginal descent) and one student had been identified as first phase ESL (English as a Second Language) meaning that the child had only rudimentary proficiency with English. Additionally, two students had identified learning needs (Autism Spectrum Disorder). All students had participated in weekly classroom music lessons with a

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[4] Issues related with this role will be addressed in the discussion of data collection methods featured later in this chapter.

specialist music teacher (the researcher) in 2011. In addition, several students had substantial formal music learning experiences (predominantly in the form of private instrumental tuition), also detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Participants in their friendship groups

Participant Name[5]	Year	Sex	Cultural Background	Additional Formal Music Learning Experiences	Learning Needs
Group 1					
Darcy Petridis	6	M	Greek-Australian		
Joe Papadakis	5	M	Greek-Australian		
John Summer	5	M	Fijian-Australian		
Bernard Azzi	6	M	Lebanese-Australian		
Ali Batlouni	5	M	Iranian-Australian		
Group 2					
Isabelle Campbell	6	F	Anglo-Australian	Piano tuition	
Annie Seacoss	6	F	Anglo-Australian	Trombone tuition (member of school band)	
Anthea Hood	5	F	Anglo-Australian	Drums tuition (member of school band)	
Zara Marino	6	F	Italian-Australian		
Lilly Conmara	6	F	Indigenous-Australian		
Group 3					
Elliot Fanner	5	M	Anglo-Australian	Clarinet tuition (member of school band)	Autism Spectrum Disorder (Asperger Syndrome)
Anthony Gunther	5	M	Anglo-Australian		
Group 4					
Vivian Sam	5	F	Vietnamese-Australian	Piano tuition (member of school band)	
Sundara Shah	5	F	Bangladeshi-Australian		Autism Spectrum Disorder
Emily Falla	5	F	Brazilian-Australian	Piano tuition	
Phoebe Kalomoira	5	F	Greek-Australian		
Group 5					
Matt Vartis	6	M	Anglo-Australian	Saxophone tuition (member of school band)	
Charles McDonald	6	M	Anglo-Australian	Piano tuition (member of school band)	
Henry Lester	6	M	Anglo-Australian	Drums tuition (member of school band)	
Owen Parker	6	M	Anglo-Australian	Trombone tuition & bass guitar tuition	
Callum Bennetts	6	M	Anglo-Australian		
Group 6					
Jeffery Glinka	6	M	Venezuelan-Australian	Bass guitar tuition (member of school band)	
Fred Alatas	6	M	Indonesian-Australian		
Brendon Martinz	6	M	Colombian-Australian		
Eduardo Paz	5	M	Colombian-Australian		ESL (1st phase)
Trent Panious	6	M	Lebanese-Australian		
Group 7					
Narata Laui	5	F	Cook Islander-Australian		
Dianne Pham	5	F	Vietnamese-Australian	Piano tuition	
Sophie Ly	6	F	Vietnamese-Australian	Flute tuition	
Sally Rana	6	F	Pakistani-Australian		

[5] Pseudonyms have been used.

Lesson Design

In designing this project, I developed a ten lesson sequence based on Green's Informal Learning principles, which was structured around two learning stages – vocal activities and instrumental activities. The overarching directions for the lesson sequence involved students forming friendship groups, choosing a piece of music and creating a group performance of this piece using vocal/body percussion sounds (for the first five lessons) and then instrumental resources. The two different learning stages were initially sparked by my concern that instrumental resources would not be available from the beginning of the lesson sequence and vocal activities provided a way of accommodating this factor. Although the vocal activity stage is a departure from Green's Informal Learning model (which focuses on instrumental learning), her principles were integrated into both stages of the task in the following ways:

1. *Learning should begin with music that learners choose for themselves*: in groups, students were given the freedom to choose one piece of music which would serve as the focus for their task. However, explicit content and inappropriate language in songs were highly discouraged.

2. *Learning should involve aurally copying recordings*: students were encouraged to "learn by listening", that is, they used audio sources (computer speakers, iPod speakers) to listen repeatedly to their chosen song and determine how they could recreate part of it. There was no limit on the use of YouTube clips in the task and students often elected to learn their piece whilst watching a version of the song with on-screen lyrics.

3. *Learning takes place both alone and in friendship groups*: students were asked to form groups of 3 – 5 members, and were encouraged to work in their chosen groups for the entire ten lesson sequence.

4. *Learning takes place in haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways*: students were encouraged to listen to their piece in its original recorded state and were reminded that the aim of the task was for them to take responsibility for their own learning.

5. *Learning should involve an integration of listening, performing, improvising and composing*: students were actively encouraged to use listening as a stimulus for performing, improvising and composing, integrating these activities in whatever way they wished.

My lesson sequence was flexible (particularly with regard to the structure and duration of each learning stage) to enable me to assess student progress as data were collected, and to ensure that the learning needs of particular students were addressed as adequately as possible. Lessons tended to incorporate some measure of both formal and informal learning practices, with the first part of the lesson dedicated to "formal" teacher explanation/modelling activities, and then the majority of lesson time taken up by "informal" student musical activities. This structure reflected the cumulative development in the children's selection and recreation of chosen songs as gradually occurred over a period of weeks. For further information, the nature of teacher strategies and student activities is outlined in Appendix A: Lesson Sequence.

Data Collection Methods

The bulk of the data in this project were collected by audio-visual recordings of student activities and focus group interviews. In addition, researcher observations were recorded in the form of field notes written immediately after each lesson, and were enhanced by immediate examination and coding of the audio-visual recordings.

Observation and recording: Challenges of the Teacher-Researcher

Observation allows a researcher to gather data from naturally occurring "live" social situations; thus "the use of immediate awareness or direct cognition. . . has the potential to yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 396). As is common in ethnographic studies, I was engaged in the role of a participant observer, whereby the observer is part of the situation being explored and therefore is "both modified and influenced by this context" (Burns, 2000, p. 405). In the initial research design, it was thought that participant observation would serve as a primary data collection method. However, given my active role in classroom events, audio-visual recordings became an equally important data source, and provided a practical way of collecting information that could not be absorbed by the eyes of one person alone (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010).

In addition to being a participant observer, my role was also that of a teacher-researcher, involving the integration of teaching and researching in a participatory framework. Such a position is very challenging, and can be likened to that of a "practitioner researcher" in action research (Denscombe, 2007). In such an approach, researchers need to focus on aspects of their practice as they engage in it, and reflection must be systematic through use of structured research techniques. A number of issues may arise, including ownership of research, questioning reflexivity and trustworthiness of researcher, but such issues may be overcome through careful, systematic research techniques and prolonged engagement in the context of study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as was the case in this project. The considerations required for data collection given this complex role are described in detail below.

Field Notes

Given my active role as teacher-researcher, I found it impractical to write any field notes during the lessons themselves. To remedy this situation, field notes were written immediately after each lesson with the purpose of maximising understanding of the events which had just transpired (Burns, 2000). The notes were predominantly descriptive in nature and served to both examine and reflect on the social, learning and musical occurrences of each lesson. Each lesson's field notes typically comprised a detailed recount of events from my perspective, discussion of each group's activities and general reflection on possible meanings, actions and points for further exploration. Additionally, as an active participant in the study, I had to be aware of the natural bias with which I was interpreting events, and so included in my weekly field notes reflections on how my role of a teacher influenced that of a researcher (and vice versa).

Audio-visual Recording

Participant observation is often combined with other forms of data collection, helping to elicit the participants' perspectives of the situation and their behaviour therein (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Because observations include both aural and visual data, audio-visual recording is a valuable tool in supplementing researcher observation. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison, audio-visual recording has the potential to overcome the subjective

nature of the researcher's view of a particular event or situation, with its capacity to "minimise the dependence on prior interpretations by the researcher" (p. 407).

In this study, four small video cameras were utilised for such a purpose. Cameras were either hand-held by the researcher or classroom teacher or were set up at one location to record events without the influence of a teacher. The latter technique yielded particularly illuminating data, given its potential for unobtrusive, "natural" recordings over a longer period of lesson time than would be possible with the hand-held alternative (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010). Additionally, on occasion cameras were issued to selected participants as a means for understanding how the children literally and conceptually viewed their world (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The aim of these differing uses was to provide multiple perspectives in the data collection phase, both as a means of addressing potential researcher bias and enabling a thorough exploration of the study's research questions, which focussed on the perspectives of both students and teacher.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews utilise group interaction as a means of eliciting information (Denscombe, 2007), and they allow the researcher to understand the reasoning behind opinions and views expressed by group members. Focus group interviews provide more comprehensive coverage of issues than would be possible in a survey alone, and they encourage the articulation of both individual and collective opinions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Three focus group sessions were held during the project (following the fourth, eighth and tenth lessons respectively) and all participating student groups were invited to take part in recorded focus group interviews with the researcher. Students were interviewed in their friendship groups, and although it proved impossible to interview every group during each session, arrangements were made so that every group had an equal opportunity to voice opinions and comments. The interviews were guided by semi-structured parameters, which allowed for flexibility whilst exploring appropriate themes (See Appendix B). The discussion topics in each focus group session were generally structured in two sections – a proportion were determined by the individual group's activities in previous lessons, and the remainder explored interesting themes general to all students which had been identified as a result of ongoing data collection/analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this study were coded using open, axial and selective coding methods developed from grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A grounded theory is one that is "inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 23) in order to create theory that remains authentic to the data generated (Neuman, 2006). However, it must be noted that this project is modelled on Green's Informal Learning approach, and therefore data patterns were analysed and theory was developed in light of her pedagogical theory. Data were examined in detail through constant comparison in the three principal phases of coding, intended to deconstruct the data into manageable segments (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The initial phase was that of open coding, in which data were explored for meanings, events and actions, and new codes and subcategories were created when necessary. The weekly data collection and subsequent video transcriptions enabled open coding to occur as a simultaneous data collection/analysis process. This phase was followed by axial coding (the process of linking categories and codes), and the final analysis stage was selective coding, in which core codes were identified and compared with existing theory (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

The multiple methods of data collection detailed above allowed for between-methods triangulation, in which different data forms were compared to enhance the accuracy and authenticity of results (Denscombe, 2007). In this study, audio-visual recordings from multiple perspectives, researcher observation and focus group interview data were thoroughly compared to allow for such triangulation. Within-methods triangulation was also utilised, present in the observation and interviewing of multiple student groups (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Research Limitations

Due to the limited scope of this study, I endeavoured to explore phenomena in great depth and with attention to detail. While findings from this study cannot be generalised to the wider population, this project aims to provide detailed conclusions from the perspective of student

and teacher participants in a specific primary school learning context. The patterns and themes emerging from the data are outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

The thirty participating children exhibited a wide range of musical, social and personal responses to the pedagogy explored in this study. A high degree of enthusiasm and engagement was demonstrated in relation to the emergent themes of learner autonomy, music making and group interactions. Although on the whole these reactions were overwhelmingly positive, there were a limited number of unanticipated outcomes which in some instances hampered individuals' ability to engage fully in the task. However, at the conclusion of the lessons, both students and participating teachers (the class's generalist teacher and myself) spoke of the extremely positive musical and social outcomes of the lesson sequence. Many children were enthusiastic to continue with such an approach, and staff who observed the outcomes were keen to explore its potential implementation for other generalist teachers in the school. This chapter outlines the nature of student responses to the pedagogy and examines the different challenges of the Informal Learning approach as they emerged in this context.

Enjoyment and Learner Autonomy

For the majority of the lesson sequence, the thirty participating children demonstrated great motivation and sustained focus in their performance task. Children's engagement was suggested by the wide array of positive responses to the Informal Learning approach, and both informal and focus group discussions revealed that all participating children had enjoyed at least one aspect of the task. Positive words like "fun", "good" and "cool" were employed by many children to describe the inherent personal enjoyment they derived from the lessons. As similarly noted by Green (2008), such discussions of enjoyment tended to revolve around two different areas – learner autonomy and music making.

Several comments suggested that children's positive feelings were often linked to their sense of control over their music learning experiences (a principal tenet of Green's Informal Learning approach).

Callum: We got to learn at our own speed.
Matt: You feel more kind of free.
(Callum's group, focus group interview, 4th June 2012)

This short dialogue confirms that the circumstantial autonomy afforded to students in this task enabled them to direct their own learning in relation to pace and progression, with clear positive connotations.

When these experiences of learner autonomy were compared with children's experiences of "formal" learning in school, it was clear that participating students were motivated by the relative freedom they experienced. One child noted that without teacher direction his group had "time to learn more", as suggested by the following comments.

Charles: You're more in control.
F: Is that a feeling that you get often at school?
Callum: No.
Matt: Not really.
Callum: At school when you're learning it's kind of like you're trapped.
(Callum's group, focus group interview, 4th June 2012)

Similarly negative discussion regarding "normal" classes was recorded by Green (2008), who muses "an outsider would be forgiven for not realising that such a varied and practical [music learning] approach had ever been in place" (p. 97). Comparison with "formal" school experiences led one girl to use an associated simile.

F: What was it like having choice?
Narata: It's like we're the teachers, we have to organise things.
(Focus group interview, 12th June 2012)

Such a role appeared to be a strong motivator for many children throughout the project and for some participants it was associated with particular responsibilities, as is suggested by the above quote. However, informal conversations suggested that responsibility was viewed in the context of a motivating challenge and children appeared to be excited by the autonomy they had been given.

Children were required to perform different musical parts, rehearse as an ensemble and produce a fluent and competent performance, and were aware that such expectations required organisation and team-work. For example, the ensemble performance nature of the task meant that individuals had to agree on specific musical roles. Given the teacher's less directive role, this often involved one or two more extroverted individuals assigning parts to other group

members, although the process proved to be more dynamic as the weekly lessons progressed. In my informal discussions with particular groups, it was clear that children were motivated by the roles they had assigned themselves, and took particular pride in articulating their musical function to an observer.

In addition to this organisational role, many children recognised that the behaviour of individuals had a significant impact on the progress of the whole group. Both my observations and children's comments suggested that keeping particular group members on task for the duration of the project was an issue for at least two of the friendship groups. This behaviour management aspect, generally under the jurisdiction of the classroom teacher in a "formal" learning situation, became the responsibility of individual group members, and varying behaviour of "off-task" individuals inevitably led to some frustration on the part of children who were motivated to take on this role. This was a particular problem with the boys in Darcy's group, who generally demonstrated the most "off-task" behaviour, particularly in the vocal stage of the task. However, discussions with the class's generalist teacher suggested that on the whole these boys were exhibiting significantly more engaged responses in the Informal Learning task compared with their behaviour in other classes.

Learner Agency and Song Choice

The autonomy associated with learner-chosen repertoire, a key facet of Green's Informal Learning approach, was well-received by the participating children in this study. Children's enthusiastic repertoire selection occurred in the computer lab during lessons one and two, and was a clear indicator of participants' engagement in the task. In the first lesson, the freedom to determine own repertoire for study elicited overwhelmingly positive responses, with children quickly forming friendship groups and happily chattering as an initial means of choosing a song. The class moved to the adjoining computer lab and each group huddled around one computer, employing YouTube to assist in repertoire selection. By the end of the first lesson, three of the seven friendship groups had finalised their song choice, and many group members were enthusiastically singing, moving and laughing in response to their selected piece. However, the other four groups struggled with song selection, and one group of boys did not finalise their song choice until lesson four, as discussed below.

Although it was clear that most children had well defined musical preferences (as suggested by other research, for example De Vries, 2010; Griffin, 2009; Minks, 1999) and were at no loss for song suggestions, some children found it hard to align their preferences with those of other group members. This notion was articulated by the girls in Narata's group, who encountered repertoire selection difficulties "'cause everyone has a different opinion of a song" (Focus group interview, 30th March 2012).

Unfortunately, several songs chosen by the children were dismissed due to inappropriate lyrical content and themes as deemed by the two teachers. A typical discussion regarding language appropriateness is documented below:

Bernard:	If there's the word sexy, is it wrong?
F:	What song are you talking about?
Bernard:	Grab somebody sexy tell em' hey (rolls his hands in time). The song is *Give Me Everything*.
Joe:	Nah we're not doing that!
Bernard:	I'm just asking.
Ahmed:	Miss the only word in this is… A-hole (said with a grin)

(Video record, 16th March 2012)

Two all-boy groups found these limitations particularly difficult to observe, with constantly rejected repertoire leading to some frustration and anxiousness. Songs were eventually chosen, but some group members expressed dissatisfaction that they were unable to use their true preferred songs. Indeed, when asked about challenges associated with the task, several children mentioned song choice, and one girl's suggested improvement involved a teacher-chosen song which allowed all students to perform achievable instrumental parts. Such a suggestion is similar to the Stage Two in Green's framework (2008, p. 25).

When questioned regarding their song choice, children divulged a range of reasons for their song selection. For some, visual elements of their song selection were connected to recreational activities engaged in at home (for example, a YouTube clip featuring an animated Lego[6] orchestra), while for others, particular sonic properties were influential in their decision ("It has good lyrics and a good tune" – Callum's group, video record, 23rd March 2012). One

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[6] "Lego" refers to small colourful plastic building blocks used by children for both recreational and educational purposes.

group of girls indicated that they were concerned with a chosen song's potential reception by an audience, as demonstrated by the following dialogue.

Narata: Yeah like this song's so easy and you can get it like that (clicks). That one's so short.
Sophie: (interjects) Doesn't get people's attention.
F: Oh okay, so were you thinking of the audience when you were choosing a song?
Girls: Yeah.
F: Why were you thinking of the audience?
Sophie: To get their attention.
Sally: We don't want them to get bored, like sit there and go like that (feigns boredom)
F: Oh that's really interesting. So why did you choose *Just the Way You Are*?
Narata: We chose that song because that song was pretty . . . it was a popular song.
Sophie: Well basically that song is very catchy and people know it a lot.
Narata: Yeah people might sing along as we sing along.
(Narata's group, focus group interview, 30th March 2012)

This degree of concern with the audience's reception of a selected song is indicative of the power of a peer group in dictating young people's musical choices and behaviour (Tarrant, North & Hargreaves, 2002). Studies of identity formation in adolescence suggest that by demonstrating what is deemed to be appropriate musical behaviour, young people may maintain the positive relations with their peer groups essential for successful identity development (Tarrant, North & Hargreaves, 2002). It would seem that, although pre-adolescent, the girls in this group were acutely aware of the (real or imagined) expectations of their audience and were careful to select a song that was both known to and accepted by their peers. A positive audience response (for example, singing along) would serve as an affirmation of their musical choices, and therefore would assist them in forming positive identities in the context of a peer group.

Music Making: Responses to the Task

Focus group sessions which explored children's feelings towards the task often revolved around the enjoyment associated with group music making. This dialogic data was supplemented by my observations of a wide range of positive musical reactions which included children confidently singing, moving, socialising, improvising and exerting control over their learning experiences. However, the task itself required children to aurally identify

and recreate instrumental parts of their selected song without constant direction from a teacher, and many children inevitably found this musical aspect challenging, as suggested by the following quote.

F: So is there anything difficult about teaching yourself in this way?
Emily: Well it's hard because,
Vivian: 'Cause we have to do it all ourselves,
Emily: And work out what's inside the song,
Vivian: Instruments and how we gonna make the sound.
(Emily's group, focus group interview, 30th March 2012)

Children's varying responses to these more challenging aspects of the task will be discussed in the following two sections entitled "Vocal Stage" and "Instrumental Stage".

Vocal Stage

One of the aims of the overarching project structure (two learning stages based around different methods of sound production) was to enable children to aurally analyse and perform musical parts initially without the addition of instruments. The range of group vocal/body percussion performances which resulted from the project's vocal stage demonstrated the broad spectrum of participating children's ensemble and performance skills. In this stage, children were instructed to perform their song's vocal line, drum beat and at least one other instrumental part. Once a song had been decided on, groups were allocated separate spaces in either the participating children's classroom, nearby computer room or adjacent spare classroom, and were set up with a device which enabled the song to be played (either iPod speakers or a computer).

My observations suggested that most children approached this task by immersing themselves in the sound world of the recording, playing their selected song repetitively, and often spontaneously singing and rhythmicking along (for a discussion of rhythmicking, see section entitled "Rhythmicking and Movement" p. 37). Such focused repetition was similarly observed in relation to children's learning of playground songs by Harwood (1998), who asserted that while teachers may view this to be a pedagogically inefficient system, such repetitious learning "allow(s) the children independent access to the song, on their own time and in a sequence of parts that is meaningful to them" (p. 56). This learning from musical

wholes is reflective of both children's informal playground practices (Harwood & Marsh, 2012) and Green's fourth Informal Learning principle (learning takes place in haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways).

While all groups enthusiastically and confidently performed their lead vocal line and drum beat, aurally copying other instrumental parts appeared to be difficult, and in some cases incomprehensible, for all but one of the participating groups. After much observation and informal discussion with children, I ascertained that many children with limited previous formal music experiences found it extremely difficult to extract specific instrumental parts (for example, electric guitar and synthesiser parts) from the aggregate sonic texture of the piece, particularly when the lead vocal line was being performed simultaneously. This led to some confusion regarding the task's specific instructions, and I attempted to help these students hear and perform such instrumental lines in the limited time that I had in each lesson, with mixed results.

Unfortunately, teacher directions were hampered by the time restrictions with which I was contending (simultaneously collecting data and assisting students), and while I modelled vocal parts with the aim of providing a starting point for children's creativity, it appeared that some children were unable to conceptualise the connection between an instrumental part and its simplified vocal version modelled for their use. This confusion may have been exacerbated by both the sonic differences in timbre between the two sound sources and the necessarily simplified parts I created for the children. Additionally, children may have been bewildered by the dislocation between contexts. It is possible that children perceived the correct "place" of the instrumental part to be in the context of the audio recording only.

However, the musical activities of one group of Year 6 boys did not adhere to this trend. Four of the five group members indicated that they received private tuition on at least one instrument, and three boys were members of the school concert band. This level of musical and instrumental experience was immediately noticeable when the boys began work on their performance in the third lesson, and their impressive musical progress, ensemble performance skills and overall motivation continued throughout the duration of the project.

Below are three excerpts from the video record which captured their learning experiences in lesson three. The camera was fixed in one location and no teacher was present.

> The boys are initially listening to their song. They sing confidently, with Callum and Henry moving and dancing as they listen. Henry bobs his whole body on the beat and waves his hands as he sings. As the verse plays, Owen, Henry and Matt discuss ways of performing the drum beat, experimenting with body percussion and table sounds.
> (Video Record, Lesson 3, 23rd March 2012)

The boys' immediate awareness of multiple instrumental lines was evident from their discussion regarding the allocation of parts:

> Callum pauses the iPod at the end of the first chorus (other boys crowd around, but he says "don't touch that"), and he then starts the track again. The song starts, but he pauses it after the first two bars. The boys discuss who will perform each part, with Owen leading the conversation and saying "You can do the la la's on that one, you can do the vocals and you can do the drums".
> (Video Record, Lesson 3, 23rd March 2012)

The following passage describes the boys' first attempts at performing without the recording, highlighting the ensemble difficulties faced and means of overcoming them.

> Boys try to practise without the recording. Owen begins on the correct pitch, modulates a bit and then ends on the correct pitch. The rhythm is accurate and all boys are bobbing in time in the rests between each phrase. Callum begins the vocal part slightly too early and the drummers are thrown off a bit – Owen needs to readjust his ostinato part but continues unaware. They get to the pre-chorus and Owen, now aware of his rhythmic displacement, readjusts his part to fit the vocalists.
> (Video Record, Lesson 3, 23rd March 2012)

By the end of the lesson, the boys had rectified these problems with ensemble timing and individual entries, and continued to polish this impressive and enthusiastic vocal performance until instruments began to be integrated in lesson six. This high quality of performance may be attributed in some part to the boys' previous formal musical experiences, and is indicative of the influence of such training on children's interactions in a task based on Informal Learning. It is possible that music learning in the form of instrumental/ensemble training provides learners with schemata, or interconnected mental constructs of understanding

(Wiggins, 2009) which enable individuals to conceptualise multiple parts present in an ensemble piece. In this context, such an understanding of the existence of internal instrumental parts may have facilitated heightened aural discrimination and the resultant ability to reproduce internal parts in a musical setting. By undertaking instrumental lessons and associated ensemble experiences, these boys were equipped with the skills and understanding that enhanced their successful aural learning in this setting.

Instrumental Stage

The integration of instruments appeared to be one of the most engaging aspects of the task, and focus group discussions tended to concentrate on the positive aspects of selecting, experimenting and discovering how to play instruments in an ensemble context. Children indicated that they were inspired by the range of sounds made possible by the inclusion of instruments in a performance.

F: What were the differences between vocal/body percussion and instrumental activities?
Darcy: It sounds heaps better with the instruments.
Ahmed: Yeah, making the song sound weird was fun.
(Darcy's group, focus group interview, 4th June 2012)

Instruments that were considered to be more stylistically appropriate elicited the most positive responses from children, with the drum kit and keyboards being the most frequently discussed instrumental choices. When comparing the two learning stages, several children indicated that although the instrumental stage was more challenging, the musical product itself was more satisfying.

F: How did the vocal activities compare to the instruments?
Isabelle: Instruments were harder to use.
Annie: But they sounded better than "dun dun".
(Isabelle's group, focus group interview, 12th June 2012)

Anthony: When we had to bring an instrument in, we had to find out how we were gonna play it so, yeah, that was the different part. Sometimes, for the vocal, we already know how it sounds like so it was easy to do, so one was easy and one was harder.
F: Was there one that you preferred?

34

Anthony: I found more the instruments more better 'cause I haven't played my recorder
             for a while. It's been, let's see, two years.
(Interview with Anthony, 12th June 2012)

As suggested by the above excerpts, it was in the instrumental stage that children appeared to encounter the most difficulties, particularly in regard to "fitting in instruments" (integrating instruments into the existing group arrangements), which was suggested to be a particularly challenging aspect by a number of participants. When asked why the addition of instruments was perceived to be more challenging, a range of responses ensued, including concerns about the timbral qualities of particular instruments and perceived place of particular instruments in popular music ("some instruments don't go with the song"), and the technical challenge of determining how to perform a musical line on an instrument ("knowing what notes to play", "trying to get the right rhythm"). However, my observations suggested that on the whole children were less concerned with accurately reproducing parts in a song and more engaged in the specific musical acts they took part in over the ten lessons, in whatever form. For example, many children appeared to be musically and cognitively satisfied with repeating a relatively simple drum motif, suggesting that they found contentment in expressing themselves through this medium and contributing to an ensemble performance. The following dialogue suggests that children were aware that a successful musical product could be created by a person with little instrumental experience:

F: Do you think that using instruments makes it more difficult?
Darcy: Well if you know how to play the instrument,
Ahmed: Not much, you can just play "ding ding ding".
Darcy: Joe just got up and didn't know how to play and now he can do it.
(Darcy's group, focus group interview, 12th June 2012)

One student concern which surfaced quickly was that of integrating "orchestral" instruments into the group performances. I strongly encouraged children to bring in any instruments played outside class time and was pleased by the number of instruments brought to the first instrumental lesson (Lesson 6). Guitars, recorders, bongo drums and drum sticks were produced eagerly at the beginning of the lesson, but all save one of the children who had access to "orchestral" instruments like clarinet, violin, saxophone and flute were reluctant to use their instrument in the music group performance task. I attributed this unwillingness to a number of factors, including playing in an unfamiliar context, fear of playing in front of peers, misalignment with perceived instrumental context (for example, in band) and perceived place

of instrument (or lack of) in popular music. After prompting from me, all children attempted to aurally learn a musical part on their instrument, but several children appeared to become disillusioned quickly by the relative challenge of aurally learning an instrumental part rather than a vocal part (as had occurred in the previous vocal stage), having previously always been dependent on using musical notation for instrumental learning.

Rhythmicking and Movement

For the entire duration of the lesson sequence, the classroom was filled with physical movement. While children tended to initially respond to their self-chosen music through both vocal and physical means, it became very clear that music and movement were inextricably linked for most participating children, and were signs of clear musical engagement. Most children were observed to move enthusiastically as they simultaneously listened to their chosen repertoire, and some of the physical responses observed are encompassed by the term "rhythmicking". Rhythmicking describes the spontaneous exhibiting of a physical, and often subconscious, response to an aural stimulus (Campbell, 2010). In this setting, "rhythmicking" describes children's actions which resulted in sound production.

In her exploration of music in children's lives, Campbell (2010) claims that children are very seldom "still" for music (p. 239), and the great importance of "doing" music was similarly evidenced in this study. Examples of children's rhythmicking included tapping, bobbing, stomping and clapping and many children tended to move in time with the beat of their chosen song. In addition, several children were observed to spontaneously imitate heard sounds (particularly in the initial lessons). However the imitated aural stimuli appeared to vary between individuals, with musical parts like drum beats, bass lines, melodic riffs and vocal phrases imitated in different children's rhythmic movements.

For some children, rhythmicking became the first step in the creation of a vocal/body percussion song version, and in some cases the spontaneously improvised movements evolved, through repetition and analysis, into a body percussion pattern which was consciously repeated in each practice (often representing the performer's perception of the drum part). For other children, however, enthusiastic rhythmicking continued throughout the project, often as an additional movement/sound which accompanied singing.

In some cases, sound production appeared to be a deliberate and enjoyable result of a child's movement, while in other contexts children appeared to be unaware of the sound they produced, and it remained a by-product of physical movement. However, not all observed movements produced sound. Dancing was a very common response to music and a number of children enthusiastically started moving when their song was heard. In addition, several students mimed instrumental performance, which was most likely prompted by the visual appearance of a particular instrument on their computer screen. Such influence of visual stimuli occurred in various forms throughout the project and some unanticipated outcomes are discussed in the section entitled "Unanticipated Outcomes: The Impact of Multimodality", p. 44.

The social dynamics of each group appeared to play a significant role in the nature of children's kinaesthetic responses to aural stimuli. Often, one child's subconscious rhythmicking would be aurally and/or visually picked up by another group member who would join in, sometimes resulting in a participatory whole group activity. This "infectious" nature of rhythms and musical patterns was observed in both the vocal/body percussion and instrumental phases of the project, akin to the transmission process of "catching" games highlighted by Marsh (2008) in her exploration of learning and teaching in children's playground games. Such transmission appeared to occur spontaneously, organically growing from musical situations without the involved children appearing to be aware of the process that had occurred.

Experimentation and Improvisation

Children exhibited signs of engagement through spontaneous and enthusiastic musical experimentation, which was often observed in the form of improvisation. In addition to the many instances of spontaneously improvised rhythmicking, several children appeared to engage in improvisation in a more focused way. One boy had been receiving drum tuition outside school and had elected to perform the drum part of his group's chosen song. During the vocal/body percussion stage, he devised a "drum part" utilising body percussion movements and sounds to imitate a drum kit, and in the fourth lesson he began to improvise drum fills during breaks in the song in an impressively rhythmic and stylistically appropriate

manner. The other boys appeared to be very impressed and one boy joined in, enthusiastically improvising his own drum fills.

As the first stage progressed, it was clear that children were motivated by the possibility of integrating instruments and other sound sources into their group performances. This enthusiasm for a spectrum of sounds led many individuals to experiment with objects found from within the room, with stimuli ranging from typical "musical" resources like claves to cups, chairs and other environmental objects. One particularly memorable example featured a boy rhythmically turning a tap on and off whilst claiming to imitate the synthesiser part of his group's chosen song. Children were highly motivated by these musical experiences, and appeared to enjoy the freedom associated with such experimentation.

Such improvisatory activities were not limited to rhythmicking and instrumental interactions. I observed numerous examples of vocal improvisation, particularly in the case of two boys (Elliot and Anthony) whose activities in the task were atypical for a number of reasons. Whilst I had originally specified that groups should be comprised of between three and five individuals, I allowed these boys to work as a pair due to the interesting nature of their favoured music-choice (a YouTube clip featuring a Lego orchestra performing "Imperial March" from the *Star Wars* film series). While all the other groups had chosen repertoire that featured at least one main vocalist, the audio of this YouTube clip featured orchestral sounds, presenting the boys with an interesting challenge in the vocal stage. Although I expected to be asked for some kind of musical direction, I was surprised at both boys' confident vocal interactions, particularly in their initial responses, as suggested by the following passages.

> After a bit of fussing, I set the two boys up with a computer in the second classroom, with my headphones to share. They logged on to YouTube and initially watched their clip in silence. However, they quickly started vocalising as they were listening (humming, singing) and rhythmicking (stomping, tapping the table, head bobbing), clearly engaged and stimulated by the orchestral sounds they were hearing.
> (Field notes, 23rd March 2012)

> Boys are vocalising without the audio recording (while watching the clip) to seemingly improvised syllables like "dum" and "bom". Anthony is tapping his feet in time with the beat. They look at each other (both singing their interpretation of the same part). Elliot slows down and starts going "brrrr" with his lips, imitating a trumpet part – Anthony follows.
> (Video record, Lesson 3, 23rd March 2012)

These forms of responses were categorised as "vocables" (vocal sounds without semantic content), and throughout the course of four lessons, the initially spontaneously improvised vocal responses developed into one sung syllable which was repeated during each rendition: "bom bom bom", often accompanied by "conducting" and beat/rhythm stamping.

Music Making as Participatory Performance

Throughout the project, all groups appeared to participate in learning in a highly interactive and motivated way, and much of the music making observed may be classified as participatory performance (Turino, 2008). Participatory performance refers to "a special type of artistic practice in which there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants performing different roles, and the primary goal is to involve the maximum number of people in some performance role" (Turino, 2008, p. 26). For most groups in the project, rehearsing was often synonymous with this kind of performance, and (as described in previous sections), all group members enthusiastically participated in multiple renditions of their group's selected song. There was no specific audience and the almost consistently high degree of engagement suggested that children were immersed in "performing" for their own sake. Conversations with participating children reflected the notion that whilst they were mostly aware of the expectations of an upcoming performance, the pleasure derived from their immediate activities was their primary focus (and musical motivation to continue practising). The continuous ways in which children appeared to communicate with each other as they developed their performance suggested that the musical nature of the activity was also conceptualised as heightened social interaction (Turino, 2008).

Children generally participated at varying levels of musical involvement, and these different degrees of participation appeared to be dependent on their personal confidence and pre-existing musical skills/interests. This phenomenon is reflective of Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation (cited by Harwood, 1998; and Harwood & Marsh, 2012), a theory which describes opportunities that foster individual participation at a variety of levels. In such instances, the distinction between performer and audience is blurred, and all contributions are perceived to be valid forms of participation, a phenomenon also characteristic of Turino's (2008) participatory performance. However, as Turino (2008) also suggests in relation to participatory performance, the varying roles inherently reflect

variations in different musical parts' necessity to the overall occasion. In this context, some children would take on "core" roles such as singing, playing a repeated motif, or drumming whilst others provided "elaboration" in the form of clapping and dancing.

In two specific instances, the participatory performance of individual groups served as a platform for larger class involvement. Several different friendship groups spontaneously coalesced, with almost all children musically participating in an improvised rendition of a particular group's song. In both instances, at least three groups merged together, and children sang, danced, tapped instruments and generally interacted with each other in a highly motivated way. As suggested by Turino (2008), the quality of a participatory performance is judged both on the level of participation achieved and the inherent feelings of those involved, resulting in a "special kind of concentration on the other people one is interacting with through sound and motion and on the activity in itself and for itself" (p. 29). Judged on such measures, these two inter-group instances of participatory performance may be deemed highly successful, gauged by both the impressive level of participation (both instances involved at least half the class), and the enthusiasm and positivity of those involved. This enjoyment was keenly articulated by Owen, who said to me as he sat down "We all sang *Just the way you are*. It was awesome!"

A very different form of legitimate peripheral participation occurred when individual children were asked to film the musical activities of other friendship groups. Rather than remaining silent observers, the "student cameramen" commonly interacted with the groups they were observing. Such interactions included spontaneously joining in with a performance in the form of singing or humming, providing positive reinforcement following a group's performance ("Good work guys!"), and presenting an audience for the performers. The following comment suggested that some children were consciously aware of the value of observing others in their work.

F: What was it like filming?
Anthony: Awesome! Because you could hear what the other groups are doing and you can know what they're doing so you can add a little bit of music to your one so you know how to do it.
F: Okay, so you were noticing what they were doing and then thinking about how you could use that in your own performance?
Anthony: Yes.

(Interview with Anthony, 12th June 2012)

Group Interactions in the Learning Process

The high degree of sociability evident in children's group interactions was identified as a point of interest early on in the project. I was concerned that the autonomy afforded to the younger age range of the participating children would result in social conflict, and that the children would be incapable of self-direction for an extended period of time. However, it became clear very quickly that these concerns were unfounded. The groups of participating children appeared to collaborate exceptionally well together for all ten lessons, suggesting that when children are sufficiently engaged, successful group work becomes a natural part of the learning process (Green, 2008)[7]. Positive group interaction was reflected in a number of forms.

Firstly, as is typical of participatory performance (discussed in earlier section), all group members musically participated on a level which was relevant to them personally, whether extensive or comparatively limited. Informal discussions with children suggested that not only were most students aware of such differentiated roles, some children deliberately created achievable parts for their less experienced/capable peers. This recognition of the need for individualised performance parts was similarly observed by Green (2008), who ascertained that the adolescent participants in her study were able to reflect on both ability differentials and how they addressed them through group organisation (p. 125).

In analysing the nature of group interactions in the project, it is useful to consider Bielaczyc and Collins's (2000) conceptualisation of group learning as a "learning community". In this theorisation, all learners are involved in a collective effort of understanding which "supports the growth of individual knowledge" (p. 271). Several children reflected that they had developed both individualised musical skills (for example, determining how to accurately perform a motif on the piano) and group skills, such as an awareness of the need for musical synchronisation.

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[7] A similar re-evaluation of teachers' perceptions of the potential perils of student-chosen groups occurred in Green's study (2008), in which participating teachers were surprised by the above average levels of cooperation demonstrated by students engaged in Informal Learning practices.

F:	Do you feel as if you've learnt anything from this project?
Ahmed:	Yeah, when we're singing it we're getting closer to working together. Usually when we're singing it goes all over the place but we've been singing more.
F:	So you feel as if you're developing ensemble, or performing together, skills?
Ahmed:	Yes. Like at different times it's harder, depending on where you are in the song.

(Darcy's group, focus group interview, 12th June 2012)

The importance of group interaction in personal learning is also articulated by Wiggins & Espeland (2012), who assert that individual learning processes are nurtured through interactions with others (p. 342). Whilst the interactions explored above appeared to occur implicitly through the group music making, I will now outline the implications of the more explicit phenomenon of peer-directed learning.

Peer-Directed Learning

The collaborative nature of the task, combined with the varying musical backgrounds of participating children, meant that peer-directed teaching and learning flourished. Children's perceptions of what is "easy" and "difficult" often do not correlate with adult notions of hierarchical difficulty (Green, 2008; Harwood & Marsh, 2012) and for this reason peer-directed learning may sometimes be more effective than teacher-directed instruction. I documented numerous examples of children explicitly teaching other children particular musical parts, ranging from fairly simplistic tapping in time exercises to the comparative complexities of learning to play a bass line on guitar. As similarly observed by Green (2008), non-verbal activities constituted the majority of teaching and learning exchanges (p. 129). Children tended to favour visual and aural modelling of a particular part over verbal directions and associated analysis (as tends to be favoured by adults, and to some extent, teachers), with all of the documented peer teaching and learning examples involving one child taking on the role of the "expert" and physically demonstrating the musical part of the "novice" child. In one filmed example of tactile modelling, one girl held another girl's hands and "clapped" a syncopated rhythm for her, suggesting that the physical aspect of modelling was being extended in a kinaesthetic dimension.

Children who had experienced more extensive formal music education prior to the task typically took on the role of the "expert", and sometimes audibly expressed frustration at the

slower learning pace of their peers. However, the satisfaction gained from a learner successfully performing his or her part was clear for both learner and teacher, and appeared to provide momentum to move forward with the ensemble performance in a positive way. While there was no evidence that these roles swapped at any time, the literature suggests that an activity of this nature provides scope for dominance by different learners with differing previous musical experiences, and that the role of teacher and learner is fluid dependent on the situation. Such variability was observed by Green as a series of "informally rotating roles which are haphazardly swapped between several or all members of a group" (Green, p. 126). In all instances, the contextual requirements of the learning task directed and promoted the forms of teaching and learning that took place.

Unanticipated Outcomes: The Impact of Multimodality

The children's initial song selection was aided by the use of YouTube during their first, second and third music lessons. The original instructions from Lesson 1 directed the students to work in the computer lab, and each group was allocated one computer with which to "research" and choose a song. YouTube was chosen as the most appropriate medium for song selection due to both its accessibility and familiarity to the children. I did not anticipate that the visual dimension of YouTube clips would prove to be a powerful influence in several children's song selection and subsequent means of performance, and the accessibility of this sensory mode would have implications for one group of learners in particular.

The participating children demonstrated immediate enthusiasm for the task of YouTube song selection in the first lesson. They had previously been allowed five minutes in their groups to discuss song choice, and it became clear to an observer that the addition of visual stimuli enhanced children's engagement in repertoire research.

The multimodal nature of the YouTube clips viewed (that is, the holistic entwining of several forms of sensory stimuli – aural, visual and bodily kinaesthetic processes – as defined by Lum and Marsh, 2012) appeared to require children's "kaleidoscopic attention" (Young, 2007, p. 335) to concurrent aural and visual stimuli. These sensory demands were reflected in children's initial responses to each clip viewed. Observations suggested that children were initially absorbing both the visual and aural aspects of the clips being viewed, rather than

focusing on musical content as the primary means of choice. This response served as a reminder that whilst I perceived music to be the focus for selection, children were initially drawn to all aspects of YouTube clips.

One participating child demonstrated a dependence on this form of multimodal learning, and subsequently experienced distress when access to the YouTube clip was denied. The child, Elliot, had been diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder[8], and was a member of the pair of boys whose highly engaged musical interactions were discussed earlier in this chapter (p. 39). As previously discussed, the two boys had chosen as their focus a YouTube clip which featured an animated Lego orchestra miming to the audio recording of *Imperial March* from the film Star Wars. While most YouTube clips are multimodal, this particular clip may also be identified as a cross-modal listening clip (Webb, 2010), which is a "music-driven visual media clip of the sort uploaded to YouTube" (Webb, 2010, p. 315). As Webb outlines in his discussion of cross-modal learning, this type of clip has a range of implications for music educators in terms of pedagogy, technology and media, and repertoire and analysis (Webb, 2010), and the multimodal/cross-modal characteristics of this clip led to some unanticipated outcomes as discussed below.

In the first three lessons, the two boys were documented as highly engaged, enthusiastic learners, as suggested by the following video record from the third lesson.

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Elliot and Anthony watch and listen intently to their YouTube clip. Anthony starts identifying instruments:

Anthony: So there was a violin.
Elliot: Tuba? Trumpet?
Anthony: There was one more wasn't there? We'll see 'cause it shows you the instruments.

The boys watch and count instruments as they see them. Elliot is particularly confident. He begins improvisatory vocalising as he watches the YouTube clip. He hums the melodic line in a "trumpet-like manner" (he stretches his neck up and loudly breathes through his nose), clearly singing the correct pitches and with a convincing crescendo through the last note.
(Video record, Lesson 3, 23rd March 2012)

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[8] Also known as Asperger Syndrome or Asperger Disorder. The primary characteristics of Asperger's Disorder are impairment in social interaction and the development of restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, activities and interests (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

Elliot's apparently subconscious physical realisation of the trumpet line represented an interesting extension of the clip's visual elements. The boys continued in this positive way until halfway through Lesson 4, when for logistical reasons they were unable to access a computer. To remedy this, I provided the audio track for *Imperial March* on my iPod, and set the boys up with iPod speakers and a quiet space. The subsequent transformation that occurred in Elliot's attitude was astounding. The learning mode had changed from visual-aural to purely aural, and this removal of the familiar and entertaining Lego images was manifested in an extremely negative way. A fixed camera documented Elliot withdrawing himself fully from the task, choosing to sit with his head on his desk while Anthony continued to be consistently engaged in the performance. Elliot stayed immobile in this way for the rest of the lesson and refused to talk to either myself or his classroom teacher, although discussion with Anthony suggested that Elliot was upset that only the sound recording was available. This self-imposed isolation continued throughout the next music lesson, even though the YouTube clip had been available and was playing on the Smart-Board in front of Elliot, while his partner Anthony bravely soldiered on with his musical rendition. Change did occur in the following lesson (Lesson 6), when with the addition of instruments Elliot was motivated to re-join the task, demonstrating evidence of his initial enthusiasm and enjoyment.

From this scenario it may be inferred that multimodal/cross-modal learning may require a certain degree of adjustment from learners and teachers should the stimulus mode change suddenly, as occurred in this situation. Such adjustment may be more difficult for some learners than others, and music teachers need to be aware of the potentially strong influence of visual elements in a cross-modal listening clip such as this. The class's generalist teacher and myself were unsure to what extent Elliot's Asperger's diagnosis may have impacted on his response to the changing stimuli, but it is possible that he found the sudden sensory shift unsettling and disempowering. The essence of the stimuli had changed from a familiar form (with stimulating visual images) to an unfamiliar unimodal one, and the discomfort which arose from this displacement may have ultimately resulted in his withdrawal from the learning task.

The boys indicated that they selected that particular YouTube clip due to its connection with recreational games played at home, as indicated by the following dialogue.

F:	Why did you choose that clip?
Elliot:	One, Lego, which I'm building a Lego mini-figure hotel. I'm already up to my third floor, and then fourth floor.
Anthony:	The reason why I chose it is because like it's an easier song yeah and I didn't want to make it too challenging for Elliot (looks at Elliot – they laugh)
F:	I'm sure Elliot likes a bit of a challenge sometimes!
Elliot:	Quack!
F:	Did you both know the YouTube clip before you chose it?
Anthony:	Yes.
Elliot:	Yes! I definitely knew it. I've seen it like 17 times before. It's funny.

(Elliot and Anthony, focus group interview, 30th March 2012)

This conversation suggests that a number of factors (such as familiarity, home recreation, play, and enjoyment) were influential in the boys' responses to the YouTube clip, and the resultant strong visual meaning is particularly relevant when Eliot's response to the alienation of the sound recording is considered.

Unanticipated Outcomes: Final Performances

The ten lesson sequence culminated in an end-of-project concert, held in the hall during Lesson 10. The concert was composed of performances from seven of the eight friendship groups and the audience consisted of the two other Stage Three classes, who proved to be a supportive and responsive group. Unfortunately, after Lesson 6 Elliot had left to travel overseas and consequently the two boys did not perform in the concert.

The seven groups that did take part in the performance showcased their aggregative work confidently and successfully. The class's generalist teacher and I were pleasantly surprised that all groups performed their chosen song unhesitatingly, and while varying degrees of ensemble awareness were demonstrated by the participating children, it was clear that all groups had improved in their musical awareness to some degree. The passage on the following page is an excerpt from my field notes from Lesson 10, providing a taste of the range and style of performances.

Jeffery's group: These boys performed with a steady beat and clear voices. They were clearly concerned about the prospect of performing but rose to the challenge! Different percussion parts were evident, and these parts successfully reflected the structure of the song.

Isabelle's group: The girls performed with a guitar, drums, bongos and vocals. They demonstrated very effective ensemble skills and the singers sang confidently and in-tune.

Darcy's group: These boys had arguably the least effective version. Bernard played the drums, tapping the rhythm of the melody line rather than keeping a steady beat. Darcy played the bongos, also tapping with the rhythm of the vocal part and Ahmed and John sang. The boys clearly enjoyed performing and given their initially negative attitudes towards singing, this degree of confidence in singing was very encouraging to observe.

Callum's group: Great vocal performance from Charles! He hit some very impressively high notes and sang beautifully. Henry successfully kept the group together with his drum part, and Owen played the keyboard riff confidently and accurately. Unfortunately, it was in a different key to Matt and Callum's saxophone/violin parts which led to a fair amount of discord.
(Field notes, 8th June 2012)

The stand-out performance of the project came from a group of Year 5 girls, one of whom (Sundara) had an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis. In usual class activities Sundara had demonstrated difficulties forming intelligible sentences and pronouncing words, leading to learning and communication difficulties. However, she appeared to be highly engaged in this music learning task, singing enthusiastically and articulating this enjoyment simply (saying "I love singing" when asked by me informally during the project). When the time came to perform in Lesson 10, the other three girls in her group refused to hold the microphone, handing it to her instead. While the other girls sang and played their instruments quietly, Sundara's amplified voice was the highlight of the performance, and she sang confidently, in-tune and articulated the lyrics clearly.

Such a performance from a child with learning difficulties impressed teachers and students alike, and I surmised that the intensive aural and vocal repetition present in the group's learning approach assisted Sundara's language and pronunciation learning. A popular song (such as that chosen by Sundara's group) is often composed of predictable, memorable structures that are helpful in nurturing language acquisition and the natural rhythm and stress patterns of a language are often emphasised in songs, thus constituting "definitive models for practising pronunciation" (Marsh, 1984, p. 2). In addition, Sundara's inherent musical interest in the song allowed her to engage in highly repetitive language practice without losing

interest, and in the company of more able peers who served as models for imitation and inspiration.

Challenges for Students and Teachers

As previously discussed, challenges for students in this pedagogy included aspects such as instrument integration (particularly orchestral instruments), aural learning with limited teacher direction, and multimodality. Additionally, the highly enthusiastic but simultaneous musical renditions of particular groups led to volume difficulties, and some students expressed concern at working in such a noisy environment.

Challenges for teachers tended to revolve around more mundane organisational tasks, such as ensuring the availability of spaces and audio playing equipment (I supplied a number of iPod speakers to ensure that all groups could sufficiently listen to their recording). Availability of instrumental resources was perceived to be a possible problem from this project's initial conception. In the past, the implementation of Green's Informal Learning pedagogy in other research contexts (Green, 2008; Jeanneret, 2010) has often been aided by financial resources used to enable student access to electric guitars, drums, microphones and other typical "rock band" resources. Such funding was not available for this project and I hoped to determine the viability of the Informal Learning approach in this context given the comparatively limited resources available. The resources at hand were representative of a typical public primary school music equipment collection, and included keyboards and a piano, tuned percussion instruments (xylophones, glockenspiels), a small number of acoustic and electric guitars, one drum kit and a large number of hand-held untuned percussion instruments (including claves, tambourines and bells). Additionally, for the instrumental stage children were encouraged to bring any instruments from home, which led to the inclusion of a variety of orchestral and band instruments, as well as bongos, drum sticks and one recorder.

These resources, whilst not predominantly of the rock band variety, proved to be very effective motivating tools for the participating children. As discussed in the section entitled "Instrumental Stage", using instruments was the most positively discussed aspect of the project. Whilst difficulties were encountered in the integration of orchestral instruments, on the whole students responded very positively to the range of instruments available. This

48

successful inclusion of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, keyboards and guitars suggested that for this age group, activities based on Green's Informal Learning principles do not necessarily require additional funding in order to be worthwhile for learners.

Conclusion

The wide range of highly positive student responses to the approach suggests that pedagogy based on Green's Informal Learning has the potential to be highly engaging and musically valuable for learners in an upper primary school classroom. Children responded to the learner agency and autonomy inherent in the pedagogy in an enthusiastic manner and all friendship groups were observed to be positively engaged in a range of meaningful music making activities. Both positive and negative unanticipated outcomes emerged from the project, a reminder that teachers must be aware of the impact of influences such as multimodality and student learning needs on children's musical experiences. These issues are further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In recent years an increasing number of music educators have drawn attention to the dichotomy between in- and out-of-school learning, and studies exploring the range of informal learning outside schools and institutions have resulted in the identification of implications for classroom teaching practice. Green's (2008) Informal Learning approach, based on the learning practices of popular musicians, aims to foster student agency through the implementation of five underlying principles (learner-chosen repertoire, aural learning, working in friendship groups, holistic and idiosyncratic learning and integration of creative musical experiences). The implementation of this approach has focused predominantly on music learning in secondary schools.

Conducted as an ethnographic single case study, the current project sought to explore the implementation of Green's Informal Learning approach in a primary school in the South-West of Sydney. Thirty children aged 10 to 12 years took part in ten 45 minute researcher-led music lessons which were based on Green's five Informal Learning principles in Terms 1 and 2, 2012. Data were collected through researcher observation, focus group interviews with students at three points in the study and audio-visual recordings of student activities whilst engaged in the project.

A varied but highly positive range of student responses to the activities were captured by the multiple data collection methods, and analysis revealed that these were predominantly related to the areas of student agency, music making and group interactions. Children were greatly motivated by the circumstantial autonomy afforded to them and many indicated an affinity with key elements of Green's pedagogy, such as working with friends and student repertoire selection. While a small number of children exhibited varying degrees of participation, most students were observed to be highly engaged in a range of meaningful music making activities for the majority of the lesson sequence, indicated by the frequency of children's enthusiastic vocalising, rhythmicking and improvising. The group-oriented nature of the learning task was reflected by the high level of sociability evident in children's activities, and learning appeared to take place within a framework of participatory performance. While a number of unanticipated outcomes emerged from the project, perceived resource limitations did not hamper children's engagement in the task and the accessibility of this pedagogy for generalist

teachers was suggestive of the potential benefits of this pedagogy in other primary school contexts.

Bringing Children's "Natural" Ways of Learning into the Classroom

The participating children in this study exhibited a wide range of musical, social and personal responses to the implemented pedagogy. When the responses of these primary school students were compared with the self-directed activities of the secondary student participants in Green's study, a number of comparisons were drawn. Many elements of the "natural" learning practices which grew out of the learner agency inherent in the approach were similar in both environments, regardless of participant age difference. For example, high levels of aural repetition were utilised, and students in both contexts initially appeared to focus subconsciously on the rhythmic aspects of their repertoire, before exploring pitch quality and finally ensemble performance.

Further comparisons may be asserted in relation to published research literature. When student responses are considered with regard to the commonalities between Green's Informal Learning approach and children's ways of learning outside the classroom (Harwood & Marsh, 2012), it is clear that pedagogy of this nature provides teachers with an opportunity to "bridge the gap" between children's music learning at home and at school. The children in this study appeared to rehearse in a highly participatory way, deriving clear enjoyment from their (often repetitious) activities regardless of musical experience and ability level. As asserted by Harwood & Marsh, activities which provide a "participatory frame" of reference (p. 329) reflect values of engagement and participation for all learners, principles which are often present in children's musical play outside of the classroom (Campbell, 2010; Harwood, 1998; Harwood & Marsh, 2012).

The aural learning enabled by this project, in line with Green's second principle of Informal Learning, was enthusiastically undertaken by all participating students, predominantly in the form of close imitation of aural models. For some children, the availability of multimodal stimuli evoked physical responses as well as aural/oral ones, manifested in the copying of visual images through dancing and mimicking instruments. Green's fourth principle, that learning is holistic, idiosyncratic and haphazard is reflected in children's tendency to prefer

holistic repetition over sequential, structured learning (Harwood & Marsh, 2012; Marsh, 2008) and this phenomenon was observed to be the preferred learning style in this project.

Harwood and Marsh (2012) align successful children's "natural" learning with learner agency, in particular relating to repertoire selection and the benefits of working with friends. These factors appeared to be highly influential in the success of this project and the positive group interactions were indicative that children of this age are capable of focused learning for a sustained period of time if motivated by an engaging task over which they have a sufficient degree of control. The peer-directed learning prompted by the group-oriented nature of the pedagogy appeared to be highly satisfying for both peer learners and teachers once a learning goal had been achieved, and the core peer-directed instructional techniques observed in this project (imitation, modelling, limited verbal instructions) reflected the importance of the kinaesthetic in children's natural learning practices. Such responses are strongly reflective of Harwood & Marsh's suggestion that the principles which underlie Green's Informal Learning represent a framework for embracing pedagogical values found in children's "natural" learning practices.

Implications for Music Teachers

This project clearly demonstrates the benefits which may stem from teacher reconsideration of the place of informal learning experiences in a primary school music curriculum. The learners in this context appeared to derive an impressive sense of sustained engagement and musical freedom from the approach, responding to the inherent learner agency with ease and enthusiasm. However, it is clear that the results derived from this study are not directly comparable with children's previous "formal" classroom experiences, and the positive responses to this approach are no indication that meaningful experiences were lacking in "formal" lessons. While research literature is suggestive of the need for more emphasis on engaging, child-oriented activities in primary school music, the aim of this study was not to implicitly denigrate current primary music practices. Rather, by exploring the potential of contemporary pedagogy, this study aimed to address identified areas of need while expanding the field of currently accepted teaching approaches.

The findings from this project are strongly indicative of the intrinsic value of Green's Informal Learning approach for both learners and teachers in a primary music classroom context. Children were highly engaged in self-directed music learning practices and the positive attitudes articulated demonstrated the pedagogy's ability to provide engaging, learner-oriented activities, thus addressing the issues identified in Chapter 2. Teachers were afforded the opportunity to take on a less directive role, observing children learning in ways which were personally relevant to them as developing individuals. Knowledge derived from such teacher observation could be utilised in the creation of future effective learning strategies for the particular group of learners involved, and therefore could provide direction for quality learner-oriented pedagogy in all Key Learning Areas.

It is important to note that while this study investigated the implementation of all five of Green's Informal Learning principles simultaneously, primary music teaching practice should not be limited solely to Informal Learning in this particular five-principle manifestation. Each individual principle is relevant in some regard to children's "natural" learning practices, and suggestions for integrating principles effectively into traditionally "formal" music lessons have been posited by Harwood & Marsh, 2012. The overarching notion of student agency, to which children in this study responded so enthusiastically, may be cultivated by providing music learning situations which engender reasoning and choice in aspects such as repertoire, learning style, working space and sound sources. The integration of aural learning as a dominant learning practice may be achieved by activities which value the close imitation of aural models over strongly notation based approaches (Harwood & Marsh, 2012).

Other valuable implications for practice may be drawn from the findings of this study. The participatory performance framework utilised by children allows for multiple levels of entry into expressive, engaging musical activities without provoking fear of peer judgement. Teachers should endeavour to develop a classroom atmosphere which is both supportive and vibrant, where musical participation on any level is highly valued, and where children are encouraged to experiment for the sake of exploration itself. Such a framework is particularly valuable for the musical and social development of students whose verbal communication is limited by language difference or level of cognitive functioning (Marsh, 2012), as demonstrated in this study.

These suggestions are provided in order to highlight the flexibility inherent in Green's approach. Teaching and learning are contextually based processes, and what is highly effective in one situation may be less successful in another. It is also clear that a sole reliance on the simultaneous five-principle approach as the only teaching strategy places limitations on the repertoire available for student exploration (that is, learner-chosen repertoire only). Teachers must be aware of the value of adapting the pedagogical approach to suit the needs of learners in their specific learning context, and should be prepared to utilise a combination of principles best suited to their environment. Green (2008) herself suggests that the most effective longitudinal teaching and learning method may involve the integration of both formal and informal learning approaches, and this is a potentially fascinating area which requires detailed exploration.

Recommendations for Further Research

While this study endeavoured to unearth a diverse range of themes relevant to a specific context, many questions have been left unanswered and many avenues were unexplored. One unexpected implication derived from this project revolves around the potential implementation of this pedagogical approach by generalist primary teachers. As noted by Jeanneret and Degraffenreid (2012), generalist teachers play a crucial role in providing children with musical experiences and have the potential to shape children's "future opinions about and participation in music" (p. 400). Research demonstrates that a generalist teacher's willingness and capacity to teach music is frequently dependent on his or her own individual musical experience (Jeanneret & Degraffenreid, 2012). It is possible that the less directive teacher role facilitated by the approach would be more appealing to generalist teachers with limited music experience. By being less dependent on teachers' personal performance skills and musical background, the role advocated by Green's approach would potentially provide a more accessible and non-threatening entry point into music teaching for less musically experienced generalist teachers. Whether the approach would be more or less effective when utilised by a generalist teacher is hard to predict, and is dependent to some extent on the ability of teachers to diagnose and assist individual children where needed. However, should the approach be utilised in some way by generalist teachers, more children would have the opportunity to take part in self-directed learning activities which enable meaningful music making and creative expression. This is clearly an area which requires exploration.

Other unanticipated outcomes which emerged from this project would similarly benefit from further study. The range of participating children's responses to multimodal stimuli raises questions of the impact of technological interactivity within a primary music classroom. Given the current wide use of digital technology as a learning tool in the classroom, it would be valuable to explore the influence of different sensory receptor modes on children's music and non-music learning. Additionally, a number of factors are suggestive of the opportunities for substantial music learning by children with identified learning needs in this approach. The group interactions were observed to occur within a participatory performance framework, demonstrating that this approach provides children with an opportunity to musically interact on a level most appropriate to their individual developmental needs. Similarly, the repetitious, holistic learning mode undertaken by participating groups may be highly beneficial for children in need of significant language, pronunciation and verbal articulation development. Linked to the potential relationship between learner agency in the classroom and the engagement of children with learning needs, these themes are clearly in need of further investigation.

Reconsidering Pedagogical Values

The core philosophy driving Green's Informal Learning approach centres on the importance of listening to young people's voices and of respecting the ways in which they learn outside of educational institutions. These values are highly relatable to younger children's learning practices and therefore hold similar significance in primary school contexts. This study makes no attempt to hide the fact that challenges and questions did arise from the pedagogy. However, the findings demonstrate that it is possible to overcome these difficulties with perceivable benefits for children's music learning and participation. In addition, the approach offers teachers an opportunity to observe children learning in ways which are relevant to them as individuals, potentially providing information which may be applied to the process of devising effective strategies for those learners in the future. Green's Informal Learning approach represents one effective way of adopting pedagogical tenets which reflect children's informal learning values. It is clear that students and teachers alike will benefit from a serious reconsideration of the place of informal learning approaches in primary school music.

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Appendix A: Lesson Sequence

Note: italics represent teacher-researcher data collection activities, as undertaken during the student activities.

Lesson	Teacher strategy	Student activity	Informal Learning principle (See p. 21)	Resources	Lesson location
Vocal Activity Stage					
1	Teacher-led classroom discussion of Informal Learning framework: - Student-organised friendship groups - Learner-chosen repertoire: one piece of music per group - Student-controlled learning experiences - Aural learning Model activity: lyrics of teacher-chosen song (*DJ Got Us Falling In Love*) were distributed and students were encouraged to sing along if they knew the song _____ *Teacher researcher role: observation of student activities, moving around groups with one video camera, discussing progress with individual groups and assisting when required.*	Students participated in classroom discussion Students were asked to identify instruments heard in the recording and suggest ways of emulating their melody/rhythm (eg. stomping, tapping the desk, improvising vocal sounds). _____ Friendship groups chosen Learner selected repertoire: in groups, students used YouTube to select a piece of music	 _____ (3) (1)	 _____ One computer per group	Participating children's classroom (PCC) _____ Computer lab (C Lab)
2	*Teacher researcher role (as described above)*	Students continued to use YouTube to select a piece of music	(3) (1)	One computer per group	C Lab
3	Teacher-led Model activity: class listened to *DJ Got Us Falling In Love* and discussed vocal group-work principles: - Identify first verse and chorus - Identify instrumentation - Determine how to emulate melody/rhythm of instrumental sounds using vocal and body percussion sounds _____ *Teacher researcher role (as described above). Additionally, I coordinated data collection from multiple cameras (typically one camera was allocated to the class's generalist teacher, one was set at a fixed location and the other was allocated to different students, who were asked to film other group's activities)*	Students were asked to identify instrumental parts of *DJ Got Us Falling In Love* and determine how they could perform parts using vocal and body percussion sounds. Students were divided into instrumental sections and whole class performed song. _____ Vocal task: in friendship groups, students were asked to create a vocal/body percussion version of the first verse and chorus of their chosen piece of music, focussing on replicating different instrumental parts	 _____ (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	 _____ Several separate spaces (enabling groups to listen to their recordings with minimal sound interference) iPod speakers, computers, smart board	PCC C Lab Adjacent classroom Corridor _____ PCC C Lab Adjacent classroom Corridor
4	Whole class revision of vocal group-work principles *Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)*	 Continuation of vocal task (performances-in-	(1) (2) (3)	Several separate spaces iPod speakers, computers,	PCC C Lab Adjacent

		progress)	(4) (5)	smart board	classroom Corridor
5	*Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)* Discussion of next stage (instrumental activity stage) and students were encouraged to bring own instruments to the next lesson	Continuation of vocal task	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	Several separate spaces iPod speakers, computers, smart board	PCC C Lab Adjacent classroom Corridor
Instrumental Activity Stage					
6	Model activity: teacher demonstration of how an instrument (ukulele) could be integrated into performance of *DJ Got Us Falling In Love* *Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)*	Instrumental task: students were encouraged to use instruments brought in from home/provided by the school and integrate them into their vocal performance by aurally working out appropriate parts	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	Several separate spaces iPod speakers, computers, smart board Limited instrumental resources (selected percussion, students' instruments)	PCC C Lab Adjacent classroom Corridor
7	Model activity: second teacher demonstration of how an instrument (violin) could be integrated into performance of *DJ Got Us Falling In Love* *Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)*	Continuation of instrumental task	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	Several separate spaces iPod speakers, computers, smart board Instrumental resources (guitars, drum kit, keyboards, assorted percussion, students' instruments)	PCC C Lab Adjacent classroom Corridor
8	*Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)*	Continuation of instrumental task	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	Several separate spaces Instrumental resources	School hall
9	*Teacher researcher role (as described in Lesson 3)*	Continuation of instrumental task	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	Several separate spaces Instrumental resources	School hall
10	Coordinating performances	Final performances in front of an audience (other two Stage 3 classes)	(1) (3)	Instrumental resources	School hall

Appendix B: Focus Group Interview Topics

- How have you been finding the music lessons so far?
- Has there been anything you have particularly enjoyed or not enjoyed?
- What is it like learning without a teacher? Do you feel you are learning much? Is there anything difficult about teaching yourself?
- Why did your group choose that particular song?
- Do you think you've been given enough time to learn your song?
- Do you have all the necessary equipment for learning your song? If not, what else would you need? (E.g. amplifiers, microphones etc.)
- How did the body percussion/vocal performances stage compare with the instrumental stage?
- How could these lessons be improved?
- If given the chance, would you participate in music lessons like these again? Why?

Appendix C: Ethics Approval Letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Ref: MF/HW

16 November 2011

Dr James Renwick
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
The University of Sydney
Email: james.renwick@sydney.edu.au

Dear Dr Renwick

Thank you for your correspondence dated 15 November 2011 addressing comments made to you by the Executive Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

On 16 November 2011 the Chair of the HREC considered this information and approved your protocol entitled **"Thrown in the deep end": Informal Learning in a Primary Music Classroom".**

Details of the approval are as follows:

Protocol No.: **14278**

Approval Date: **16 November 2011**

First Annual Report Due: **30 November 2012**

Authorised Personnel: **Dr James Renwick**
Ms Flora Benson

Documents Approved:

Document	Version Number	Date
Parental Consent Form	2	14/11/2011
Parental Information Statement	2	14/11/2011
Principal Information Statement	2	14/11/2011
Focus Group Discussion Topics	1	20/10/2011
Student Questionnaire	1	20/10/2011

HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the approval date stated in this letter and is granted pending the following conditions being met:

Condition/s of Approval

- Continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.

- Provision of an annual report on this research to the Human Research Ethics Committee from the approval date and at the completion of the study. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of ethics approval for the project.

- All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

- All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

- Any changes to the protocol including changes to research personnel must be approved by the HREC by submitting a Modification Form before the research project can proceed.

Chief Investigator / Supervisor's responsibilities:

1. You must retain copies of all signed Consent Forms (if applicable) and provide these to the HREC on request.

2. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Dr Margaret Faedo
Manager, Human Ethics
On behalf of the HREC

cc: Flora Benson   fben3092@uni.sydney.edu.au

Appendix D: SERAP Approval Letter

NSW GOVERNMENT | **Education** & **Communities**

Miss Flora Benson
16 Tennent Parade
HURLSTONE PARK NSW 2193

DOC 11/268227

Dear Miss Benson

SERAP Number **2011213**

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in New South Wales government schools entitled *"Thrown in the deep end": Informal Learning in a Primary Music Classroom.* 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. **You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.**

This approval will remain valid until 30-11-2012.

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
Flora Louise Benson	30-11-2012

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.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to Manager, Schooling Research, Department of Education and Training, Locked Bag 53, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010.

Yours sincerely

Dr Robert Stevens
R/Senior Manager
Student Engagement and Program Evaluation
12 December 2011

Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau NSW Department of Education and Communities
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

68

Appendix E: Participant Information Statements

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

ABN 15 211 513 464

Sydney Conservatorium of Music

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"Thrown in the deep end": Informal Learning in a Primary Music Classroom

PARENTAL (OR CAREGIVER) INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?

You are invited to permit your child to participate in a study which explores the effects of current innovative music pedagogy (informal music learning) in the primary school music classroom.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because he/she is part of the Stage 3 cohort at Canterbury Public School, and this is the targeted age group for the study.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Flora Benson and will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music Education (Honours) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of James Renwick (Chair of Music Education). Flora Benson is currently engaged in the role of K-6 Music Specialist Teacher at Canterbury Public School.

(3) What does the study involve?

Participating students will take part in researcher-led music lessons based on the informal music learning approach for one 45 minute lesson per week during school hours in Terms 1 and 2, 2012. Students will take part in a number of group performance activities and the study will conclude with a musical performance from all students involved. The aim of this task is to allow students to engage in self-guided learning, with little direct teacher input.

If consent is received, groups of students will be issued with small video cameras with which to film their learning activities, and selected students will be invited to take part in focus group interviews which will be held at particular points in the term. All participating students will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the study which assesses students' evaluation of the effectiveness of the lessons.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Participating students will spend 45 minutes per week (during school hours) engaged in researcher-led lessons. A small number of focus group interviews will be held at lunchtimes for selected students. Every participating student will be asked to complete a short questionnaire during school hours at the conclusion of the study.

(5) Can my child withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to consent your child.

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, the Sydney Conservatorium of Music or Canterbury Public School. 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, the Sydney Conservatorium of Music or Canterbury Public School.

If your child takes part in a focus group and wishes to withdraw, as this is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data once the session has commenced.

Neither you nor your child is under any obligation to consent to complete the questionnaire. Your child can withdraw any time prior to submitting the completed questionnaire. Once a questionnaire has been submitted anonymously, 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 not benefit you or your child directly, but results and information gained from this research will be used to assist both music specialist and generalist educators in their teaching of primary school music by exploring the possibilities of more contemporary music pedagogy.

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

Yes, you may.

(9) What if I require further information about the study or my child's involvement?

When you have read this information, Flora Benson is available to discuss it with you further and answer any question you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact the following researchers:

Flora Benson
Ph: 0431943371
Email: fben3092@uni.sydney.edu.au

James Renwick
Ph: +61 2 9351 1334
Email: jrenwick@sydney.edu.au

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

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on +61 2 8627 8176 (Telephone); +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep

Appendix F: Consent Forms

PARENTAL (OR CAREGIVER) CONSENT FORM

I,..[PRINT NAME], agree to permit
..............……..[PRINT CHILD'S NAME], who is aged .... years, to
participate in the research project

TITLE "Thrown in the deep end": Informal Learning in a Primary Music Classroom

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1.   The procedures required for the project and the time involved for my child's participation in the project have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2.   I have read the Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my child's involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3.   I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent to my child's participation.

4.   I understand that my child's involvement is strictly confidential. I understand that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published however no information about my child nor I will be used in any way that is identifiable.

5.   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 or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

6.   I understand that my child can withdraw from participation in the focus group at any time if my child or I do not wish for discussions to continue. However, as it is a group discussion it will not be possible to exclude individual data to that point.

7.   I consent to:

- Video-recording   YES ☐   NO ☐
- Receiving Feedback   YES ☐   NO ☐

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

Feedback Option

Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

....
Signature of Parent/Caregiver

....
Please PRINT name

....
Date

....
Signature of Child

....
Please PRINT name

....
Date