# Historical and Contemporary Aspects of Primary Music In-service Education in Ireland

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Abstract

The subject of this thesis is primary music in-service education in the Republic of Ireland. The central aims are to investigate what can be learned from the study of historical and recent aspects of music in-service education and to reflect on how this knowledge might be used to inform future policy and practice. There are therefore two distinct strands in this study - the historical research and the research on present-day practice.

Historical research was undertaken on the music curriculum and music in-service education from 1900, when music was first introduced as a compulsory subject, to the present day. Three periods in the history of the music curriculum were investigated, leading to the music in-service programme scheduled for 2004 to introduce the 1999 music curriculum.

The perspectives of present day teachers and trainers were investigated. Questionnaires were used to elicit the views of teachers who have attended music courses as well as those who have never attended music courses. Following evaluation of this data, semi-structured interviews were held with a sample of music trainers. The research focused on how the current model of music in-service courses could be improved, so that they might be more responsive to the needs of the participants.

Finally, the outcomes of the historical research were related to those of the research on the current provision. The findings highlight the fact that certain themes have recurred since music was first introduced as a compulsory subject to the primary curriculum. These issues are: the status of music, the curricular content, the lack of confidence of many generalist teachers, gender and music in schools, and the provision of an advisory service and graded music in-service courses. The study concludes with a set of recommendations for future practice as well as some reflections on the outcomes of the thesis.

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Abbreviations

BEd   Bachelor of Education

CMOD   Centre for Management and Organisational Development

CPD   Continuing Professional Development

DES   Department of Education and Science

ICDU   In-career Development Unit

ICT   Information and Communication Technology

INSET   In-service Education and Training

INTO   Irish National Teachers' Organisation

IPPN   Irish Primary Principals' Network

MEd   Master of Education

NCTE   National Centre for Technology in Education

NPC   National Parents' Council

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PCSP   Primary Curriculum Support Programme

PD   Professional Development

RSE   Relationships and Sexuality Education

SESE   Social, Environmental and Scientific Education

SPHE   Social, Personal and Health Education

TES   Teacher Education Section

Part One: Contextualising the Study

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Irish Primary Curriculum 1999 states that 'Music education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence' (Department of Education and Science, Primary Curriculum: Music, 1999: 5). As well as affirming the status of music in education, the curriculum also advocates that the teaching of music is the task of the generalist primary teacher: 'Given that the music curriculum is closely linked with other arts subjects and integrated with other areas of the curriculum, the class teacher is the most appropriate person to teach the music programme' (op. cit.: 9). In fact, since music was first introduced as a compulsory subject to the Irish primary curriculum in 1900, the generalist class teacher has been responsible for teaching it. However, as Beauchamp (1997a: 69) argues, music, probably more than any other subject, makes demands on teachers to deliver knowledge, skills and understanding that they themselves may lack. This is certainly the case in Ireland, and critics here have commented on the ineffective delivery of the music curriculum by generalist primary teachers on numerous occasions (e.g. Groocock, 1961; Fleischmann, 1971; Arts Council, 1985; Heneghan, 2001). A national programme of in-service education is scheduled to commence in September 2004 to prepare the teaching profession to deliver the revised music curriculum of 1999. This is therefore an opportune time to examine the issue; hence my thesis investigates primary music in-service education in Ireland.

In this opening chapter, I identify the focus of the research, and highlight its aims and objectives, and I summarise how this particular focus evolved during the period of investigation. As the study is located in the Republic of Ireland, I provide a brief description of Irish primary education. Then, I present an overview of the structure of the thesis, and discuss the rationale for such a structure.

1.2 Origin and development of the thesis

As a primary school teacher in Ireland, who is also involved in the design and delivery of music in-service education, my original intention was to explore the complexities of professional development in music through research. I began by focusing on the identification of some key aspects of effective music in-service education. However, as the work evolved, many questions arose - mainly of a historical nature - which appeared to be very pertinent to the research. It seemed apparent that the current problems in music in-service education could not be explored and resolved until there was a more complete understanding of their historical origins. I considered it vital, therefore, to develop an in-depth understanding of the professional development in music education provided for Irish primary school teachers in the past. I agree with Cohen, Manion and Morrison who argue that: 'the historical study of an educational idea or institution can do much to help us understand how our present educational system has come about; and this kind of understanding can in turn help to establish a sound basis for further progress or change' (2000: 159).

As the research developed and evolved, it became clear that this **historical** aspect was an important part of the work. The history of primary music in-service education in Ireland had not been investigated to date, and I felt that it was vital that this research should be undertaken, as the findings may have implications for future policy and practice. As Plummeridge (2001: 5) argues, school programmes have evolved over a long period of time, and 'current curriculum issues and debates can often be more clearly illuminated and better understood when viewed initially from an historical perspective'. I decided that 1900 was a logical starting point for the historical research, because it was in this year that music first became an obligatory subject in the primary school curriculum. I determined to examine the provision of music in-service education to the present time, specifically to June 2004. The historical enquiry consisted mainly of an investigation into various historical records and documents, but it was illuminated by interviews with individuals who have been key participants in music in-service education in approximately the last forty years.

In conjunction with this historical enquiry, I also investigated present-day teachers' and trainers' perceptions of music in-service education. In this **contemporary** part of the work, research was undertaken to obtain the views of:

- Teachers who <u>have</u> attended music in-service education
- Teachers who <u>have never</u> attended music in-service education
- Providers of music in-service education

The research tool used to elicit the views of the teachers who attended music courses was a questionnaire. The data were analysed in an attempt to obtain participants' perspectives on music in-service education, and to determine if teachers required on-going support on completion of a music course. The questionnaires also included some open questions, which afforded the respondents with further opportunity to offer their insights and opinions on the subject of music in-service education, and some valuable data were obtained.

The research tool used to investigate the views of teachers who had never attended a music course was also a questionnaire. The purpose of this particular questionnaire was to identify why some teachers do not attend music in-service education, and to establish what features, if any, would encourage them to attend. Some open questions were also included in the questionnaire, which once again yielded rich data.

Following analysis of the data generated by the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews were held with six music trainers to obtain their perspectives on the evidence gained from the research on teachers. The views of the providers of music in-service education were considered in detail in relation to those of the teachers. Finally, the findings of the historical research were related to those of the research on the current situation, and were closely considered in an attempt to create a set of recommendations that might illuminate future policy-making and practice.

1.3 Purpose of the research

The key aims of the research are to investigate what can be learned from the study of historical and recent aspects of primary music in-service education in Ireland, and to reflect on how this knowledge might be used to inform future policy and practice.

Borg (1963: 32) discusses in detail whether an educational researcher should favour the use of hypotheses or objectives. He defines a hypothesis as the researcher's guess as to the probable outcomes of his experiments. He goes on to argue that the hypothesis places clear and specific goals before the research worker, and provides him or her with a basis for conducting the research. However, argues Borg, in some research carried out in education, especially in descriptive studies, it is more appropriate for the researcher to list objectives rather than hypotheses (op. cit.: 36). In this study, the listing of objectives is the method I chose to employ.

The specific objectives of this research are:

1. To investigate the history of primary music in-service education in Ireland from 1900, when music first became a compulsory subject, to June 2004

2. To investigate a sample of present-day teachers' perspectives on music in-service education

3. To establish if participating teachers require further support beyond existing provision

4. To investigate why some primary school teachers do not participate in music in-service education and to establish what features, if any, would encourage them to do so

5. To research music trainers' views on the key issues raised by teachers regarding music in-service education

6. To consider how the knowledge gained might be used to inform future provision of music in-service education

1.4   Use of terminology

In recent years the terms '*in-service education*,' '*in-service education and training*', and '*continuing professional development*' tend to be used interchangeably. I will discuss this usage of terminology in greater detail in the next chapter. However, when I initially applied to undertake this research in 1999, the term commonly used in Ireland was '*in-service education*', so that is the term I have utilised in this work. As I will discuss at length in Chapter Two, this study is based on the premise that a

teacher's participation in music in-service education is just a small part of the teacher's ongoing continuing professional development.

1.5 Location of the methodology discussions

In this study, I used two distinct types of research methodology. For the historical investigation, I used standard methods of empirical historical research, and for the study on the current provision of music in-service education, I used a survey approach. The discussion of the historical research methodology is positioned just before the report on the findings of the historical investigation, that is in Chapter Five. The discussion of the research methodology employed in the survey is located in the chapter preceding the presentation of the outcomes of that research, i.e. in Chapter Ten. This structure enabled a logical sequenced presentation of work, thereby enhancing the clarity of the thesis.

1.6 A note on the referencing system used in this study

The referencing system generally used in the social sciences is the Harvard system, while the usual system used in historical research is the footnote convention. However, I decided that the use of two referencing systems in one thesis would be confusing for the reader, and could potentially detract from the coherence of the writing. As the study is situated in an educational context, I decided to use the system conventionally employed in this arena, i.e. the Harvard system.

1.7 The Context - Primary Education in Ireland

This study examines music in-service education in primary schools in the Irish Republic; therefore a brief consideration of the current system may prove useful to the readers. There are approximately 3,200 primary schools in the Republic of Ireland. These primary schools are also known as national schools, and the vast majority are owned by the Catholic Church. In addition, there are a small number of Church of Ireland schools, an expanding multi-denominational sector of nineteen schools, and a larger Irish language medium sector with more than 135 schools (Sugrue, 2002: 316).

Children in Ireland attend primary school for a total of eight years, commencing at the age of four or five years, and transfer to second level education at the age of twelve years approximately. The eight classes in the primary school cycle are: Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First Class, Second Class, Third Class, Fourth Class, Fifth Class and Sixth Class.

Primary school teachers are generalists, and teach all subjects to their pupils. Currently the curricular areas are: Irish; English; Mathematics; Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) which incorporates Science, History and Geography; Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE); Physical Education; Visual Arts, and Music. Drama will be introduced to the curriculum in the near future. In the Catholic schools, the class teacher also teaches Religious Education, but the church, rather than the Department of Education and Science (DES) prepares the curriculum for this area, and on-going review and evaluation is also conducted by the church. Teachers' salaries are paid centrally by the state, though the teachers are employed by the Boards of Management of the individual schools. The state also centrally pays substitute teachers, to replace teachers who are on approved forms of leave, such as sick leave, parental leave, or study leave.

The usual form of teacher training for primary teachers is the three or four year B.Ed degree, which has a restricted entry quota. Places are usually over subscribed, so the entry-level requirements are quite demanding. Teaching in Ireland is held in high esteem, and the positive status accorded to the profession has been documented on numerous occasions (OECD, 1991; OECD, 1998; Coolahan, 1981 & 2003).

There is one union that represents all primary teachers, including principals, which is known as the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). This union, founded in 1868, has been referred to as a 'power bloc' by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 1991: 38). The INTO contributes to policy formulation through its educational conferences, research and publications, and the union is also involved in the design and delivery of continuing professional development for its members.

1.8 Structure of this study

This thesis is presented in four main sections. The first part is entitled **Contextualising the Study**, and it includes four chapters, beginning with this opening chapter, which introduces the study and its aims and objectives. Chapter Two contains a review of literature on continuing professional development (CPD) in general. I present a rationale for ongoing teacher education, and identify some key themes relating to effective in-service education that recur in the literature review. I also propose a working definition of some of the terminology used in this study, and relate these to the vocabulary currently used in the literature.

In Chapter Three, I examine the provision of in-service education in Ireland, and consider this in relation to the literature on effective professional development. Some strengths and weaknesses associated with the current system are identified, and suggestions are given as to how these could be addressed. In Chapter Four, I consider some issues which are specific to music in-service education. Finally, I identify a number of key components of effective professional development as derived from the literature review, which are pertinent to the design and delivery of an effective music in-service education.

The second part of the study is entitled **The Historical Dimension**. In Chapter Five, I outline the research methodology employed in the historical part of this thesis. The next four chapters contain the outcomes of the historical investigation. The history of the national school system may be arranged into broad divisions or periods, which were influenced by events on the wider political and social scene. Music education and in-service education have also been influenced by these events, therefore the findings are presented in a chronological way. Thus in Chapter Six, I investigate the period from 1900, when an ambitious programme of music in-service education was offered to facilitate delivery of the newly introduced music curriculum. In this chapter, I also outline how the initial enthusiasm for in-service education was not sustained, and identify the key reasons for this.

Chapter Seven contains a study of the music curriculum and the in-service education in the primary school after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922. It describes how music became a 'servant to the teaching of the (Irish) language' (McCarthy, 1999: 117) during this era, and considers how the other great determinant of the curriculum – Catholicism – also impacted on the in-service education that was provided for teachers during this period.

In Chapter Eight, I examine the events that led to the formulation of the Primary Curriculum of 1971, and investigate the accompanying in-service education offered in music. The work on this period was enriched by interviews with some key personnel, namely the two surviving inspectors (now retired) who were instrumental in the design and dissemination of the 1971 music curriculum. Research was also conducted by means of interviews with individuals who experienced this music in-service education, both as trainers and participants. The chapter concludes that the 1971 music curriculum was not generally implemented as originally intended, and identifies the key reasons for this failure.

In Chapter Nine, I present an examination of the events that led to the revised Primary Curriculum of 1999, which is currently being phased into Irish schools. In-service education in music is scheduled to commence in the academic year 2004-2005, with implementation of the programme beginning the following year, but already the planning for this curriculum dissemination is underway. The study of this particular period was also enriched - and perhaps complicated - by the fact that I was involved in the writing of the 1999 music curriculum, and have also been appointed to the panel of trainers that will disseminate the curriculum nationally from September 2004. My position as participant-researcher will be considered in detail in the methodology section in Chapter Ten.

The third part of the thesis is entitled **The Situation at the Start of the 21st Century**, and is divided into three chapters. Chapter Ten presents a consideration of the research methodology employed to investigate the present day provision of music in-service education. In this chapter, I outline in detail some of the thinking and processes I followed in the design and implementation of my research tools, and I also describe the rigorous pilot study that I carried out.

Chapter Eleven reports on the survey that was carried out on participants on music education courses in summer 2001, as well as on teachers who had never attended music in-service education. The most salient findings of the research are presented. Following analysis of this research, semi-structured interviews were held with a sample of music trainers, to investigate their perspectives on the findings of the research on teachers, and Chapter Twelve presents the outcomes of this aspect of the research.

The final part of the thesis is entitled **The Way Forward** and it is divided into two chapters. In Chapter Thirteen, I discuss the common issues that have emerged in the historical and contemporary research. In Chapter Fourteen, the concluding chapter, I offer a set of recommendations for future in-service education in Ireland, and identify potential areas of research that could extend and develop this work. I also reflect on the thesis and its contribution and limitations.

1.9 Conclusion

This piece of research investigates primary music in-service education in Ireland from 1900 to 2004. Despite the importance officially accorded to music in the curriculum by successive governments throughout the last century (e.g. Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1899b; Government of Ireland, 1995; Department of Education and Science, 1999) this declared importance has not been translated into practical application in the classroom. Research on the subject overwhelmingly demonstrates that provision for music at primary level is extremely variable, and that many teachers' ability and confidence to teach music is low (e.g. Arts Council, 1979 and 1985; Curriculum and Examinations Board, 1985; Heneghan, 2001). Through my research, I attempt to identify why the music in-service education that has been provided to date has not been more successful, and to investigate how it could be improved, so that ultimately the teaching and learning of music in Irish primary schools may be improved.

Chapter Two: Issues in Continuing Professional Development: a Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

While the literature on music in-service education is at present rather limited, there is an abundance of literature on continuing professional development in education generally, in the UK and USA as well as in Ireland. In fact, as Duffy and Dugdale argue 'Such is the volume of recent literature on the need for, and possible forms of, in-service education that the uninitiated reader might well be led to the belief that there was much discourse and little action' (1994: 196). However, it is worth examining this literature, because, only through a thorough understanding of the components of effective in-service education generally can we hope to apply the insights gained to music in-service education.

In this chapter, I examine the concept of the 'teaching continuum' and present a rationale for ongoing teacher education. I also propose a working definition of some of the terminology used in this study, and relate these to the vocabulary currently used in the literature. Next, I consider in detail some of the major themes that recur in the literature, including: the outcomes of professional development; the issue of individual versus system needs, andragogy or the study of adult learning, the components of effective in-service courses, and the provision of follow up support as an integral feature of in-service courses. Finally, the issue of time for in-service education and the provision of incentives for participation in professional development are examined.

2.2 The 'teaching continuum': a rationale

A key theme in recent educational literature is the emphasis on the need for continuing professional development (CPD) of the teaching profession. In the past, most countries put the emphasis on initial teacher training. However, as Davies and Preston (2002: 231) point out, a change has occurred in the last thirty years or so in which ongoing training and professional development of serving teachers has grown in importance and status in the educational debate. It is now generally recognised

that pre-service training cannot, of itself, be expected to prepare teachers fully to meet the ever increasing demands placed on them, especially against the background of a rapidly changing social, economic and educational environment. Johnston (1971: 10-11) points out that 'the one thing that all courses of pre-service education have in common in all countries, east and west, rich and poor, is their incompleteness', and therefore further training 'is and indeed always has been, an essential condition for all teaching.' The current emphasis in the literature is on the concept of the 'teaching continuum' which embraces initial, induction and in-service as distinct phases of the teaching career, and educational writers are in general agreement that teacher education must be thought of as a career-long proposition (e.g. Joyce and Showers, 1988 & 1995; Dean, 1991; Fullan, 1991; Sugrue & Uí Thuama, 1997; OECD, 1998; Day, 1999; Sugrue 2002; Campbell et al, 2004). As Soler et al. (2001: 59) argue, there is a growing realisation of the need for greater continuity, which 'might provide an almost seamless progression from initial teacher education, through induction, to continuing professional development.'

Furthermore, as Ovens (199: 282) points out, there seems to have been a recent rediscovery of the Ancient Greek idea that education is, or should be, a life-long process. The concept of lifelong learning has been supported and promoted by national governments, and particularly by the European Union (EU) in the last decade, often for reasons of vocationalism and marketplace competition (Sugrue, 2002: 313). The ideal of lifelong learning is as relevant to teachers as it is to other members of society. In fact, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) proposed that to be seen as an effective role model the teacher must be committed to lifelong learning (OECD, 1998: 18). Sugrue and Uí Thuama argue that 'In the present context, the teaching continuum is taken to be synonymous with lifelong learning for teachers' (1997: 56).

2.3 Towards some working definitions

Before exploring modes of delivery, programme content and other aspects of teacher learning, it is essential to explore conceptually what is meant by professional development. The terms 'In-service Education and Training' (INSET), 'in-career development', 'in-service education', 'staff development', 'professional

development' (PD), and 'continuing professional development' (CPD), are all now key words in the educational discourse, but as yet no single and agreed definition exists, a fact which is commented on by many writers (e.g. Dean, 1991: 5; Glover and Law, 1996: 2; Craft, 1996: 6). These writers state that it tends to be common practice to use the terms interchangeably, and in much of the literature, this is in fact the case (e.g. Craft, 1996; Garrett and Bowles, 1997; Jones et al., 1989). Moreover, as Campbell et al. (2004: 16) argue, defining professional development is not an easy task, as it is highly dependent on the cultural and socio-economic climate prevalent at any one time. However, I contend that there are subtle differences inherent in the various terms, and it is worth examining these, before proposing some working definitions for the purpose of this thesis.

The term 'In-service Education and Training' which is often shortened to the acronym INSET in the UK, has been defined as 'planned activities practised both within and outside schools primarily to develop the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance of professional staff in schools' (Oldroyd and Hall, 1991: 2). There is an element of intention and planning inherent in this definition, and it is generally understood to imply participation in formal courses and/or workshops, which are probably designed to update the knowledge base of teachers in specific areas. Some of the educational literature demonstrates a preference for the phrase 'in-service *education* of teachers' rather than 'in-service *training* of teachers' (e.g. Bradley, Conner and Southworth (1994: 235). However, the distinction between education and training is not always clear, and the portmanteau phrase 'in-service education and training' or INSET is commonly used in England and Wales. There is a difference in the etymology, however. The word 'training' suggests preparing people to fulfil a defined task, while 'education' (from *educare,* to lead out) suggests equipping people with the ability to fact new situations and challenges. In Ireland, the term 'in-service education' is more commonly used, and tends to be used interchangeably with the term 'in-career development'. Fidler (1997: 162) states that 'career development' involves the development of individuals so that their careers can progress. However, the term 'in-career development' is conceived as being the same process as 'in-service education' in Ireland, and in fact, the unit of the Department of Education and Science which is charged with the ongoing education of teachers was known as the In-career Development Unit (ICDU) from its inception

to 2004, when it changed its name to Teacher Education Section (TES) to signify its new responsibility for pre-service education as well as in-service education.

Fidler (1997: 162) argues that the term 'staff development' involves the development of the staff to meet the needs of the institution in which they work. Oldroyd and Hall also contend that, while they use the terms staff development and INSET interchangeably, they actually perceive staff development as being more about developing the school than it is about developing the profession (Oldroyd and Hall, 1991: 3). In my view, the term 'staff development' is specific to an identifiable institution, and implies that a significant proportion of a school's staff, if not the entire staff, is engaged in the particular development activity.

Professional development has been defined as 'those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators, so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students' (Guskey, 2000: 16). Guskey goes on to argue that every day presents a variety of learning opportunities for the teacher. These opportunities occur 'every time a lesson is taught, an assessment is administered, a curriculum is reviewed, or a professional journal or magazine is read, a classroom activity is observed, or a conversation takes place with another teacher or administrator' (op. cit.: 19). Campbell et al. (2004: 18) also concur with this view when they argue that 'professional development takes many forms, from the solitary, unaided, daily reflections on experience, to working with a more experienced or knowledgeable practitioner, observing and being observed, professional discourse, and attendance at workshops, courses and conferences.'

The definition proposed by Fullan (1991: 326) complements this, but goes a step further, in that it introduces an element of career-long continuity, when he defines professional development as 'the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement'. Bolam (2000: 267) uses the term 'continuing professional development' (CPD) and offers a working definition: 'CPD embraces those education, training and job-embedded support activities engaged in by teachers, following their initial certification..... Such activities are aimed primarily at adding to their professional knowledge, improving their professional skills, and helping them to clarify their

professional values so that they can educate their students more effectively' (op. cit.: 267).

For the purpose of this thesis, I will use three terms. I will not use them interchangeably, however, but will assign each a specific area of meaning. I will use the term *in-service education* to signify formal learning experiences provided for teachers, for example courses, conferences and workshops, which are designed to improve their pupils' learning. I will use the term *staff development* to indicate learning experiences for the collective staff of a school or institution. The term *continuing professional development (CPD)* will be used to denote all the learning experiences, both formal and informal, engaged in by teachers throughout their teaching careers, which enhance their pupils' learning. These include in-service education and staff development as outlined above, but also include personal reading, watching television, reflection, research, conversation with colleagues, or indeed any combination of these and related activities. Thus, a teacher may participate in in-service education in music, and staff development in music, but this participation forms only a small part of the teacher's continuing professional development.

2.4 Outcomes of in-service education

Dean (1991: 8) stresses that successful in-service education is about improving the experience for pupils in the classroom. Unless it does this, it is an extravagance that cannot be afforded. Crookhall, (1987: 61) also argues that we need to regard the quality of provision in the classroom as the main purpose of the exercise and view everything pursued under the banner of in-service education in that context in order that the learning environment of the children in our care is as good as possible. Teachers are the key connection between society's expectations and what students learn (OECD, 1998: 17), therefore teachers' continuing opportunities to develop professionally will influence their own practice and indirectly, the achievement of their students. Roberts & Pruitt (2003: 53) argue that 'ultimately, the bottom line for effective professional development is improved student achievement.' These writers go on to argue that successful in-service education encourages teachers to examine the results that they are achieving with their students, and to change their practice if these are not the results they want.

The specific outcomes of effective in-service courses have been identified by Joyce and Showers (1988: 68) as follows:

- Participants gain knowledge or awareness of educational theories and practices, new curriculum or academic content
- Participants experience changes in attitude towards self, children and/or academic content
- Participants develop new skills and/or improve existing skills
- Participants transfer the new skills and strategies to the classroom

Joyce and Showers (1988 & 1995) argue that the research on in-service education has demonstrated that virtually all teachers can learn the most powerful and complex teaching strategies provided that the development is properly designed. The literature abounds with theories and proposals for the design and implementation of effective in-service education, and I will now examine some of the key issues that recur in the literature.

2.5 Towards effective in-service education

In the literature on in-service education, the term 'effective' occurs repeatedly. However, the term is sometimes used to mean 'efficient' and because of that, there may be misunderstanding about what is actually denoted by the word. There is a demand for teacher development to be efficient, where efficiency is measured in terms of handling large numbers of teachers at minimum cost. Understandably, the major concern of those who have to provide the resources for in-service education is whether it brings value for money. In a climate of intense competition for scarce resources, policy makers understandably look for value for money. However, the term 'effective' goes beyond concern for the cost of the enterprise, or the efficiency of its delivery, and it addresses 'more fundamental issues related to changes in thinking, values and beliefs of the participating teachers and to the effects of their experiences on the learning opportunities provided for children' (Bradley, Conner and Southworth, 1994: 238).

Oldroyd and Hall (1991: 8) concur with this when they assert that 'The Holy Grail of researchers and evaluators of INSET is whether the increasing amount of effort and expenditure on staff development actually leads to any improvement in pupil's learning and attainment, or other school improvement process'. Effective in-service education leads to teacher development, but also to action in schools (Bradley et al. 1994: 238). Burgess and Galloway (1993: 169) also argue that impact in the classroom is the 'acid test of INSET', but that 'the paradox is that it can be very difficult to identify'. However, there is a general accord that unless in-service education leads to improvement in the classroom, it cannot be considered effective. In-service education ideally should be both efficient and effective, but the literature cautions us that effectiveness takes time to achieve, and is difficult to quantify.

2.6 In-service education: Individual versus system needs

In the past, teacher development was an almost wholly individual process, the responsibility of the individual teachers. There was a domination of off-site courses, geared more to the needs of the individual rather than to groups of staff. As courses were usually undertaken on a voluntary basis, they were not necessarily undertaken by those with the greatest need (Craft, 1996: 8). In addition, critics argued that a high proportion of teacher development had little effect on teaching and learning in practice because it was too far removed the teacher's everyday environment (OECD, 1998: 43). There is nowadays a growing agreement that the balance needs to be redressed so that the needs of schools are also addressed. Oldroyd and Hall (1991: 6) argue that there is a mounting body of evidence of the greater effectiveness of school based development rather than conventional out of school courses. An advantage of on-site courses is that they are more likely to bring together colleagues who can discuss how to improve their own situation rather than learning principles in the abstract (OECD, 1998: 43). It is generally believed that such on-site development is more likely to have a direct impact on the practice in the particular institution. In some countries, e.g. UK, there has been a swing towards the school-based model.

However, I contend that while it is important to have in-house opportunities for staff to share and learn from each other and to take responsibility for improving their practice, a provision which is wholly school-led can reinforce rather than challenge

current practice, may lead to insularity and complacency, and may overlook an individual's need to 'step outside' (Morley, 1994: 12). For some purposes, situating learning experiences outside the classroom may be important, or even essential, for powerful learning (Putnam and Borko, 2000: 12). There are arguments for this view. If the goal is to help teachers think in new ways, for example, it may be important to have them experience learning in different settings. Engaging in learning experiences away from the classroom may help teachers to 'break set' – to experience things in new ways (op. cit.: 15). Putnam and Borko (2000: 12) go on to argue that summer workshops may free teachers from the constraints of their own classroom situations and afford them the luxury of exploring ideas without worrying 'what they are going to do tomorrow' (op. cit.: 16). Bolam (2000: 267) also argues that 'the pendulum has swung too far in the direction of system-led training, and that we should reassert the importance of individual professional development'.

Craft (1996: 10) argues that individual development and school development are inextricably linked and there cannot be one without the other. In my view, the ideal is to combine both personal and system needs in the in-service education provided for the teaching profession. Through the provision of a broad range of both school-based and external courses, it is more likely that both system and individual needs will be addressed.

2.7 Andragogy: Study of the teacher as adult learner

Eraut (1972) was one of the earlier writers who pointed out effective in-service education had to consider andragogy, or the study of how adults learn, and he highlighted the importance of work related tasks and experiential learning in adult learning. Since then, many researchers have stressed the importance of androgogy in teacher development (e.g. Jones et al., 1989; Aylward, 1991; Blackmore, 1991; Bradley et al, 1994; OECD, 1998; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 1998).

Jones et al. (1989) summarise the findings on adult learning as follows:

- Adults need realistic, job-related goals for a learning programme to be effective

- Adult learners need to see the results of their efforts and have accurate feedback about progress

- Learning a new skill or concept may produce anxiety and fear of external judgement

- Adults may resent learning situations which they see as an attack on their competence

- Adults prefer to learn in an informal learning situation where social interaction can take place

(Jones et al. 1989: 200).

The literature emphasises that adult education should be experiential, and that there should be opportunities for examining real work situations. In addition, the outcomes of the in-service activity must be relevant to the needs of the school. Adult learners frequently experience anxiety when learning new methodologies or strategies, and it is important that facilitators of adult learning are aware of this, so that such anxiety may be minimised. There should also be opportunities to learn through interaction with colleagues. The literature review reveals that adults learn best when their experiential learning takes place in informal situations where social interaction can occur. Collins (1991: 70) also argues that knowledge gained from discourse with colleagues is sometimes more useful than any lectures, and goes on to argue that this opportunity for meaningful talk occurs more during in-service experiences, as everyday talk in the work context tends to be 'on the level of gossip or information rather than pedagogical analysis.' Therefore those individuals who design and deliver teacher in-service courses must consider these findings on the nature of adult learning, so as to ensure that the optimum learning opportunities are provided for participants.

2.8 Components of effective in-service courses

Dean (1991: 115) asserts that it is often tempting to think that the best way of getting information across is to give a talk. However, as discussed, the research on andragogy clearly shows that adults learn best when they start from their own experience and gain new expertise in the area being studied. In-service sessions therefore need to contain substantial opportunities for experiential learning. Craft

(1996: 39) recommends that in-service courses should provide a combination of different strategies such as lectures, practical activities and coaching. Not only does the use of a combination of methods lead to better mastery of the subject area, it also facilitates individual teachers, who all have individual learning preferences and learning styles.

Joyce and Showers (1988: 3) argue that there are certain training components that need to be offered for maximum probability that the desired outcomes of the professional development activity will be achieved. These training components as proposed by Joyce and Showers are:

- Presentation of theory – Joyce and Showers argue that an understanding of theory through discussions, reading, and lectures is necessary for an understanding of the rationale behind a skill or strategy

- Demonstration – the demonstration or 'modelling' of a skill greatly facilitates learning. Such skills can be demonstrated in settings that simulate the workplace, or may be delivered through videotape or film, or by 'live' demonstrations. The demonstrations may be mixed with explanation; the theory and modelling components need not be conducted separately. In fact, they can have reciprocal effects. The modelling facilitates the understanding of underlying theories by illustrating them in action

- Practice of skill – the third training component is the practice of skill under simulated conditions. The closer the training setting resembles the workplace, the more transfer is facilitated. The writers argue that considerable amounts of skill can be developed, however, in settings apart from the workplace

- Feedback about performance – the writers argue that feedback about performance facilitates skill development. This feedback, to be of maximum utility for skill development, should occur as soon as possible following the practice, should be specific to the behaviours being attempted by the trainee, and should evaluate the particular skill, rather than the individual

- Coaching – the writers argue that the in-service education is not finished when the actual course is over, but should continue into the classroom, ideally in the form of what they term 'coaching'. They argue that the integration of new skills into existing practice involves a highly complex

process of learning. They suggest that teachers need on-site coaching to integrate an initially difficult innovation into their existing practice. Joyce and Showers describe coaching as a collegial approach to the analysis of teaching and the integration of new teaching methodologies. Coaching as a form of after course support is discussed in greater depth in the next section of this chapter.

(Joyce and Showers, 1988: 68-69)

Putnam and Borko (2000: 17) suggest that a combination of approaches, situated in a variety of contexts, holds the best promise for fostering powerful, multidimensional changes in teachers' thinking and practice. Such change can be considered in terms of change in awareness, knowledge, attitudes and skills. Joyce and Showers (1988: 71) argue that each of the above components of staff development has impact on different levels, which they summarise as follows:

- The presentation of theory impacts on awareness
- Demonstration or modelling impacts on awareness and knowledge
- Practice in simulated settings impacts on awareness, knowledge and skills
- Feedback on performance impacts on awareness, knowledge and skills
- Assistance in the classroom impacts on awareness, knowledge, skills and application

(op. cit.: 71)

In addition, as Soler, Craft and Burgess (2001: 63-65) argue, individual teachers differ markedly, and their teaching and learning styles differ. Not only does a combination of different in-service education strategies lead to better mastery of new skills, it also recognises the fact that different people have different preferred ways of learning. As the Irish National Teachers' Organisation asserts, teachers are a 'heterogeneous occupational group with diverse needs and demands, and therefore any provision for in-service education must recognise that fact and allow for a variety of different levels of interaction' (INTO, 1993: 133). Therefore, a combination of in-service strategies, with adequate opportunities for experiential learning, and the provision of follow-up support, would seem to provide the best development approach for adult learners.

2.9 Follow up support as an integral component of in-service courses

2.9.1 Follow up support for successful transfer to the classroom

It is now widely recognised in the literature that the provision of follow up support is vital for effective in-service education (e.g. Joyce and Showers, 1982, 1986, 1995; Holly and Blackman, 1983; Crookhall, 1987; Guskey, 2000; Soler et al., 2001; Sugrue 2002; Roberts & Pruitt, 2003). These writers assert that few individuals can move from a professional development experience to implementation with complete success. Guidance, direction and support are crucial when these adaptations are being made. The effective implementation of in-service requires what the literature refers to as 'human support' – personal contact and interaction among teachers, planners, providers and consultants, and the growth of a professional supportive culture.

If the object of the in-service activity is to improve the quality of teaching and learning, then a sustained and supportive approach seems vital. The absence of support at school level means learning is not sustained as it lacks appropriate support and context sensitive feedback. 'Without such supports, the grammar of schooling persists; thus stasis, rather than transformation is maintained' (Sugrue, 2002: 335). Teachers tend to remain stuck at lower levels of mastery for lack of explicit counsel from external experts or from experienced peers (Soler et al, 2001: 155). Guskey (2000: 22) also argues that training sessions must be extended, or ' supplemented with additional follow-up activities to provide the feedback and coaching necessary for the successful implementation of new ideas.'

It was Joyce and Showers who first introduced the concept of **coaching** in CPD. In 1980, they completed a two-year research study on the ability of teachers to acquire teaching skills and strategies. Much of their later research and development work on the in-service education of teachers is based on this study (e.g. 1982, 1986, 1995). The researchers maintain that although teachers are good learners, they require certain in-service conditions to improve their practice. Presentation of theory, modelling, practice and feedback - as already discussed - are the four components of effective training that they culled from their literature analysis. A training using all or a combination of these components, they argue, ensures that most teachers will be

able to master the skills associated with a particular teaching model. The researchers enriched their analysis of effective training by focusing on the transfer of learning to the classroom, and they found that such learning did not always lead to change in the teacher's methodology. After reviewing research about how individuals best learn new skills, they investigated the usefulness of coaching for helping teachers to develop expertise with new teaching techniques and to sustain their use. Their meta-analysis of research found that coaching definitely made a difference (Joyce and Showers, 1982, 1986; 1995), and in fact, in-class coaching was more powerful in terms of transfer of training than all the other training components of presentation of information, demonstration, practice and feedback. The writers argue that such coaching can be provided by 'peers (other teachers), supervisors, professors, curriculum consultants, or others thoroughly familiar with the approaches' (1986: 296).

The practical application of coaching has evolved and developed over the years, and two main types of in-class coaching may be identified. *Reciprocal coaching* or *Peer Coaching* involves teachers who observe and coach each other so that instruction may be improved. Guskey (2000: 22) asserts that one of the best ways to learn is by observing others, or by being observed and receiving specific feedback from that observation. Analysing and reflecting on this information can be a valuable means of professional development. A major advantage is that it provides important benefits to both the observer and observed. A very obvious disadvantage is that it requires a significant commitment of time, and in primary schools there is the added complication of a general lack of non-contact time for teachers during the school day.

Expert coaching utilises specially trained teachers with expertise in a particular curricular area. They observe, support and provide feedback to other teachers. In some countries, for example the UK, such expert coaching may be provided through the provision of a subject advisory service, and in the next section I discuss the role of the advisor in teacher development in greater detail.

The literature resonates with evidence that generally, without support and feedback for teachers at the level of the school when new methods are being 'tried' the

pedagogical status quo is likely to prevail (Guskey, 2000: 22; Soler et al., 2001: 141; Sugrue, 2002: 334). The importance of supporting teachers in their classrooms is a recurring theme in the literature on effective in-service education, therefore it is vital that such follow-up support is provided as an integral component of in-service courses.

2.9.2 The role of the advisor in the provision of follow up support

Crookhall, (1987: 62) argues that the opportunities for continuing support after an in-service course are very limited in subject areas lacking the provision of advisory personnel. Over thirty years ago, the OECD (1978) argued that the advisory or consultancy role was of great potential value in in-service education, and recommended that such a service merited closer study and documentation (op.cit.: 30). In the UK and the USA, the advisor / consultant is usually a teacher with expertise in a certain area, who is seconded from his/her school for a period of time to provide support to the teaching profession.

In his analysis of the manner in which advisory teachers work with classroom teachers, Harland (1990: 34-38) identifies several modes of working as a provider of professional development. He describes these as (i) the provisionary mode, (ii) the hortative mode, (iii) the role-modelling mode and (iv) the zetetic mode.

In the provisionary mode, the advisor provides resources to support teachers' work in schools, or informs the teacher of where these may be accessed. Harland summarises this as the '*I'll give you*' model. As well as having direct practical benefit to teachers, this can give the advisor access to schools, and provide a starting point for further development work. The disadvantage is the implication that the advisory relationship is solely resource dependent. Such a model on its own does not address how the resource is used and incorporated into the teacher's methodology.

In the hortative mode, the advisor communicates verbally and in writing, passing on ideas, advice and/or information, encouraging teachers to apply them in school. Harland describes this as the '*I'll tell you*' model, and noted that teachers found this more influential through informal conversation rather than through formal talks or workshops.

In the role-modelling mode, the advisor demonstrates how a particular area of the curriculum could be taught, often alongside teachers in their classrooms. Harland describes this as the *'I'll show you'* model, and he claims that teachers in his study found this a good support, particularly if they were freed from their own contribution to the lesson sufficiently to be able to observe the demonstration. A potential disadvantage that he identified was that this could lead to uncritical imitation of the teaching style of the 'expert'.

In the zetetic mode, which Harland defines as 'meaning to proceed or learn through a process of enquiry' (op. cit.: 37), the advisor encourages teachers to critically examine their current practice. Harland describes this as '*In order to help you develop your teaching, I will ask you what it is you are attempting to achieve, what it is you are doing in your classroom practice, and to what effect.*' The researcher notes that this is high-risk strategy. The extent to which it is successful is dependent on the personalities involved. When it is successful, it can be inspiring and productive. However, if it fails, Harland notes that it can precipitate the termination of the advisor-teacher relationship.

It may be that the ideal operational mode for an advisor is a combination of all the operational modes as described by Harland. At various times the advisor may need to use different strategies, and ideally the strategy used at any given time should be responsive to the needs of the individual teacher and/or class. This implies that the advisor, in addition to having subject expertise, also needs to possess good inter-personal skills. Research indicates that teachers prefer to receive such classroom assistance from other teachers, and Corrigan (1986: 107) argues that serving teachers who are good adult educators as well as good teachers of children make excellent 'co-trainers' of other teachers in the work situation, as they have 'credibility' in the eyes of their colleagues. The literature review highlights the importance of supporting teachers in their classrooms, and the provision of an advisory service would seem to be a logical way to provide such in-class support.

2.10 Time for in-service education

The lack of time for participation in professional development is a fundamental barrier to success (Fullan, 1980: 16). Time is perhaps the most pressing matter for teachers (Collins, 1991: 71), and practising teachers must often find time for their studies and on-going development outside the normal working day. Thus, at the point in their lives where teachers embark on in-service courses, they are often subjected to a range of pressures from other directions – as parents, as children, as spouses, and frequently as all three. The time devoted to in-service work must be conducted against a current of other demands (op. cit: 70).

Holly and Blackman (1984: 32) argue that an adequate quality of time and quantity of time is necessary in which to absorb, apply and reflect on new ideas. The standard primary school teaching day in many countries does not include time for preparation and marking, for the study of teaching, for co-operative efforts in school improvement, or for academic study (Joyce and Showers, 1988: 2). Nowadays, when professional development is regarded as a necessary component of effective teaching, governments face a problem, and, in the absence of adequate amount of time in the school day for in-service education, the use of incentives may be used to induce teachers to participate in their own time.

2.11 Incentives for participation in in-service education

A recurring theme in the literature relates to the appropriateness and adequacy of incentives for participation in in-service courses. Yarger, Howey and Joyce (1980: 14) suggest that it appears that most teachers participate in professional development out of a desire to become better teachers. Extrinsic rewards such as salary advancement are generally perceived by teachers as less motivating than are intrinsic rewards associated with learning something of value for their teaching (Swenson, 1981: 5). In fact, Joyce and Showers argue that 'incentives are not good substitutes for the embedding of staff development support within the context of the workplace' (1988: 2). They assert that the study of academic content, teaching and school improvement should be an inescapable part of the job, and that the organisation

should arrange and fund a system whereby formal learning is an essential component of the job of teaching.

This is not to suggest, however, that teachers are unconcerned about extrinsic rewards. In fact, an item commonly included in teachers' collective bargaining agreements is a system of extrinsic rewards for participation in staff development activity (Jones, 1987: 217). As early as 1978, the OECD reported that there was some consensus among researchers that the major incentive for teachers to attend in-service education was 'release time' (1978: 22). Other incentives that are proposed in the literature are salary enhancement, promotion opportunities and accreditation. Blackmore (1991: 196) argues that there needs to be accreditation for courses attended and experience gained, and 'there must be a way of promoting coherence in what might otherwise be scattered learning experiences that add up in terms of accreditation to nothing.' I would agree that some system of monitoring and accreditation of a teacher's professional development activity would seem to be a logical and worthwhile activity, both in terms of individual motivation and in terms of system effectiveness. However, I also agree with Joyce and Showers (1988: 2) that participation in a certain quota of CPD should be a core part of the teacher's professional duty, and should not be viewed merely as an add-on elective activity.

2.12 Summary and Conclusion

Given the examination of the literature in the preceding sections, it is evident that there is a lively interest in professional development in the educational community. It is now widely recognised that initial teacher training is an insufficient basis for career long development, and is in fact 'only the beginning of learning to be a teacher' (Dean, 1991: 18). The multiple usage of terms reflects the 'complex character of teacher development' (OECD, 1998: 18), and therefore in this chapter I have proposed some working definitions of CPD, staff development and in-service education.

There seems to be general consensus emerging among researchers on the characteristics of effective in-service education, and based on the extensive literature review I conducted, it seems reasonable to make the following assertions:

- Both quantity and quality of time are essential for effective delivery of in-service education. Frequently this time is not built into the school year. Where teachers are required to participate in in-service courses on a voluntary basis, it may be necessary to consider the provision of incentives to encourage participation

- Those who design and deliver in-service education must consider features of andragogy, or the study of how adults learn, and therefore courses must contain elements of experiential learning, classroom relevant activities, and opportunities for social interaction. Presenters must be aware that participants require feedback on their performance, but they must also be aware that learning a new skill may produce anxiety in adult participants

- In-service courses are more likely to result in transfer to the classroom if they contain certain components, which Joyce and Showers (1988 & 1995) identify as presentation of theory, demonstration, opportunity to practise the skill, feedback about performance, and on-going support when implementing the new content in the classroom

- The research resonates with evidence that in-service education that does not provide follow up and/or ongoing support cannot be expected to be a constructive agent of change. Such follow-up support may be facilitated by the provision of an adequately resourced advisory service

The main tension I detected in the literature review was the debate as to whether in-service education should be school based, or should be provided in the form of a broad range of external courses, where individual teachers are free to choose which to attend. Some critics argue that a high proportion of teacher development in the past had little impact on teaching and learning in practice because it was too far removed from the teacher's normal environment. To counteract this, on-site professional development is advocated, where colleagues can learn and decide how to improve their own situation rather than learning principles in the abstract. School based in-service education does indeed have positive features. The chief of these is that it enables development to 'be rooted in the practical and professional realities of the teachers' environment' (Kirk, 1992: 141). However, as I have argued, individual teachers have individual needs, and there is also a need for external courses to be

offered, where teachers can pursue individual interests and development needs. The ideal situation must be that both models of in-service education are provided and developed, so that individual and system needs are addressed and supported.

In various countries, policy makers are nowadays utilising various strategies to provide an effective system of professional development for their teaching professions, with a view to ultimately improving teaching and learning in the classroom. The next chapter specifically considers the in-service education currently provided in Ireland.

Chapter Three: Continuing Professional Development in Ireland: A Review

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I investigate the in-service education currently provided for primary school teachers in Ireland. I outline how the provision of continuing professional development (CDP) has evolved and developed in recent decades, and I consider in detail the various modes of delivery. Finally, some strengths and weaknesses associated with the current system are identified, and suggestions are given on how these might be addressed.

3.2 The context

In Ireland, the education system is centrally administered, and the provision and control of professional education is the responsibility of the government's Department of Education and Science (DES). In the past, Irish in-service provision was criticised for its lack of cohesive policy and organisational body in all major policy papers (e.g. Committee on In-service Education, 1984; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 1991; National Education Convention, 1994; Department of Education and Science, 1995). The criticism generally identified was that in-service education in Ireland was fragmented and provider driven, and lacking in national focus and direction.

The move towards reform in recent years probably commenced in 1980, when the Minister of Education of that time appointed a committee to identify priority areas of in-service training of teachers and to make recommendations to his department. This committee reported in 1984, and criticised the 'reality of niggardly current provision' and asserted that its aspiration was 'to bring about lifelong professional learning as a reality for each teacher' (Committee on In-service Education, 1984: 10-15). To facilitate this, the committee recommended that each teacher should be released from teaching duties to participate in in-service activities for the equivalent of up to twelve weeks every five years during his or her working life. It also recommended the

establishment of a central agency to oversee policy and practice in in-service education. (op. cit.: 52-58).

However, these recommendations remained aspirational for several years. When the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) examined education in Ireland in 1991, it acknowledged the strength achieved by the Irish system 'attained by virtue of the calibre of its teaching force' (OECD, 1991: 91). However, it pointed out that formulation of continuing teacher development policy was still at a rudimentary stage in Ireland at that time. The Examiners again advocated the concept of career long professional development for Irish teachers, and also proposed that participation on this should be mandatory rather than elective (op.cit.: 101-102).

The 1990s was a decade that heralded major change in Irish education. A National Education Convention was held in Dublin in 1993 and its report was issued in 1994. The convention secretariat argued that the case for in-service education of teachers no longer needed to be made, and that attention should instead be focused on appropriate structures and best modes of delivery. It recorded wide support for the concept of the teaching career as a 'continuum involving initial teacher education, induction processes and in-career development opportunities, available periodically throughout a teacher's career' (NEC, 1994: 85). The report also urged that in-service teacher education should take into account the personal and professional needs of the teacher, as well as those of the school system. It emphasised that there should be a harnessing of providers of in-service education so that on a regional basis teachers and schools could have reasonable access to professional development, and recommended that appropriate incentives and rewards for teacher participation should be established (op.cit.: 87-88).

The DES *White Paper on Education* (1995) continued the debate on professional development in education, when it also asserted that teachers had a personal responsibility to keep themselves abreast of new developments in their profession. It

argued that teacher education was a continuum in which 'quality initial training and well-structured induction are followed by well-devised in-career training programmes, available periodically throughout a teacher's career' (DES, 1995: 128). The *Paper* pledged a centrally coordinated strategy, and also prioritised areas for future in-career development, so as to achieve effective change in the education system. These identified areas included school management, curricular change at primary level, the introduction of primary science, special needs education, and the performing and creative arts (DES, 1995: 128-130).

To facilitate the implementation of a major programme of development and training, the Irish Government, with the assistance of the European Union, committed to an expenditure of almost IR£40 million for in-career development in education from 1994 to 1999. This represented a four-fold increase in the annual amount spent on in-service education (OECD, 1998: 79). In 1994 the In-career Development Unit (ICDU) was established to oversee provision of CPD at first and second level. This unit was advised by two committees, one at primary level and one at post-primary level, and these committees included representatives of management bodies, teachers, providers and parents. Its function was to develop and formulate a comprehensive policy on in-career education for teachers. The original investment was followed by a further commitment of funds under the National Development Plan, which runs from 2000 – 2006. In 2004, the ICDU changed its name to the Teacher Education Section (TES) to signify its new responsibility for the pre-service - as well as in-service - education of teachers.

3.3 Time for professional development in Ireland

Ireland does not have non-contact days designated for staff development such as exist in UK and elsewhere. For example, in UK, primary teachers' statutory conditions of service require that they are available for work for 195 days, of which 190 are teaching days and five are days dedicated to CPD. In Ireland, there is a shorter school year, as primary teachers are required to work a minimum of 183 days. However, as the Review Body on Primary Education (1990) pointed out, this 'minimum' has become the 'maximum' in most schools. Days for delivery of induction on curricular innovation are further taken from this allotment. The Review

Body recommended that the designated minimum number of days should be dedicated to teaching, and that a total of six extra days should be used for school related activities such as curriculum development and school planning (Review Body on Primary Education, 1990: 83). However, this proposal of an increased number of working days was unacceptable to the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), and the proposal was subsequently dropped. As of now, the vast majority of primary schools operate for 183 days only, and any school development planning and national curriculum in-service education courses further erode these teaching days.

3.4 Role of the Inspectorate

In the past, the primary inspectorate was very involved in the professional development of teachers. The Review Body on Primary Education (1990: 83) recommended that, as preparation for and involvement in in-service training for teachers made a heavy demands on inspectors' time, their part should be one of co-ordination and monitoring rather than direct provision. The OECD Report of 1991 also recommended that the inspectorate abandon their direct responsibility for organising in-service training courses, concentrating instead on improving the quality of teaching and administration of schools through monitoring and advising school staff. This has been the case in recent years. The DES nowadays usually uses teachers with specific expertise to deliver its in-service courses. These teachers may provide in-service education outside of school hours, or may be seconded from their schools for certain periods of time. The inspectors' role in CPD is nowadays one of monitoring and evaluation of in-service courses.

3.5 Training of Trainers

An INTO survey in 1993 found that teachers prefer to receive training from practising teachers with subject expertise, specially seconded for that purpose. (1993: 76). In recent years, the 'teacher-as-trainer' model has been used increasingly at primary and post-primary level. Teachers are selected for their specific skills and expertise in a curricular area, and some 'training of trainers' is provided. This model has grown in popularity since the EU injection of funds in 1994, under the Human Resources Operational Programme. Most of the in-service education offered nowadays is facilitated by teacher-trainers.

3.6 Role of the Education Centres

There are currently 30 Education Centres in Ireland, 21 of which have full time directors, all seconded from the teaching profession. A further nine smaller centres have a part time director, who teaches full time, but who also directs the activities of the centre outside of school hours in return for an annual honorarium and six weeks paid substitution (Centre for Management and Organisational Development (CMOD), 2002: 6). Over the years, the Education Centres have become more involved in in-service education. These centres are run by and for teachers, are local and very cost effective (Review Body 1990: 26). In 1995, the Government changed their name from 'Teacher's Centres' to 'Education Centres' to signify a more widely embracing role, and pledged a major investment and expansion programme for these centres, to enable them to provide a focus for development programmes for teachers, parents and boards of management (DES, 1995: 132). The Education Centres are involved in delivery of local in-service education programmes, and are also responsible for the administration of national in-service programmes at local level.

3.7 Role of other organisations

Other organisations occasionally offer courses targeted at primary school teachers, and these organisations may also be eligible for financial assistance from the TES for their courses. These organisations include both private and non-profit making organisations such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Gaelic Athletic Association, and the Kodaly Society. Similarly, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) assisted by funds from the TES also organises courses, on a regional basis, which are delivered by teachers who are selected and trained by the INTO.

3.8 Format of in-service courses in the Republic of Ireland

In-service education in Ireland currently falls into four main categories:

- Postgraduate study
- Summer courses
- Out of school term time courses
- Centrally administered induction on introduction of curricular change

Post graduate study, summer courses, and out of school term time courses are all voluntary courses, while the centrally administered induction on the introduction of curricular change is mandatory.

3.8.1 Postgraduate study

Postgraduate opportunities in the form of study for higher degrees and diplomas are provided by the universities and colleges of education. In Ireland, the universities are concentrated in the cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick. The universities do not offer the pre-service training of primary school teachers. However, they do offer opportunities for postgraduate degrees and diplomas for primary school teachers as well as for second level teachers, for example, through the Master's Degree in Education, and the Higher Diploma in Educational Administration. These are long-term courses, taking at least one or two years, and incurring significant course fees that are usually paid by the participants themselves. Such postgraduate courses may be taken full time or part time, and teachers may be released from school for the university semester, on full pay, on condition that they fund a replacement teacher themselves. Postgraduate study demands sustained dedication, and a heavy financial commitment on the part of the teacher. Participation on university courses is also, because of geographic location, confined to those teachers living in or near the relevant cities. However, successful completion of certain postgraduate degrees attracts extra remuneration for the graduates.

There are five Colleges of Education in the Republic of Ireland, which offer the B.Ed degree, the professional qualification necessary for primary school teaching. The colleges are concentrated in two cities, Limerick and Dublin (Dublin has four Colleges of Education – the Catholic St. Patrick's College, the Church of Ireland College in Rathmines, Froebel College, and Marino College, which offers the B.Ed degree through the medium of Irish). The Colleges of Education offer a range of professional development opportunities as well as postgraduate degrees in education for the teaching profession, both long term and short term. However, geographic location again limits their relevance for the general teaching population. The financial commitment may also make such professional development inaccessible for many teachers.

Some English universities provide opportunity for postgraduate study to Irish teachers. For example, the University of Leeds and the University of Hull both facilitate M.Ed programmes in Cork. However, these outreach centres also tend to be confined to the major cities. The Open University courses are also accessed by a number of Irish teachers.

3.8.2 Summer Courses

Summer courses have been a very popular mode of in-service activity for Irish primary teachers, since they were first offered in 1909. An OECD Report in 1998 pointed out that almost 60% of the country's 20,000 primary teachers participate annually in summer courses (1998: 50). These are traditionally offered during the first and second weeks of July, and the last week in August. The courses at the beginning of July are generally far more popular with teachers. Attendance on an approved five-day course entitles the teacher to three days of Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days, days that may be taken at the teacher's discretion, subject to the approval of the Board of Management. The EPV days to some extent may explain their popularity, although studies show that many teachers do not in fact use the EPV days to which they are entitled (INTO, 1993; Sugrue and Uí Thuama, 1997). The EPV days also cause problems for the school management, as substitute cover is not provided, so the pupils have to be accommodated by the rest of the staff. An INTO report (1993: 62) asserted that the fact that so many teachers do not actually take their EPV days highlights the teachers commitment to in-service education and the popularity of this mode of provision. This report also noted that in the majority of cases the expenses incurred through attendance at these courses are met by the teachers themselves, and went on to argue that if the issues of substituted cover and the reimbursement of expenses were to be addressed, a significant increase in the number of teachers attending these courses could be attained.

In theory, almost anyone can offer a summer course for teachers, though there are strict criteria for official approval. Most summer courses tend to be offered by the Education Centres, while some are organised by the INTO and other interest organisations as described in section 3.7. Participants attending the summer courses

pay a fee, though the TES provides a budget to the Education Centres to assist in the provision of local summer courses. Application for sanction must be made to the appropriate section of the TES several months before hand, and a detailed description of the course and its aims and objectives, as well as details of the course presenters must be provided. In the past, it was claimed that many such courses were not pertinent to the primary school curriculum, or the professional development of teachers, when courses in such activities such as 'Yoga' and 'Keep Fit' were offered. However, in recent years, progress has been made in this area, and courses now have to fulfill certain criteria, which are published annually by the TES.

3.8.3 Term time courses

In Ireland, elective term time in-service courses are provided for teachers by the Education Centres, and occasionally by other interest organisations. These may take place at night or at weekends. The subject areas vary from centre to centre, and are generally dependent on the expertise available locally. The trend is towards single presentation, or a short series. Participants pay a fee, which is usually subsidised by the TES, and attend in their own time. There is no particular incentive to attend, other than personal and professional development.

However, in a recent attempt to encourage participation in a national programme entitled 'Walk Tall', the DES awarded participants on term time courses a total of two EPV days. 'Walk Tall' is a programme designed to promote substance misuse prevention, and in term time is presented in the format of nine sessions. It was the first time in Irish education that EPV was granted for participation on a term time course. This course was also fully funded by the DES. Also, because of the recent DES initiative to promote the use of information technology in schools, a wide range of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) courses are currently offered, both in the format of summer courses and term time courses. These are facilitated by the Education Centres, but are administered and funded by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE), are heavily subsidised, and are usually cost free to teachers.

3.8.4 Centrally administered induction on the introduction of curricular change

In the past, the dissemination of curriculum changes was the specific responsibility of the DES inspectorate. Nowadays, it is the responsibility of the TES, which appoints and trains teachers to facilitate training seminars for their colleagues. As the curricular change proposed by these courses is mandatory, attendance is obligatory. However, pupils are given extra holiday(s) to facilitate teacher attendance during the scheduled school day. These extra 'in-service days' are very unpopular with parents' organisations, because of the loss of teaching time, and the disruption to family routines. The Government, too, asserts that the delivery of in-service training during normal school time is 'a cause of disruption in schools and affects the quality of teaching service delivered to students' (Gov. of Ireland, 2003: 116), and it is now committed to maintaining the integrity of the school year. As part of the current national pay agreement *Sustaining Progress: Social Partnership Agreement 2003 – 2005* the DES, school management and the teacher unions have agreed to address this issue, and talks are soon to commence, with a view 'to agreeing new arrangements for delivery of in-service training, which will lessen the impact of in-service training on the operation of school' (op.cit.: 116).

3.9 Discussion of the CPD currently provided in Ireland

3.9.1 Commitment to CPD

In this chapter I have outlined the CPD currently provided for primary teachers in Ireland, where policy documents increasingly reflect the emerging emphasis on the 'teaching continuum' (Sugrue, 2002: 19). In-service education is no longer seen as a luxury in Irish education, or regarded simply as an opportunity to pursue a hobby during a summer course (OECD, 1998: 90). Nowadays, it is perceived as essential for professional and school development. All of the education partners are committed to the concept of life-long professional development of teachers.

However, the current situation in Ireland, as elsewhere, is far from ideal. In this section, I will identify some weaknesses in the current system, and suggest how these could be addressed.

3.9.2 Lack of Dedicated Time for CPD

A very real weakness in the Irish system is the lack of dedicated time for CPD. In his research, Sugrue (2002) found that the vast majority of teachers in Ireland favour the provision of professional development opportunities during school time. Sugrue asserts that teachers may be expressing a long established trade union position when they assert that CPD should occur during school hours. He goes on to argue that in an international context where the influence of teacher unions on policy and practice has been significantly eroded, 'others may look enviously on the fact that Irish teachers have not had their conditions of employment altered structurally.'(Sugrue, 2002: 335). However, as there is almost no time during school hours for ongoing professional learning, then the issue of time as a concern needs to be addressed as a major structural issue that currently is inhibiting both professional learning and school reform (op. cit.: 335).

Mandatory in-service education, for example, that which accompanies curriculum revision, is facilitated to date by allocating extra holiday(s) to pupils, to allow teachers to attend. Since the introduction of a revised curriculum in 1999, schools have allocated up to six teaching days annually to in-service education. (This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Nine). However, as part of the national pay agreement of 2003, teachers are committed to on-going modernisation, managing and responding to the challenges of change in the workplace, and to facilitating and improving quality and flexibility in the delivery of services (Gov. of Ireland, 2003: 117). The government has targeted certain issues as part of this process, namely, the timing of parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings and in-service education, so a review of the current situation is currently underway.

3.9.3 Timing of the Summer Courses

The summer course is a popular mode of delivery of elective CPD in Ireland. Undoubtedly, the summer is an ideal opportunity for teachers to participate in in-service courses. As they do not have teaching duties, they have the opportunity to immerse themselves in a particular curricular area. Because the courses are generally of twenty hours duration spread out over five days, participants have time to assimilate the new material and practice the new skills. The interaction and social

contact with colleagues from a variety of schools enhances the professional development opportunity for participants, a factor which is advocated by the literature on the professional development of adults.

However, there are certain weaknesses associated with this model. It could be argued that, because such courses are provided during holiday time, most usually at the end of the school year, the participants are generally exhausted and do not wish to be challenged. Teachers are unable to try out new approaches and methodologies in class, and critics contend that any impact these courses may have had has dissipated before teachers return to their classrooms two months later (Sugrue and Uí Thuama, 1997: 61).

Courses offered during the last week of August generally prove significantly less popular with teachers. In a small-scale survey I carried out on the participants in a summer course in July 2003, on behalf of the local education centre, 70 % of the respondents stated that in their opinions, a summer course in the last week of August would probably be more beneficial for their teaching practice. However, 90% stated that they preferred a summer course in the first week of July for personal reasons. As one respondent wrote: *'I prefer to get my course out of the way early so I can enjoy the rest of the holidays.'* (McAuliffe, 2003: 4).

In my opinion, summer courses offered at the end of the summer holiday are far more advantageous to the individual's professional development. Teachers have an opportunity to try out the new methodologies and content in the weeks immediately following the courses, thereby embedding these in their teaching repertoire. It may be feasible to vary the incentives offered for courses held at the start of the summer and the end of the summer. The DES should investigate such options, even though this action may not be popular with the teachers' union.

Writing of the situation in UK, Billingham (1999) advocated the expansion of summer courses as a mode of delivery of CPD. He criticised the amount of annual teaching time lost in the UK due to in-service education, and proposed that teachers undertaking professional development during their summer holiday should be paid a

daily rate equivalent to that paid to a supply teacher. This is a suggestion that could be seriously considered by the DES in Ireland. While it would be an expensive innovation, it would minimise disruption to teaching time. It would also be at least as cost effective as providing substitute cover for teachers for EPV days, and more beneficial to the teaching and learning of pupils.

3.9.4 Evening and Weekend Term Time Courses

Elective term time courses in Ireland are generally held in the evenings and at weekends. Ruddock (1981: 24) points to some problems inherent in term time evening courses, such as the problem of 'end of day fatigue', the amount of teacher time spent travelling to and from the venue, the problem of occasional unavoidable absenteeism, the amount of weekly time lost in 'getting into focus', as well as the problem of 'just getting going' on the intense exploration of an issue and finding that it is time to end the session.

However, Ruddock also lists potential advantages of such courses, which might be beneficial enough to offset the advantages identified. These include:

- The weekly meeting allows teachers to reflect on what has been explored, and perhaps to try it out in the classroom
- The weekly meeting allows the course leader to make modifications to the course in response to the needs and interests of the group
- There are no problems of release time for schools
  (op.cit.,1981: 24).

Undoubtedly, the advantages as outlined above outweigh the disadvantages. A major issue of concern in Ireland is that there is no particular incentive to encourage teachers to undertake term time courses in their own time, such as the EPV days offered for summer courses. In the recent past, when an exception was made and two EPV days were given for attendance on 'Walk Tall', certain resentment was generated among participants on courses in other subject areas. Such a concession may also have fostered an impression that certain courses were more favoured by the DES than others. Rather than bow to pressure on a case-by-case basis, the DES should consider the issue of incentives for term time courses, and if it decides that

incentives are merited, it should ensure that these are offered across the board for all worthwhile professional development activities. Incentives other than EPV leave should be considered. If EPV leave is to be offered for participation in term time courses undertaken in teachers' own time, then efforts must be made to minimise the disruption caused to the teacher's class in his/her absence.

3.9.5 Certification of Courses

The INTO has suggested on numerous occasions that consideration should be given to the certification of in-service courses, and proposed the possibility of accruing credits for attendance at an agreed number and variety of courses for the purpose of reward in the form of a qualification allowance (1993: 62). While the literature review revealed that extrinsic rewards will not encourage teachers to increase their commitment to professional development if motivation is not already present, nevertheless, certain incentives do currently exist in Ireland, and the time may be opportune to examine the situation in detail. Some system of national certification of courses might prove an acceptable replacement for EPV days. Of course, the certification would have to prove beneficial to the teacher in some way, for example, by contributing to the teacher's Curriculum Vitae for promotional purposes.

3.9.6 Release time for trainers

Most of the CPD currently provided in Ireland is nowadays facilitated by teachers with special expertise in a particular area, who may also have been specially trained by the DES for this purpose. In the case of national, centrally administered programmes, which are delivered during the normal school day, the trainers are released from their schools on a year-to-year basis, to facilitate their CPD work. But in the case of professional development facilitated by the Education Centres, the trainer is expected to provide the in-service activity in his/her own time, during the holidays and at weekend and evening courses. This is quite onerous for the trainer. He/she is paid a standard rate for this extra activity, and travelling and subsistence expenses are also provided, but the in-service activity must be conducted in addition to the trainer's normal teaching duties. All preparation and follow up work for the in-service course must be done in the trainer's own time. In direct contrast, the INTO

arranges for its teacher-trainers to be released from school with full substitute cover, to plan for the summer courses it facilitates.

While teacher-trainers are generally regarded by the teaching profession as being the most credible people to deliver professional development, the issue of time allocation for all trainers needs to be addressed. Ireland does not have advisory teachers for curricular areas, which means that the local trainer may be the only person to help teachers who are facing challenges in certain areas. Many good trainers have discontinued their professional development activities, because, for various personal and family reasons, they cannot dedicate the necessary time to CPD as well as to a full time teaching career.

3.9.7 Lack of follow-up support as an integral component of CPD

In Chapter Two, I reviewed the essential components of effective in-service courses as outlined by Joyce and Showers (1988 & 1995). To recapitulate, these were: the presentation of theory through discussion, reading or lecture; the demonstration or modelling of a skill, either by live demonstration or film; the practice of the skill in simulated settings; feedback about performance; and ongoing support in the form of coaching. I also argued that it is now widely recognised in the literature that the provision of follow up support is vital for effective CPD. The integration of new skills into existing practice involves a highly complex process of learning. Mastery of new skills is rarely sufficient for implementation in classroom practice (Joyce and Showers, 1988: 73). On-going and follow up support in the form of on-site coaching and support is vital to complete the in-service experience. It is imperative that this should be provided as an actual component of the in-service programme, and not as an optional add-on. Without such a component, the literature review has revealed, transfer to the classroom is less likely to occur.

However, such ongoing support as a component of in-service courses is not generally available in the Irish context. In recent years, trainers have been appointed on a temporary basis at primary level to support the 1999 curriculum subjects which have already been introduced to the schools, namely Irish, English, Mathematics, Science, Visual Arts and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). These trainers are

known as *'Cuiditheoirí'*, which is the Irish word for 'Helpers'. Individual schools may request their services through the local Education Centre. Their appointment has been greatly welcomed by schools, and was originally hoped that this service would be expanded to all curricular areas, and made a permanent service, and not just a temporary service at a time of curricular innovation. However, recent financial constraints have resulted in cutbacks in this area, and currently there is no commitment to the retention or expansion of this service.

3.10 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the continuing professional development that is currently offered to the teaching profession in Ireland, and discussed the various models of CPD delivery that are currently utilised. I also identified some issues that need consideration at policy level, which are:

- The lack of dedicated time for CPD in Ireland
- The timing of the summer courses
- The lack of incentives for participation in term time courses
- Certification of CPD
- Release time for trainers
- Lack of follow-up support as an integral component of CPD

A recurring theme in the literature is that both quantity and quality of time are essential for the provision of an effective CPD service. The issue of time for in-service education in Ireland needs serious consideration. The DES should aim to ensure that sufficient time for participation in continuing professional development is embedded in the academic year.

Summer courses are generally a popular in-service education activity in Ireland. However, to ensure transfer of the new knowledge and skills to the classroom, it may be necessary to ensure they are held at the end, rather than at the beginning of the summer. While term time courses may have more immediate impact on classroom practice, the fact that incentives are not generally provided may cause some teachers to opt for summer in-service courses rather than term time courses. The ideal situation must be the on-going provision and expansions of both modes of delivery,

therefore it may be necessary to review the situation regarding incentives so that both summer courses and term-time courses are equally attractive to the teaching profession.

The certification of all in-service courses is an issue that has been proposed by the INTO (1993). Obviously, this certification should be meaningful, in that it should help to further the teacher's career or earning capacity. Such an option may prove more attractive and cost effective than EPV leave, and less disruptive to the teaching of pupils. It could potentially be extended to all courses, both summer courses and term-time courses, and is therefore worthy of further investigation.

The lack of follow up support as an integral component of CPD cannot be provided while trainers are also working as full time teachers. It is therefore time to consider the establishment of an advisory service in Ireland, such as exists in other countries. Now that a central agency in the form of the TES is in place, the provision of subject advisors at local level would seem to be a feasible option, which again is worthy of serious consideration. The capacity is already there, both in terms of personnel, in the form of the trainers, and in terms of local venues, in the form of the Education Centre Network.

The voluntary commitment of Irish teachers to professional development is very high (OECD, 1998: 90). The challenge is to build on this commitment and co-ordinate resources to further both individual and system needs. It may be necessary, also, for Irish teachers to 'sacrifice significant amounts of their 'legendary autonomy' if schools as well as individuals are to become learning organisations' (Sugrue and Uí Thuama, 1997: 68). In my opinion, the teaching profession needs to actively participate in the debate regarding CPD, and embrace the changes that are deemed necessary to improve the current situation.

Chapter Four: In-service Education in Music: Specific Issues

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, I proposed working definitions for the terms 'in-service education' and 'staff development', and argued that these activities are part of a teacher's career long continuing professional development. In this chapter, I focus specifically on issues relating to in-service education in music. There has long been concern about the confidence and performance of many generalist teachers when teaching music in the primary school (Beauchamp 1997a: 69). I will attempt to identify some of the reasons why this is so. Next I will consider some theories of knowledge and learning in music, with a view to indicating how these may be incorporated into the design of music in-service education. Finally, I will identify some of the key components of effective continuing professional development (CPD) as discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two, which would seem to be pertinent in the design and delivery of an effective music in-service education.

4.2 Who teaches music in primary schools in Ireland?

In Ireland, as in many other countries, the generalist primary teacher is expected to teach the full curriculum range to his/her class. In some countries, specialist teachers are employed to teach the subject areas where teachers have little prior experience, such as music and physical education. Specialist teachers, however, do not exist at primary level in Ireland. There are arguments for and against providing such specialist teachers, and a full discussion of this area is outside the remit of this study. However, it will help to consider some of the key issues in this debate.

Many critics argue that an effective music education will never be provided at primary level, unless teachers who are properly trained in music pedagogy are appointed. Plummeridge (1991: 70-72) argues that all music teaching calls for subtle and refined musical judgement and, if music is to be a truly meaningful and dynamic part of children's education, then the foundations must be firmly laid in the early

years of schooling by suitably qualified teachers. In Ireland, too, the demand for the appointment of specialist music teachers has been made on repeated occasions (e.g. Groocock, 1961; Fleischmann, 1971; Review Body on the Primary Curriculum, 1990; INTO, 1985; Joint Committee on Education and Science, 2000). Such commentators argue that an educational system that continues to allow inadequate provision in music is depriving the pupils of what is their basic entitlement.

On the other hand, much has been written, especially in the UK, to support the teaching of music by the generalist primary teacher. These writers who oppose the use of specialist teachers at primary level argue that music is for 'all teachers and all children' (Mills, 1995: 2). Music, they argue, is an integral part of the pupil's intellectual, cultural, emotional and spiritual development, and therefore 'should not be treated in isolation from the rest of the curriculum, nor should it be the sole province of the music specialist' (Durrant and Welch, 1995: 3). Just as a teacher can develop children's written language without being a professional novelist, it is perfectly possible to engage children in music without being a professional musician. The advocates of the generalist responsibility for music claim that all class teachers, given appropriate preparation and support, are capable of teaching music. In fact, if music teaching is restricted to one or two staff, argue Glover and Ward (1993: 9) pupils may draw the conclusions that only certain people can teach music. Such assumptions are carried into adult life, the writers contend, and therefore perpetuate the notion that music is the preserve of certain individuals only.

Currently, the official Department of Education and Science (DES) viewpoint in Ireland is that the generalist primary teacher can, and does, teach music. However, the reality is rather different. As the Arts Council reported in 1985: '...the overall situation is little short of appalling' (Arts Council, 1985: vi). The fact that many teachers abdicate responsibility for this curricular area is officially overlooked. The Arts Council report goes on the assert that 'Inspectors seldom go beyond listening to a song nor do teachers generally wish them to' (op.cit.: 7). In the next section, I will attempt to identify some of the reasons for this blatant difference between policy and practice.

4.3 Issues contributing to the low status of music in the curriculum

4.3.1 Low status accorded to the arts in education generally

The Irish primary curriculum asserts that the arts are central to the curriculum as 'Arts education is integral to primary education in helping to promote thinking, imagination and sensitivity, and arts activities can be a focus for social and cultural development and enjoyment in school' (DES, Primary School Curriculum: Music, 1999: 2). However, in reality, the arts subjects – music, visual arts and drama - often have a low status in education, with fewer resources and less time allocated than other subject areas (Sharp, 1990: 68). This is just as true in Ireland as in other countries. Many parents, teachers, principals and inspectors believe that the arts subjects are not as important as other curricular areas such as Irish, science or information and communication technology (ICT), which are generally perceived as being essential for pupils' future employment prospects. The arts are seen principally as an optional addition rather than central to an academic curriculum. In such a climate, it is not surprising that many primary teachers do not feel that they need to provide meaningful arts experiences for their classes, or that principals in some schools give a low priority to opportunities for professional development in the arts generally. There is, therefore, little incentive for teachers to gain confidence in teaching the arts in school.

As long ago as 1979, the Arts Council asserted that 'The arts have been neglected in Irish education' (1979: 7). The Council went on to advise that 'Educationalists and policy makers must be urgently persuaded that the arts have a serious and unique contribution to make to education' (op. cit.: 23). However, such a campaign to convince the policy makers and the education community in general did not materialise. In 1985, a report issued by the Curriculum and Examinations Board declared that 'The symbol systems which dominate Irish education are verbal and numerical...Many other systems exist, central among which are the arts, and the neglect of such forms of meaning in the school experience of most young Irish people is educationally indefensible' (CEB, 1985: 6). This report again recommended that a promotional campaign should be introduced to familiarise educationalists with the potential of arts education for all students and that schools in

turn should encourage more positive attitudes towards arts education among parents (1985: 22). However, almost two decades later, these recommendations have not been carried out.

4.3.2 Perceptions of music

The notion of artistic talent has a strong influence on arts education (Sharp, 1990: 69). The arts, it is commonly believed, are really a province of a talented few. Because artistic talent is held to be an in-born trait and is perceived as an absolute quality, this line of reasoning provides teachers with a rationalised excuse for not providing arts education. Teachers' perceptions of their own talent may also affect their confidence in teaching the arts, as many teachers do believe that to be able to teach an arts subject, they must be personally talented in the arts. Teachers may also be unwilling to attend in-service education in the arts for fear that their own lack of talent will be shown up by the other, more talented participants on the course. (Sharp, 1990: 68).

In Ireland, music has frequently been perceived as 'a highly specialised, elitist, difficult subject, reserved for the talented minority' (McCarthy, 1997: 8). The perception of music as a 'difficult' subject was transmitted by the strong emphasis on music theory in the secondary school curriculum, which was similar to that provided in colleges of music and conservatories (op. cit.: 9). This perception is not unique to Ireland. Small (1987) described similar circumstances in Britain, where he found evidence of all kinds of creative activity, except music. 'I'm not a trained musician' was the typical answer he got from teachers when he questioned them regarding the absence of music. Small goes on to argue: 'The untrained artist has elicited from his pupils art works of all kind, the untrained writer has had them writing poems, projects, assorted writing, but the untrained musician has been convinced....that he can do nothing to help his children develop that musicality which is just as powerful as the other artistic impulses that he has so generously released in his pupils' (op.cit.: 214).

Another problem arises in relation to music aptitude, or musicality, an attribute that McCarthy argues has been viewed as dichotomous – an individual either possesses it

or does not possess it. However, the theory of multiple intelligences, as proposed by Gardner (1983, 1993), argues that music is a distinct and separate form of intelligence, rather than a mere 'talent', and that it is present in some degree in all human beings. Research findings in the last few decades indicate that music intelligence or aptitude is evenly distributed across all populations in the same way as general intelligence is. American music education psychologist Gordon (1990) has developed a theory of music aptitude in which he articulates clearly this point. 'Music aptitude' he contends, 'is the child's potential to learn music; it represents 'inner possibilities'...just as there are no children without intelligence, so there are no children without music aptitude' (Gordon, 1990: 9). This inborn musical potential, Gordon argues, needs to be nurtured in all children, the earlier the better. All children can grow through music, so music education is for all children (Mills, 1995: 1). Glover and Ward (1996: 1) argue that there is nothing exceptional about being musical, as everyone is. For various reasons some people are exceptionally musical, just as some are exceptionally mathematical or athletic. While few pupils will go on to become gifted performers or composers, few pupils also will go on to become novelists or poets. However, a broad and balanced curriculum should provide opportunities to educate the children in and through all their intelligences. The most recent Irish primary curriculum recognises that children possess many intelligences, and that therefore they should have access to an education in music, when it asserts that 'Music is an indispensable part of the child-centred curriculum as one of the range of intelligences and as a special way of knowing and learning' (Primary Curriculum: Music, Teacher Guidelines, 1999: 2). The challenge for the education system is to translate this official policy into practice in the classroom.

4.3.3 The issue of skill in music

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) notes that the arts subjects require the development of special skills (INTO, 1985: 4). Undoubtedly, there is an element of skill involved in music. In its definition of 'skill', The Little Oxford Dictionary (1998: 611) proposes 'practised ability, expertness, technique'. The assumption is that ordinary life experience does not produce the skill unless accompanied by special practice or training.

Gammon (1996: 118) proposes that while creativity should be at the centre of the music curriculum, it should be supported by the teaching of skills. There should be no going back to the 'evil days of skills as drill', he argues, but creativity and skill should reinforce each other, the development of one spurring on the development of the other. He describes these musical skills as aural skills, listening skills, performing skills and creative skills. These core skills take time to develop, and that is something that must be recognised and provided for in any music in-service education programme.

However, as Beauchamp (1997b: 205-206) points out, it is important to distinguish between the development of specific music performance skills, such as are taught by the peripatetic or private music teacher, and the 'development of the distinct skills of developing music in others in the classroom'. The former calls for a narrow concentration on specific performance oriented skills, while the latter uses many of the teaching and organising skills that a teacher already possesses, and continues to develop throughout his/her career. Logically, then, it should be possible for the teacher, given adequate preparation and support, to use these pedagogic skills that s/he already possesses to teach music to his/her class.

4.3.4 Pre-service education of the teacher

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation report suggested that many primary teachers feel ill at ease in teaching the arts because they themselves have been denied a wide experience of the arts as children (1982: 57). The poor 'musical self-esteem' of some adults (Mills 1991: 5) can be traced to their own negative experiences in their own early education. The INTO (1985: 2) contributes to this argument when it states that the three years a student spends in a college of education is but the final phase of a teacher's pre-service education. It is therefore important to examine influences already experienced by the student at first and second level education, as these will affect his/her attitude to the arts and will also impact on the proficiency attained in these areas on entry to teacher training education.

In general, the INTO (1985) argues, parents of primary school children enjoy their children's response to arts education. However, as they advance to the higher classes,

many parents see the artistic elements of the curriculum as increasingly peripheral and unimportant, fearing that artistic development is achieved at the expense of lower standards in the core subjects like English, Irish and Maths. Hence, even at this level a false hierarchy of subjects is established in which the arts subjects have an unfavourable position. This hierarchy is often confirmed by classroom practice due to the pressure on teachers of senior classes to prepare children for assessment tests taken on transfer to second-level education, as well as for the sacrament of confirmation (INTO, 1985: 2-3).

At second level, the lower status of the arts subjects is further reinforced. Pressure is even greater for emphasis on those subjects that are seen as most valuable in attaining points for entry to third level education. Few second level schools offer music as an option, and many students entering the colleges of education have no second level education in music. Hence, their knowledge of, and proficiency in this area is vastly inferior to what they achieved in the 'core' subjects, and this tends to engender in them a negative attitude to their ability in music.

To secure a place in a College of Education in Ireland, all candidates must achieve high marks in the Leaving Certificate examination, which is the examination undertaken on completion of second level education. Most students take seven subjects, which must include, for B.Ed applicants, English, Irish, and Mathematics. The remaining subjects will be taken from a complete menu of thirty one curricular areas, with the ten most popular choices in 2003 being: Maths, English, Irish, French, Business, Geography, Biology, Home Economics Social and Scientific, History and Art (Source: *Irish Independent*, August 14, 2003). The number of students who take music as an examination subject is very small. Some students may also have taken music lessons privately, but their achievement levels vary widely. Generalist primary teachers, therefore, often arrive at their professional training with low confidence in their ability to teach music (Mills, 1991: 4). They measure their musical competence by what they cannot do, she argues, for example, they can't play the piano, or read music.

During the three or four year B.Ed programme, the student has to study an elective subject to degree level; in addition to other subjects including the History of Education, Philosophy of Education and Child Psychology, as well as taking courses in all pedagogic subject areas. The amount of time that is devoted to each curricular area is quite limited. The allocation of time to the arts subjects is generally meagre. There is little chance that such courses will compensate for the lower levels of competence in the arts subjects. In the case of curriculum areas such as language and mathematics, where the student-teachers have a shared common background, the individual's personal reading and study may compensate for the limited number of contact hours. However, in the case of music, where student-teachers have very varied background experience, study on its own cannot compensate for this deficit. In addition, the student teachers need time to develop the necessary music making skills, and such time is not in ready supply during the very crowded B.Ed programme. Furthermore, because students tend to select professional and curricular elective courses that reflect their strengths on leaving second level education their choices tend to reflect a negative view of the arts subjects which further limits the efforts of the colleges of education, and ensure a cyclical process of devaluation (INTO, 1985: 4).

Temmerman (1997: 27) points out that the discussion on the adequacy of undergraduate primary teacher education courses to provide teachers who have little, if any music background, with enough music to be able to teach it, has been going on for some time. Bourne (1988: 327) commenting on the situation in Australia, suggested that 'the biggest single waste of time in tertiary teacher education courses may be found in the short units, whether compulsory or elective, offered to general primary school teacher trainees, under the name of music. Music is a highly complex activity, requiring a variety of skills and an in-depth knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy'. Stowasser (1993) reporting in trends in Australia, US and Britain, claimed that 'the panic felt by many general teachers when faced with teaching music at primary school level the world over indicated that their pre-service training has ill prepared them for the task (1993: 16).

Thus the cycle of inadequacy in music education (Young, 2001: 209) is effectively perpetuated, and it is now left to continuing professional development programmes to equip teachers to teach music. Beauchamp (1997b: 205) notes that the most common and widely advocated solution to non-specialist teachers' lack of confidence in music is that of increased availability of in-service training, and I will consider this issue later in this chapter.

4.4 The nature of musical learning

Philpott (2001: 19) argues that musical learning is a difficult and complex process. He goes on to discuss in detail the nature of musical knowledge, and he proposes three different types of music knowledge, which he bases on the earlier work of Reid (1986). These are knowledge 'about' music, knowledge of 'how' to make music, and knowledge 'of' music.

Philpott describes knowledge 'about' music as a factual type of knowledge, for example knowledge about composers, or theory, or musical concepts. The knowledge 'how' is more technical, and skills based, for example, how to play an instrument, how to discriminate between sounds, or how to read and write music. The knowledge 'of' music he describes as knowledge 'of' music by direct acquaintance, which implies the building of an understanding relationship with music, through practical engagement with the music. These three types of knowledge need to be developed simultaneously, and each impacts on and enhances the others. However, knowledge 'of' music is probably the most essential and fundamental element of all musical learning, as we can only 'make sense of knowledge 'how' and knowledge 'about' music by building meaningful relationships with it' (op.cit.: 26). Plummeridge (2001: 11) also notes that there is widespread agreement in the field of music education that music knowledge and understanding are developed not as a result of learning 'about' music, but through direct contact with music in three experiential modes: performing, composing and listening.

This theory of how learning occurs in music has to be considered in the design and delivery of any music in-service programme, and those who facilitate music in-service courses will have to ensure that they provide ample opportunities for

participants to develop these three types of knowledge as identified by Philpott (2001). The knowledge 'of' music, which can only be acquired through direct engagement with music, also has consequences for music in-service courses, because it means that participants may require even more experiential learning than would be provided in other curricular areas.

4.5 Towards effective in-service education in music

The literature review on staff development that I presented in Chapter Two has indicated that practically all teachers can learn the most complex teaching strategies provided that the development is properly designed. The training components identified by Joyce and Showers (1988 & 1995) - presentation of theory, demonstration or modelling, practice, feedback, coaching - are eminently adaptable to music in-service education, and indeed most music in-service programmes in Ireland use a mixture of these components. However, as Joyce and Showers (1988: 72) argue, if the content of training is new to trainees, training will have to be more extensive than for substance that is relatively familiar. Furthermore, because of the need to develop the necessary skills in music, it could be argued that a significant proportion of the course time should be devoted to experiential learning. Such experiential learning will also satisfy the requirements of andragogy, or the study of how adults learn, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Moreover, in a subject area where teachers are lacking in prior knowledge, skills and understanding, the essential component of follow-up support becomes even more vital if effective transfer to the classroom is to occur. As I have argued in the previous chapters, such ongoing support can only be effectively delivered in an education system which provides a subject advisory service. However, this vital component of effective music in-service education is lacking in the Irish situation, and I contend that effective professional development in music cannot be offered in Ireland until this situation is addressed. As far back as 1979, the Irish Arts Council recommended the establishment of a network of arts subject advisors with adequate support to enhance the teaching of the arts. It envisaged that 'The specialist subject advisor would be a highly trained teacher who would have special responsibility for developing his subject in a certain number of schools' (1979: 35). In 1985, the

Curriculum and Examinations Board echoed this recommendation (CEB, 1985: 22). However, such an advisory service has not to date been provided, and no other facility has been put in place to facilitate in-class coaching as an essential component of music in-service education.

4. 6 Summary and Conclusion

Irish policy papers have consistently asserted the centrality of the arts in education (e.g. Review Body on Primary Education, 1990; National Education Convention, 1994: Department of Education, 1995). However, I argued that this policy is not evident in practice in the classroom, and in this chapter, I outlined some of the key reasons for teachers' general lack of confidence on teaching music, namely, the low status of the arts in education generally, the general perceptions regarding musicality, the misconceptions regarding the skills necessary to teach music, and teachers' uneven pre-service experience in music.

If the current situation in music education is to improve, the official policy relating to the place of music in the curriculum must be actually translated into practice in the classroom. Schools and teachers must be able to demonstrate that each primary pupil is obtaining a basic music education. Should the teacher not feel competent to deliver this, there must be no possibility of opting out – it should be incumbent on the school/teacher to make arrangements to ensure that the class is not disadvantaged. Teachers lacking in basic confidence and/or competence should be encouraged and facilitated to participate in in-service education. These teachers need to be helped to realise that they do know some music and have some musical skills which, 'if used in conjunction with their general teaching skills, can be sufficient to enable children to learn' (Glover and Ward, 1993: 26). Teachers already possess strengths in other areas of the curriculum which they can adapt for use in teaching music (Beauchamp, 1997b: 215). Music teaching is not about teachers performing for children: it is about facilitating children's learning. The aim must be to help primary teachers with low self-esteem to recognise their strengths and set realistic targets for their improvement (Mills, 1991: 2).

As Heneghan (1996: 45) argues, the training of teachers is strategically the most critical fact in music education. However, while much may be hoped of in-service education in compensating for the deficit in teachers' pre-service experience in music, one of the biggest challenges facing the system is to get teachers to attend, especially those teachers who are most lacking in 'musical self-esteem'. In Ireland, participation in in-service education is voluntary, except at times of significant curriculum change. Thus, it is conceivable that a graduate teacher leaves the College of Education lacking in music pedagogy skills, and never again participates in a music course of any sort. Yet, in a system lacking advisory teachers, specialist teachers, and curriculum co-ordinators, this teacher will be in charge of music for his/her pupils for the duration of his/her teaching career. Encouraging teachers to participate in professional development in a curricular area where they are lacking confidence is not easy. The Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), as outlined in Chapter Three, proposes the possibility of accruing credits for attendance at an agreed number and variety of courses for the purpose of reward in the form of a qualification allowance (1993: 62). This would seem a useful proposition, in that the concept of a variety of courses is inherent in the suggestion, and such an arrangement could help to motivate teachers to attend in-service courses in all curricular areas, including music.

In Part Three of this study, I present a description of the research and subsequent evaluation that I carried out to determine what features, if any, would encourage teachers to attend music in-service education. Before addressing that issue, however, I will examine the music in-service education that has been provided in Ireland from 1900 to 2004, with a view to determining what the strengths and weaknesses were, and to discover why the teaching profession is not generally competent or confident in the teaching of music in primary schools, despite a century of music in-service education.

Part Two:
The Historical Dimension

Chapter Five: Historical Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, I outlined the main aims of this study, which are to investigate what can be learned from the study of historical and contemporary aspects of primary music in-service education in Ireland, and to suggest how this knowledge might be used to inform future policy and practice. The first of the specific objectives of the project is to investigate the history of music in-service education in Ireland since music first became a compulsory subject in the curriculum in 1900. To realise this objective, I used standard methods of empirical historical enquiry to research the past provision of music in-service education.

In this chapter, I describe in detail the research methodology employed in the historical research. Swanwick argues that one of the key conditions that characterise research is that a 'methodology is articulated which promotes a certain level of objectivity. This involves a certain standing back and viewing our procedures from a critical position' (1996: 254). Such a process also ensures that replication of the study to re-examine the findings may be possible at any point in the future, thus contributing to the credibility and reliability of the research.

I outline how the data derived from the historical research were considered and analysed. As is common in research of this nature, an enormous wealth of material was compiled and studied. However, the historical researcher must consider 'the size and cost of the final document, the time at his/her disposal, the relevance of the data to his main point, the style of exposition, and the psychological effect on his readers ' (Brickman 1982: 179), and therefore it is usually necessary to limit substantially the final report. Some of the data, which I did not use in its entirety in this study, was used to prepare some papers for dissemination to a wider audience (Ryng, 2002a, Ryng, 2002b & McAuliffe Ryng, 2004).

5.2 Historical Research in Education: A Rationale

Historical research has been defined as 'the systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning past events' (Borg, 1963: 188). So, to one extent, the past is researched in an effort to 'compile and furnish an accurate record of past events intended purely for present enlightenment' (Rainbow, 1992: 29 – 30). As Anderson and Arsenault (1998) point out, in such work the historian seeks to describe what happened: 'There need not be elaborate hypotheses or startling new issues; the motivation is to describe something that has not been fully described before' (1998: 94-95). Gammon, too, argues that historical research is worth undertaking 'for the deeply unfashionable and almost certainly unfundable reason that it is interesting and makes a contribution to human understanding' (2001: 100). He goes on to assert that 'If you do not investigate your own history, then there is a tendency to invent it, worse still, other people may invent it for you' (op. cit.: 100). This is a sentiment with which I wholeheartedly agree; therefore a central objective of this study is to compile and furnish an accurate account of primary music in-service education in Ireland since 1900.

Postmodern writers, however, argue that we can never accurately describe the past. Jenkins (1991: 6) argues that 'history is a discourse about, but categorically different from, the past'. The past has occurred, argues Jenkins. It has gone, and can only be brought back by historians in different media, for example in books and papers, not as actual events. No matter how meticulously constructed, such history remains inevitably a 'personal construct', in that it is viewed 'through an interpreter who stands between past events and our readings of them' (op. cit.: 12). Such historians are influenced by their personalities, by their understanding and use of language, by their values, their positions and their ideological perspectives, and by the pressures involved in writing up the products of their work. As Burns (2000: 488) argues, all researchers bring their own perspectives and 'personal baggage' to the problem. Thus the historian can create a storyline, which, while shaped by the data, 'could be massaged into a different history by another historian' (op. cit.: 489). Similarly, the products are read by individuals, in many different settings and in many different

ways, and therefore no two readings are the same. (Jenkins, 1991: 21 – 24). History is 'what historians make, but they make it on slender evidence. It is inescapably interpretive, and there are at least half a dozen sides to every argument, so that history is relative' (op. cit.: 25). Rayner (1993) cited in Southgate (1996: 108) wrote that history is 'reporting on what they [historians] believe happened in the past interpreted in the light of their own prejudices and opinions'. Such a philosophy should be seriously considered by those engaged in historical enquiry. As Southgate (1996) argues, there are important implications in postmodern thought for the role of historical study in education. While the traditional model of the subject may seem to favour an intellectual acceptance of existing structures, 'a postmodern approach should provoke questions about those structures' very foundations' (1996: 8). However, we must be careful that scepticism towards historical knowledge does not lead to cynicism and negativity. What is more important is what Jenkins describes as 'a positive reflexive scepticism' (1991: 57). I would concur that historical research can never record what happened in the past in its entirety, nor can we hope to empathise fully with the people of the past, as we have not lived their lives or shared their experiences. However, as long as integrity of methodology and reporting as well as reflexivity are maintained, historical investigation can do much to enlighten us regarding past events and processes, even if we cannot grasp past worlds in their totality and complexity.

Educational historians usually argue that they research the past, not merely to provide an account of what happened, but also in an attempt to understand, and perhaps influence, the present and the future. Therefore, the definition as proposed by Burns (2000: 481), where he described historical research in education as 'past oriented research which seeks to illuminate a question of current interest by an intensive study of material which already exists' is a definition which reflects my philosophy. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 158-159) assert, the particular value of historical research in education is that it can yield insights into some educational problems that could not be achieved otherwise. Furthermore, they argue, such historical study can do much to help us understand how our present educational system has come about, and this kind of understanding can in turn help to establish a sound basis for further progress or change (op. cit.: 159). This is a common theme in

the literature (see, for example, Best, 1959; Hill and Kerber, 1967; Brickman, 1982; Rainbow, 1992; Cox, Plummeridge and Turner, 1997; Anderson and Arsenault, 1998; Burns, 2000; Pitts, 2002).

I agree with the viewpoint of Pitts (2002: 3) who argues that the current debates and challenges of music education make the historical study of previous development a relevant undertaking, as much of the contemporary curriculum is rooted in the ideals of past generations. It would be naive to assume that such knowledge will help us to avoid all future pitfalls. Indeed, sometimes, all it may do is help us to understand that certain problems are perennial, or have 'been around a long time' (Gammon, 2001: 94). However, I believe that an understanding of why and how these problems have occurred will in some way help us to address them, if not to totally eliminate them in the future.

5.3 Historical Research: the data sources

The sources of data in historical research is conventionally categorised into two main groups: primary sources and secondary sources. *Primary sources* are usually produced by those directly involved in or witness to a particular historical episode or issue, and have been described as 'the lifeblood of historical research' (Cohen et al., 2000: 161). Phelps (1980: 124) describes these quite simply as 'firsthand information'. The main examples are various kinds of documentary records and artefacts. Documents include 'a wide range of written and printed materials recorded for the purpose of transmitting information' (Borg, 1963: 191). Artefacts, also known as relics, include physical objects related to the period or the institution being studied, which in education might include such materials as school furniture or teaching aids. Each of these has particular uses and limitations in telling us more about the story of past educational initiatives. Primary sources therefore provide the researcher with first-hand accounts. These accounts have been produced with a particular aim and audience in view, and it is always important for the researcher to seek to comprehend those in order to evaluate the author's perspective, and therefore the potential biases and interests involved (McCulloch and Richardson, 2000: 79-80).

Secondary sources are those 'that do not bear a direct physical relationship to the event being studied' (Cohen et al., 2000: 161). While primary sources are usually generated in the period being investigated, a secondary source is constructed from primary sources and/or other secondary sources. The most common kind of secondary sources for historical research in education are published books, articles in academic journals, and unpublished academic theses. Such works examine specific historical problems or debates in education by interpreting primary and secondary sources on the topic. Some may have 'classic status', because they 'have been widely used and cited by others, and have come to be regarded as key works on particular topics' (McCulloch and Richardson 2000: 83).

While researchers stress the importance of using primary sources of data where possible, the value of secondary sources should not be minimised. Secondary sources can contribute significantly to valid and reliable historical research, and are often very useful in setting a particular era in context, and/or for guiding readers toward primary sources. Furthermore, as these are produced at some remove from the events or issues in question, they may thereby have greater detachment. However, it is important for the researcher to be aware that secondary sources, too, are often inevitably influenced by the assumptions and theories of the era and context in which they are written.

In recent years the use of **oral sources** has become an increasingly important part of some historical researchers' work. Oral history in education is usually based on interviews, with, for example, former teachers and students, and is designed to facilitate these individuals to tell the story of their own experiences, thereby contributing their personal experiences to historical data. Oral history has a very valuable contribution to make to the historical researcher. Although the traditional documentary sources are important tools for historical researchers, they do have limitations. Many do not survive, are incomplete or are not accessible to researchers, and therefore the use of interviews with individuals who were actually engaged in the particular era in question can be very illuminating. Also, as interviews, they often have 'the candour, directness and freshness absent in the carefully worked over and considered printed text' (Gammon, 2001: 96).

Furthermore, documentary sources tend to portray a top-down view of the history of education, and record in the main the views and prescriptions of the policy makers. The documents may take for granted that the actual policy was implemented in practice, which frequently is not the case. Gammon (2001: 96) argues that the 'problem with reliance on the published word is the inevitable gap that exists between ideas and activity, proposal and implementation, prescription and practice.' Oral sources are therefore a suitable tool to discover the experiences, outlooks and alternative agenda of such groups. McCarthy (2003: 131) argues that the use of oral history ensures that a better balance will be achieved between 'top down' and 'bottom up' history, and argues that 'It is important to capture the memories of our current and retired teachers through oral history, thus documenting practice for future research.' As Gardner and Cunningham (1997), as cited in McCulloch and Richardson (2000: 118) argue, 'if we can use such data carefully and creatively alongside our more familiar documentary sources, then we may be able to go beyond histories which are locked into unitary paradigms...and look for more challenging ways of rethinking the problem of structure and agency'.

5.4 Historical investigation: the process

5.4.1 Rationale for detailed consideration of the research

One of the features of good research is that each stage of the research process is outlined in detail, so that those considering the findings can evaluate how rigorous the research was, thereby confirming - or otherwise - the validity and credibility of the findings. This also applies in historical research. In this section, I aim to present my methodology for scrutiny, so that the reliability and authenticity of the research may be assessed.

Historical research, also called historical method, follows certain rules and directions, which ensure, or help to ensure, accuracy of result (Garraghan, 1946: 33). Historical method therefore, argues Garraghan, may be defined as 'a systematic body of principles and rules designed to aid effectively in gathering the source-materials of history, appraising them critically, and presenting a synthesis, generally in written

form, of the results achieved'. Borg (1963: 189) argues that the essential steps of historical research are: defining the problem, gathering the data, evaluating the data, and synthesizing the data into an accurate account of the subject investigated. These 'essential steps' effectively sum up the various steps I carried out, so I will evaluate my research process under these categories.

5.4.2   Defining the problem

As with other research methods, historical research usually begins with the selection and evaluation of a problem or area of study (Cohen et al., 2000: 159). Anderson and Arsenault (1998: 94) assert that historical research problems usually arise from personal interests. Phelps (1980: 7) advises that researchers should choose a topic for investigation ' in which they have an intense interest, one to which they may lay claim as their own.' Rainbow (1992: 21) also argues that the most fruitful areas of research arise from 'interests and enthusiasm already present and subsequently nourished in the minds of those undertaking them.' Certainly this was true in the case of this study. When I began investigating music in-service education, I found that I was intensely curious to understand how music education and in-service education had developed in Ireland. When debating the issue with colleagues who are also involved in the delivery of music in-service education, I found that they too, were curious to find out more about the past, therefore I considered that investigating this area would form a very useful part of this study.

Phelps (1980: 49) argues that the matter of delimitation is very important for successful research, yet investigators in music education frequently do not accord it enough attention. This certainly was a predicament that I was soon to face. At the beginning of my research, I wanted to investigate all that there was to be known about music in-service education in Ireland to date. As my research progressed, it became very clear that I would have to limit the scope of the study; consequently I decided to study music in-service education in Ireland from 1900, when music first became compulsory in the primary curriculum.

5.4.3 Gathering the data

The data-gathering phase of the historical part of this study involved a considerable amount of reading, both of secondary and primary sources. Rainbow (1992) argues that individuals undertaking historical research in music education will first need to undertake considerable preliminary reading. They must 'first become sufficiently aware of the education scene as a whole to form a realistic estimate of the potential place and role of music teaching within it' (op. cit.: 1992: 20). Cohen et al. (2000: 161) also point out that the review of the literature in other areas of educational research is regarded as a preparatory stage to gathering historical data, and serves to acquaint researchers with previous research on the topics under investigation. This also enables them to place their work in context, and to learn from earlier endeavours. Moreover, as Brickman (1982: 76) points out, any particular area cannot be studied in a vacuum. Each educational idea or practice has some relationship to the time during which it originated, therefore he advocates that the researcher should read some background material and make use of it in the preparation of his/her report. Thus, I commenced my historical research by reviewing the general history of primary education in Ireland since the foundation of the National School System in 1831, so that the position of music in-service education for teachers would be comprehensively set in context. The chief writers in this area are Akenson (1975), Coolahan (1981 & 1989) and Hyland (1987), writers who could be considered to have the 'classic status' as described by McCulloch and Richardson (2000: 83), as they are the key writers on the history of education in Ireland. These writers focus on the educational system in general, rather than on any specific curricular area. While their value to the understanding of the history of education in Ireland cannot be overstated, their type of enquiry differed from this piece of work. However, they were very useful in directing me to primary sources that might also prove useful for my research.

Two substantial pieces of research in music education were also identified, which complemented my research. McCarthy (1999) focuses on the transmission of music in Ireland, and documents the transmission and development of music in folk, art and educational areas. However, the in-service education of teachers was not a major issue for her, and this receives only scant attention. Kelly (1978) in his unpublished

MA thesis deals mainly with the curricular content of the national school curriculum from to 1831 to 1971. Again, however, the issue of in-service education was of lesser significance, and his research concludes in 1971. Preliminary reading of these sources, however, helped establish a general picture of the evolution of music in education. As Brickman (1982: 93) points out, reliable secondary sources are useful for providing background comprehension, provided they are based on primary sources. However, once these documents had been scrutinised, it was essential to identify and peruse the pertinent primary sources in order to attempt to address the problem comprehensively.

Preliminary investigation identified a key primary resource, the *Annual Reports of the Board of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland*, published from 1833 to 1922. These documents consist mainly of reports submitted annually by district inspectors and head inspectors to the Board of Commissioners, describing their year's work, and commenting on detail on the state of education in the schools they visited. A significant number of the reports survive in the archives of University College Cork, and any missing issues were accessed in the archives of Trinity College Dublin. Anderson and Arsenault (1998: 97) caution that the nature of historical material makes the historical researcher's work difficult. Much of it is fragile, and must be handled with extreme caution. Investigation of these reports entailed substantial input of time and travel. However, the rich data I gleaned from these primary sources compensated for the inconvenience.

Another major primary source that I identified was the publications issued by the Catholic Church. These include *Lyra Ecclesiastica, Studies*, and *Irish Ecclesiastical Record,* various issues of which were located in the major university libraries. Many of the contributors commented on the education scene, and a consistent theme in their writings was the demand that the education sector should improve the music education offered in the schools. As most of the national schools in Ireland were – and still are - under church management, this must have influenced teachers to some degree. Moreover, some of the key personnel involved in editing or contributing to these journals were also directly involved in education at the time, and it is likely that these writings and their authors would have had some impact on education.

The third significant primary source I used consists of the periodicals issued by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), which have been at various times *The Irish School Weekly, The Irish School Monthly, An Múinteoir Naisiunta (The National Teacher)*, and *InTouch*. These journals were usually sourced in the university libraries, as well as in local school archives.

The authors of the above publications represented the views of the major stakeholders in Irish education in the past – the government, the church and the teaching profession. Any valid criticism of the data collected from these sources must take into consideration the vested interest of the relevant parties. However, the data obtained from these sources complements and enriches that obtained from others, therefore a degree of triangulation was possible, so that what I consider to be a clear and comprehensive picture was established.

In the more recent past, from approximately 1980 to the present, government policy papers, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) publications, and position papers issued by other parties such as the Arts Council, all formed part of the primary sources consulted. These are generally much more accessible, as they are in the public domain, and are available at local libraries.

In addition, I undertook oral history research, in the form of interviews with individuals who have been key players in the music education during the last forty years or so; to elaborate, illuminate, extend and lend greater veracity to the data derived from the documentary sources. The use of oral history can complement the analysis of documentary sources to provide not only confirmation or triangulation of results, but also an extension of the findings, and often include new and perspectives and insights. Using the data in a complementary manner makes it possible to comment on various aspects of policy and practice with greater authority as issues are grounded in various data sources.

5.4.4 Evaluating the data

Phelps (1980: 121) argues that researchers in music education are not only expected to obtain various kinds of data about the past related to their topic, but also to interpret them according to generally accepted techniques of historical study. The historical researcher, argues Borg (1963: 193) while in the process of gathering research data, concurrently carries on an evaluation of these data. The evaluation of the data is of 'critical importance in helping the researcher to place each bit of information in its proper perspective, and draw sound conclusions from the total picture obtained' (op. cit.: 193). The evidence collected must be evaluated carefully and checked whenever possible against other sources. Heller and Wilson (1992: 104) argue that the researcher 'must assume nothing and question everything'. This evaluation of historical evidence is usually referred to as historical criticism, and is divided into two major categories – external criticism and internal criticism, and the reliable data yielded by the process are known as historical evidence (Cohen et al., 2000: 162).

External criticism is primarily aimed at determining whether the evidence being evaluated is reliable; therefore it is aimed primarily at the source itself rather than the statements contained in it. It therefore 'sets out to uncover frauds, forgeries, hoaxes, inventions or distortions' (Cohen et al, 2000: 162). Fortunately, this external criticism did not present a major problem for me, as the archivists at the holding universities had already authenticated the primary sources that I consulted.

When the reliability of the document has been assessed, the task of 'evaluating the accuracy and worth of the data contained in the document must be undertaken' (Borg, 1996: 194). This is usually a much more difficult process, argues Borg, because it involves evaluating the writer, his biases, and his possible motives for distortion, intentional or unconscious. An important issue in the analysis of historical data is to realise that data in historical research were not generally developed in the first place for use in research (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998: 97), but were written and filed to fulfil some other purpose. A person who has strong motives for wanting a particular version of a described event to be accepted can usually be expected to

produce biased information. The principal role of the historical researcher is the interpretation of the data in the light of historical criticism. This means that the researcher continually has to evaluate and weigh the data according to the origin of the primary source. He/she continually needs to use all his/her accumulated knowledge of the period to watch for any clues of inaccuracy, bias or hidden agenda, and conversely, he/she needs to use each new piece of data to confirm other data. In this, his work resembles that of a detective, a feature that has been highlighted by Anderson and Arsenault (1998: 96), and Burns (2000: 486). Most of my data came from primary sources, which represented the views of the major stakeholders in Irish education in the past – the government, the church, and the teaching profession. At all times, I cross-referenced the accounts from different interests, to highlight differences and similarities, in an effort to construct a reliable account.

The main concern in the evaluation of oral sources is reducible to three elements, according to Garraghan (1946: 71), which he lists as: the actual possession by the witnesses of the knowledge which they undertakes to communicate; their intention and wish to communicate it just as they possess it; and their accuracy in communication of it. The witnesses I interviewed were former inspectors, music trainers and teachers. The inspectors, especially, because of their first hand involvement in curriculum design, teacher training and school inspection, were insightful witnesses. They are now retired; therefore they could speak without reticence. As I interviewed them separately, it was possible to cross-reference the evidence of each against that of the other, to check the veracity of the account. I did not include any evidence that was in any way questionable, or unverifiable. Furthermore, the evidence of the music trainers and teachers of the past helps to collaborate the evidence of the inspectors. At all times I endeavoured to make a transparent and reasonable assessment of the evidence, in order to produce a reliable account.

5.4.5 Synthesizing the data into an accurate account of the subject investigated.

Once the data have been gathered and subjected to external criticism for authenticity and to internal criticism for accuracy and relevance, the researcher is next confronted

with the task of piecing together an account of the events embraced by the research problem. This stage is known as the process of synthesis (Cohen et al., 2000: 163). In historical research, argues Kemp (1992: 14), the researcher is 'required to construct accurate accounts of conditions, issues and trends which have occurred in the past through the analysis and evaluation of primary and secondary sources of information.' In this work, the historian, normally distanced from the era in question, attempts to create a convincing account of the subject being investigated through a synthesis of the various perspectives of past actors. McCarthy (2003: 126) describes this as similar to the construction of a jigsaw puzzle, and comments on the 'painstaking effort it takes to make sense out of the many and varied sources and pieces of evidence available for interpretation'. In contrast to a jigsaw puzzle, she argues, the manner in which the pieces interlock is not predetermined, thus highlighting the mediated nature of the outcome. Thus it falls to the historian to connect the pieces and make sense of the interrelationships between them. This binding of the pieces together is the heart of the historical process – 'the storyteller's ability to capture the *zeitgeist* or spirit of the time, an elusive yet profound presence that is transmitted in the telling of the story' (op.cit.: 126-127).

Heller and Wilson (1992: 107) point out that music education historians assume three obligations: telling the truth, telling it in an interesting and memorable way, and making it available to others. Two tasks are inherent in this for the writer of music education history, they state. The first is to impart information as clearly and succinctly as possible, while the second is to create images or sensations that bring that information to life. Both functions of communication are essential if the story is to be read and remembered. Mindful of the advice of Heller and Wilson as outlined above, I aim not only to impart the necessary information, but also to 'create the images or sensations' that may bring that information to life. This is no easy task, but in an effort to address it, I made use of the voices of the key actors who were central to music education in the past, by quoting directly from their writings when they can say something with greater passion and conviction than a researcher can. Garraghan (1946: 407) advocates this approach, and argues that direct citation from the sources in historical research can often lend narrative a vividness and actuality that cannot be secured in any other way. It can make delightful reading, he argues, and may be

many times more effective in portraying a person or situation than any paraphrase or summary of it could possibly be.

Anderson and Arsenault (1998: 98) note that another challenge for the historical researcher is the development of a framework for the organisation and interpretation of the data, and suggest two models: organisation by date and organisation according to concept. In the synthesis I carried out, I organised my data in a chronological manner. I chose this form of organisation because the history of the national school system in Ireland may be arranged into broad divisions which were in turn influenced by happenings on the wider political and educational scene. Music education and in-service education were also influenced by these happenings, so it seemed logical to present the results of the investigation in a chronological manner, and these are to be found in the next four chapters of this study.

5.4.6 Setting the newly constructed history in context

The final challenge facing the historical researcher is that of presenting the new history he / she has synthesised in the context of history that already exists. The newly derived material must be interpreted, set in context, and positioned into a comprehensive background that readers can recognise. Brickman contends that facts by themselves, even when arranged chronologically, do not constitute an historical narrative. 'It is only when the historian shows the real meaning of the data, their interconnections and interrelationships, that he begins to approach the writing of history.' (1982: 161). Best, (1959: 85) also points out that history is not merely a list of chronological events, but a truthful, integrated account in which persons and events are examined in relation to a particular time and place. Similarly Garraghan (1946: 34) argued that no single fact in history is completely isolated from other facts. Any single event owes its existence to other events that preceded it, and indeed that surround it. Thus education, and music education, are directly influenced by what is happening in the larger political, economic and cultural background in which they exist, a fact that cannot be overlooked in music education research.

Heller and Wilson (1992: 104) also argue that the way in which music education fits into the history of education in general is a fascinating but little-studied problem.

Educational historians, they argue, are generally unaware of the role of music in the history of education. Similarly, music educators are equally uninformed about education history and the ways in which music education has paralleled teaching and learning in other subjects. Some collateral reading in this area can contribute to a more complete picture of the topic under consideration. They go on to assert that 'Establishing the context is important in telling a story. The reader craves to know how the details fit together and how the present story relates to what the reader already knows.' (op.cit.: 104). Abeles (1992: 238), also, argues that it is critical for the historical researcher to link new studies into previously developed historical research so that the congruity of the results with previous work can add confidence, and that inappropriate and inadequate interpretation can be challenged. Mindful of this, I reviewed the background of the education system in each of the periods investigated, so that the place of music education and teacher in-service education in music may be understood in its political and cultural background.

5.5 Limitations of the Research

McCarthy (2003: 121-121) points out that one of the challenges of historical research in music is that 'music educators typically come to historical research with little or no formal training as historians, rather with a conviction of its value, an interest in the profession's past and a motivation to remember and represent it to themselves and to others, and an informal and intuitive knowledge of the historical process'. She goes on to argue that 'doing history is a messy, unpredictable, and emotionally engaging activity where meanings emerge as the researcher interacts with the persons, materials, or media being studied' (op. cit.: 125). I attempted to address this lack of previous experience of historical research by extensive reading of expert writers – e.g. Garraghan, 1946; Brickman, 1982: Rainbow, 1967 & 1992; Cox, 1993 & 2002; McCarthy, 1999 & 2003; Pitts, 2000 & 2002; McCullough and Richardson, 2000 - as well as writings on historical research which are included in general manuals on research methods in education. I continued this background reading right throughout the course of this study. In addition, I attempted to follow the essential steps of the historical process as described by Borg (1963: 189) in the collection, evaluation and exposition of my data, as I described in detail in Section 4 of this chapter.

A real limitation of historical research is that 'the data are always incomplete' (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998: 98). The researcher does not have the luxury of collecting more data once he obtains all that survives. So, she or he has to draw conclusions from partial evidence. Pitts (2000: 6), also argues that the construction of a history of music education is fraught with the difficulties that attend any historical investigation, and to find a continuous chronological argument amongst the fragmented accounts that are available for study is sometimes virtually impossible, so that 'some degree of interpretation has to take place in order to achieve coherence.' Similarly, she argues, no history of music education can ever be complete, because the gradual change that occurs in individual classrooms, individual teachers and individual pupils goes largely undocumented (op. cit.: 204). Historical researchers therefore, often have to contend with inadequate information, so their reconstructions tend to be more like sketches rather than portraits. However, even this sketch helps in some way to fill the lacunae that previously existed, hence making the research worthwhile.

The sheer bulk of the historical data is also a feature with which historical researchers must contend. It has been suggested that on average only about a tenth part of the notes and material assembled in a piece of historical research finds its way directly into the written product (Garraghan, 1946: 338). However, while only a certain quota will be used in the writing of the final report, the reading and criticism of the accumulated data helps to frame the picture. This helps the researcher to 'create background, perspective, atmosphere, insight' that offers an intelligent and effective grasp of the subject treated (Garraghan, 1946: 340). Also, some of the extensive data I accumulated was used in the preparation of papers for relevant journals (Ryng, 2002a, Ryng, 2002b and McAuliffe Ryng, 2004). Phelps (1980: 57) notes that a serious weakness in music education has been the lack of dissemination of research results. He argues that 'if research in music education is to be worthy of the name, the results should be solid enough to be shared with members of the profession (op. cit.: 5). Many excellent studies, he notes, are of no value to the profession because investigators have been either unable or unwilling to share these. This is something I attempted to do during the course of my historical investigation.

Through the preparation of papers and presentation of findings at music education conferences, I attempted to share and disseminate, and obtain feedback on, my historical research. Such dissemination of the results of the historical enquiry helped to generate debate on the subject of music in-service education in Ireland, which in turn helped me to refine my thinking.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined in detail the processes and some of the thinking I followed when undertaking the historical investigation for this study, in an effort to view the research process from a critical position, as advocated by Swanwick (1996: 254). The aim of this procedure is to enable the readers to determine how rigorously – or otherwise - the research was conducted, thereby contributing to the credibility of the results, and also to facilitate replication of the study in the future. In the next four chapters, I present the results of the historical investigation. I am conscious of the fact that my personality, my values, my position, and my use of language (Jenkins, 1991: 12) will to some extent shape and influence the history that is presented. As Southgate (1996: 135) argues, it is difficult to see what else historians can be expected to do other than report on the past in the light of who they are, but 'that is no bad thing as long as they are aware of what they are doing and why'. I have attempted to be reflexive and transparent in reporting how I conducted the investigation, and in describing the sources I consulted. At all times, I cross-referenced and triangulated the data, so that the story that is presented may be considered a reasonable account.

Chapter Six: The Introduction of Music to the National School Curriculum in Ireland in 1900, and Subsequent Music In-service Education.

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I commence the presentation of the findings of the historical investigation. I position the history of music and music in-service education in the wider educational context, as events in music education did not happen in a vacuum. Also, it is important to remember that music was designated a compulsory subject in the Irish curriculum in 1900, not suddenly, but following a debate that spanned several decades, therefore a brief consideration of this is necessary. I describe and analyse the ambitious in-service education that was provided for teachers, under the aegis of Peter Goodman, Organising Inspector of Music, to enable them to teach the newly introduced curricular subject. Finally, I attempt to identify why the original commitment to music education in the opening years of the twentieth century declined miserably in the years leading to Irish Independence in 1922.

6.2 The Background: Foundation of the National School System of Education in Ireland in 1831

The early nineteenth century saw profound political, social, economic and demographic change in many European countries. There was a new concern for education. The emerging challenge was the provision of mass literacy, and the new emphasis was on the agency of the state in providing such an education (Coolahan, 1981: 3). Though Ireland was part of the United Kingdom when a national system of elementary education was struggling into existence, the system in Ireland developed, for religious and political reasons, along different lines to that in England. Ireland was frequently used as a 'social

laboratory' (Coolahan, 1981: 3) where various policy initiatives were tried out which might be less acceptable in England. Thus is was that, through the agency of Lord Stanley, Chief Secretary for Ireland, Ireland got a state supported national school system under the control of a voluntary, state-appointed Board of Commissioners in 1831, while similar provision was not made in mainland Britain until 1870.

The motives behind the provision of the National School system have at times been labelled altruistic, experimental, or even suppressive, depending on the particular view of the commentator in question. It would seem fair to assume that the initiative was not solely benevolent. The Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), writing in 1996, asserted that:

> The education system which was introduced into Ireland in 1831 had aims other than the promotion of literacy and numeracy. The curriculum was embedded in the British political project of cultural assimilation and political socialisation. The instructional programme was prescribed and in line with its aims excluded the Irish language, history, music and poetry' (INTO, 1996: 6).

The figures clearly show that there was a steady annual growth in the number of pupils enrolled in the first thirty years, ranging from 789 schools providing for 107,042 pupils in 1833, to 5,632 schools providing for 804,000 pupils in 1860. (Coolahan, 1981: 19).

The original policy of the government was the provision of a non-denominational primary education system, where arrangements would be made for doctrinal instruction according to different denominational beliefs. However, this was not acceptable to any of the religious groupings in Ireland at the time, so the school system, while non-denominational in theory, became increasingly denominational in fact.

The Board of Commissioners of National Education was responsible for the training of teachers for the National Schools. The Board set up a training college in Marlborough Street in Dublin in the 1830s, and they augmented this in the following years by establishing model schools throughout the country. While teacher training was meant to

be interdenominational, in the following years the various denominations set up their own teacher training colleges, a tendency which prevails to this day.

The Board was also responsible for the curriculum, and published most of the textbooks, as well as retaining the right of sanction on any other books used. The Irish language was not recognised as a school subject, even in the areas where it was the sole spoken language of the people. Indeed, for much of the early years, the textbooks contained very little material relating to the Irish environment, and were geared towards cultural assimilation of the native people by the English administration (Coolahan, 1981: 21)

The Board of Commissioners published annual reports, commencing in 1833, and from these we get a detailed and comprehensive picture of the developing education system. As outlined in the previous chapter, these reports are widely regarded as a significant primary resource in the history of Irish education, and it is also possible to detail the gradual introduction of music into Irish schools through the pages of these reports.

6.3 Towards the introduction of music into the National School curriculum

During the early years of the National School system, music was not included in the curriculum. However, very soon after its establishment, there were suggestions that music should be taught in the national schools. As McCarthy (1999: 51) points out 'Such discussion was not unique to Ireland. All nations developing educational systems faced a similar decision: would music be included, why, and in what form?' Early debate regarding its inclusion referred to its 'civilizing' influence, and it was claimed that music would provide a source of innocent recreation for the people, and that it would elevate their life-style and social manners. Music was also viewed by many as an important part of the religious education in the schools. (Select Committee on Foundation Schools and Education in Ireland, 1835: 257, 345, 377).

Gradually, vocal music was introduced as an optional 'extra' branch of study into the central Model School, and to the teacher training college. The Board of Commissioners

adopted a system of sight singing that had been introduced to England by John Pyke Hullah (1812 - 1884). This particular system was based on the methods of French music educationalist, Guillaume Wilhem (1781-1842). Hullah adapted it for English use, and was responsible for its dissemination in English education, so it became known as the 'Hullah' system. Hullah used the French system of fixed solfa. Thus the system guaranteed rapid progress as long as the singers remained in the key of C, but presented great difficulties in other keys. (For a detailed account of Hullah and his work, see Rainbow, 1967 and Cox, 1993). In 1840, the Board sent two Irish teachers to be trained in the Hullah method at Battersea Training College in England, and on their return they introduced it to the Board's Model Schools. (Board of Commissioners, 1840: 4). In 1849, the Board began to employ peripatetic music teachers who travelled around the country to the model schools, spending a certain period in each, teaching the pupils and teachers the Hullah system. (Board of Commissioners, 1852: 223). This was the first music in-service provision offered to teachers in the national school system in Ireland.

The status of music in the curriculum advanced very slowly during the following years, though the inspectors commented on its effect on the pupils and their parents:

> This refining branch of education had been most acceptable to the pupils and their parents. At first, many of both did not understand why singing should be taught, and considered it a loss of time. The pupils, however, first began to like it, and next the parents, the former deriving pleasure and instruction from the music and poetry, and the latter finding their evening fire-side cheered by the voices of their children after the toils and labours of the day.
> (Board of Commissioners of National Education, Appendix to Nineteenth Report, 1852: 225)

In 1859, a gratuity was introduced for teachers holding certificates of competency in music, who taught singing to their pupils. They were allowed sums ranging from £2 to £5 annually, depending on the numbers under instruction. However, the gratuity for drawing ranged from £3 to £10, while the gratuity for navigation was £5 to £10, which indicates that music was regarded as inferior to these other optional subjects. In 1869, Inspector Earley lamented this inequality, stating: 'Singing is surely of more value as an

education instrument, particularly among a musical people as the Irish are admitted to be, than drawing; yet the gratuity attainable for the latter subject is double that for the former' (Board of Commissioners, 1869: 42). However, the advancement of music in the following decades was slow. The notorious 'Payment by results', which was introduced in 1868, resulted in an exam-dominated curriculum that 'was narrow, inflexible and centrally imposed' (Hyland, 1987: 19). This narrowness of curriculum certainly impeded the progress of music teaching during the final decades of the nineteenth century (Kelly, 1978; Mc Carthy, 1999).

6.4 Peter Goodman and the Tonic Solfa System

In 1892, the Board of Commissioners of National Education appointed Peter Goodman (1849-1909) to the position of Examiner in Music. Prior to this, Goodman had been a teacher of vocal music in Marlborough Street Training College, and St. Patrick's Catholic Training College. His new duties consisted of examining and reporting on instruction in music in the Training Colleges and schools. This was the first appointment of its kind in Ireland, and took place twenty years after Hullah was appointed to a similar capacity in England. Goodman, however, was highly critical of the Hullah system. He contended that 'for fifty years it was the sole method used in Irish National schools, and it is hardly too much to say that it left them very little better than it found them' (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 193) He was an advocate of the Tonic Solfa method of teaching sight singing, which had been developed in England by John Curwen (1816-1880), and where it had largely superceded the Hullah system following intense debate nicknamed the 'War of the Moveable Doh' (See Rainbow 1967 and Cox, 1993). I have written comprehensively elsewhere about Goodman's contribution to music education in Ireland (see Ryng 2002a, Ryng 2000b and McAuliffe-Ryng, 2004).

Goodman's yearly reports were included in the annual reports of the Board of Commissioners. He wrote prolifically, if at times a little naively, on the state of music in education, and of his aspirations for its future development. He argued that:

> Surely the schoolroom without the cheering influence of song in it is but a
> dull place. It is like a house into which the glad sunshine never enters. No

other subject so brightens and enlivens the routine of school life as sweet pleasant music. It quickens all the faculties of the children in making them more impressionable, more gentle, more tractable, more happy. (Board of Commissioners, 1898: 271)

Goodman was responsible for the organisation of the inter-schools singing competitions that commenced in Dublin in 1893, and these did much to promote choral singing and the Tonic Solfa method. Indeed, Mc Carthy (1999: 229) writes that the sight-reading for the 1893 competition was 'designed by John Curwen himself, while Mrs Spencer Curwen was one of the judges.' This is clearly an inaccuracy, as John Curwen died in 1880 (New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980: 103) but it is quite probable that the said sight-reading was composed by John Spencer Curwen (1847 - 1916) son of John, who succeeded his father as principal of the Tonic Sol-fa College in 1880, and who was also head of the family's publishing firm. It was this John Spencer Curwen who was the one of the prime movers behind the competition festival movement in England in 1882, importing the idea from Wales where he had judged at such festivals. The Mrs Spencer Curwen referred to was probably Annie (1845 – 1932) wife of John Spencer, herself a native of Dublin, and who was author of *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, published by the family publishing house. In any case, it is clear that choirs who were still using the Hullah system were at a serious disadvantage, and this further contributed to its decline. Goodman himself wrote that the competitions gave rise to another competition, 'viz. a competition of methods – Tonic Solfa versus Hullah' (Board of Commissioners, 1893: 332). The competitions had the approval and sponsorship of the Catholic Church. Winning choirs were invited to combine and participate in liturgical celebrations at the Cecilian festival in Dublin. In his address after High Mass, the Archbishop of Dublin praised the pupils and 'enlightened teachers' who introduced into their schools 'that one truly scientific system of musical instruction…the Tonic Solfa system' (op.cit.: 335). These singing competitions were to flourish for the next two decades or so.

6.5 Towards Curricular Reform

During the closing years of the nineteenth century, attitudes to education were changing in Europe, and the traditional emphasis on book-learning in primary schools was coming under increasing criticism (Bennett, 2000: 7). 'Payment by results' was terminated in England and in Scotland, though it still operated in Ireland. Singing was now an integral part of the programme in most schools in England, Wales and Scotland, though it was still an optional subject in Ireland. In Ireland, attention had been drawn to the need for curricular reform at national school level on a number of occasions during the 1890's. (Hyland 1987: 19). The Board of Commissioners of National Education became convinced that a radical change in the national school curriculum was necessary. They were concerned that the curriculum was too narrow and book centred, a tendency accentuated by the system of payment by results (Coolahan, 1981: 33). To address this, the Royal Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction, more commonly known as the Belmore Commission, was set up in 1897, to enquire into contemporary educational trends in Britain, Europe and America. The Commission invited the views of individual and organisations in Ireland and overseas. It also sent delegates to view schools in Europe, to seek information concerning the manual and practical instruction provided there. Music was seen to be obligatory in all the schools they visited. The final report of the commission was published in 1898, and it recommended a radical reform of Irish education. As a result, a major revision of the national school curriculum took place, and the new curriculum, known as the *Revised Programme of Primary Instruction*, published in 1899, came into effect in all national schools in September 1900 (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1899b).

6.6 The Revised Programme and the status of music

The Revised Programme was fundamentally different from the programme which it replaced, in that is was a 'child-centred curriculum, and it encouraged learning based on activity and observation' (Hyland, 1987: 20). It advocated that subjects were not to be compartmentalized, but were to be taught in an integrated manner where appropriate. Payment by results was finally abolished. New subjects such as science, manual

instruction, drawing, and cookery were introduced. For the first time the status of singing was raised to a compulsory subject in all schools where there were teachers qualified to teach it, and it was considered that the teaching of vocal music should form part of the duties of the primary school teacher. The Board of Commissioners decreed that music was to be introduced into all schools as soon as possible. The Commissioners emphasised that they desired 'to see vocal music taught in every national school, as they consider the study of music in any form is a refining and intellectual pursuit, and is calculated to have a cheering influence on school life generally.' (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1900: 82).

Music was allocated three classes per week for boys, each of 25 minutes duration, and two classes per week for girls, each of 30 minutes duration. (This difference in time allocation was due to the cookery and needlework classes that were also on the girls' curriculum). The music syllabus was based on singing. A choice of methods was offered – Tonic Sol-fa or Staff Notation, but Tonic Sol-fa was advised as being the preferred method. Music was also included for junior classes, but the emphasis here was on singing by ear.

Peter Goodman was clearly pleased with this development, and he wrote: 'The past year will long be memorable in Irish education as that in which…the primary schools of Ireland saw the light '(Board of Commissioners of National Education 1899a: 258).

6.7 Teacher education for the Revised Programme

The curricular reform of 1900 was accompanied by a comprehensive attempt to provide in-service education for the teachers of Ireland. The estimated cost of introduction of the Revised Programme was £60,000 per annum, which was four per cent of the national education budget. The Board also provided equipment grants averaging £10,000 per year during the first five year of the revised programme (Hyland, 1987: 21). Over twenty full time organising inspectors and assistants were recruited on a five-year contract basis to give courses in the 'new' subjects. Goodman was put in charge of vocal music, and the major task now facing him was to prepare Ireland's teachers to teach singing in the

national schools. He was promoted to the rank of 'Inspector of Musical Instruction' rather than Examiner in Music, and his role was now to oversee and encourage 'all matters relating to the teaching of music in primary school' rather than being chiefly concerned with the Training Colleges (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 81). With the help of a team of five 'organisers' (this later grew to six) he set about providing music training for the national teachers of Ireland. The task was monumental – approximately 75% of the country's twelve thousand teachers were not proficient in music (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 82). The records make no mention of the qualifications or prior career experiences of the organizers. They had not been connected with music in any of the training colleges, and Kelly (1978) suggests they may have been teachers who had become prominent with their school choirs during the public singing competitions in Dublin. The records name the music organizers as: Miss Appleyard, Miss Byrne, Miss Colclough, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Robinson and Mr Maguire, who was the last to join the team. I did succeed in tracing a grandson of this Mr Maguire, who is himself currently a peripatetic music teacher in London. He confirmed that his grandfather Elias, the said Mr Maguire, who was born in 1878, attended the Training College in Marlborough Street from 1897 – 1899, therefore he was indeed a national school teacher prior to his appointment. Following his work with Peter Goodman, Elias taught at the Inchicore Model School in Dublin for thirty-eight years. Based on this evidence, it would be fair to assume that the other 'organisers' were also national schoolteachers, who had come to the attention of Goodman either at the Teacher Training Colleges or through participation in the singing competitions.

Commencing in 1900, the organisers held evening classes for teachers at various centres all over Ireland, and visited schools in the vicinity to give model lessons to the pupils. The participating teachers were very mixed in their singing ability, and Goodman lamented that 'to make singers and teachers of singing out of people that attended, was beyond the power of mortal man (Board of Commissioners, 1902: 89). The organizers modified their aims somewhat, and attempted 'To get a little song singing and a little note singing as quickly as possible into as many schools as possible. To have the children sing the songs of their country sweetly and tunefully' (Board of Commissioners

of National Education, 1902: 89). Goodman appealed to the inspectors to be lenient in the examination for music and to give it every encouragement for the first few years.

6.8 Format and content of the music in-service courses

Goodman recognised that if music in the schools was to flourish, then the education must begin with the teachers. Writing in 1900 he stated that 'we organisers must seek to especially reach the teachers. If we could make them efficient, our work is as good as done' (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 81).

Goodman and his team, therefore, deliberately attempted to reach teachers in remote, rural districts, where music was practically non-existent. He stated 'It is in such schools – small school with one teacher only, in out-of-the-way places – that the brightening, gladdening influence of music is most needed. And as such schools form the majority of the schools in Ireland, I feel that we could not give them too much attention.' (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1905: 4)

Reporting as Organising Inspector in 1901, Peter Goodman described the music in-service courses as follows:

> The novel and interesting experiment of seeking to quickly develop the school music of a nation begun by the organisation in the previous year, has been rigorously continued through the year. In constant operation every week evening from 6 - 8 p.m., classes meet at 5 different centres. To each class are summoned all the teachers living within a radius of about 7 miles (this later grew to 8 miles). For 5 or 6 weeks, each organiser remains in the one locality, in the daytime working in the school, in the evening teaching teachers. Then the organiser moves on.
> (Board of Commissioners, 1901: 147)

Each centre received sixty hours of instruction altogether over the five or six-week period, from one of the organisers. Teachers attended every weekday evening, and at an earlier time on Saturday, for the duration of the course. There was an average of thirty teachers in a class, but some classes catered for up to seventy teachers. (Board of Commissioners, 1901:147) The content consisted of a complete elementary course of

Tonic Sol-fa, a little staff notation, and a 'considerable number of school songs'. (op. cit.: 147) At the conclusion of each course, Goodman, assisted by the local inspector, examined the teachers. Those who passed were henceforth obliged to teach music, while those who failed were exempted (Board of Commissioners, 1901: Appendix, pp. 82-5).

Over four hundred teachers attended in the first year, and Goodman noted their enthusiasm. He wrote that:

> From the first the teachers have flocked to our classes with the utmost enthusiasm. Night after night they have come, often long weary journeys, with unflagging zeal and unfailing regularity. The attention and earnestness with which they have devoted themselves to study of our classes call for the highest praise.
> (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 81)

The in-service classes had the enthusiastic support of managers and inspectors, who put premises at the disposal of the organisers free of charge. Indeed, the clergy actively supported the introduction of music as a core subject. Writing in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in 1901, Rev. T. Donovan exhorted school managers to promote actively the introduction of music to their schools, and 'to show his teachers and the children that he is interested in the success of the project' (Donovan, 1901: 24). Inspectors, too, were generally directed to give increased attention to music. The positive encouragement from the church and the inspectorate may have contributed to the positive attendance records reported for the music courses. From 1900 - 1905, 168 music courses were held at centres all over the country, and 6,397 teachers attended – over half the teaching population (Board of Commissioners, 1905: Appendix, pp. 131-2).

Some convent schools, where the nuns were proficient in music, also offered free music courses for teachers. In addition, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), which had been founded in 1868, also offered some music courses, where the participants had to pay the costs themselves. At the conclusion of each music course, teachers were individually examined. However, it seems that only approximately half of the participants reached a satisfactory standard, as the records show that, of those

examined, approximately 25% were rated good, 25% were rated fair, and 50% were rated weak (Board of Commissioners, 1905: Appendix 192-3).

Despite the high failure rate, the evidence demonstrates that there was a marked enthusiasm for music in the teaching profession, and there were large increases in the number of schools teaching it. In 1899, vocal music was taught in 1,475 national schools. This rose dramatically, to 3,963 schools in 1900, and to 6,032 in 1901, showing the spectacular improvement brought about by the in-service initiative. By 1908, the pupils in 7,065 national schools were receiving instruction in vocal music (Board of Commissioners, 1909: 80-1) Curwen's educational charts and modulators were supplied to schools, and the formal aspects of sight-reading were given priority.

6.9 Decline of music in-service education

By 1905, the numbers attending the music classes began to dwindle. As over half of the country's teachers had by now participated, it is probable that those who intended to attend had done so. It is fair to assume that teachers' enthusiasm for curricular in-service education had reached saturation point, as courses had been offered in all the new curricular areas. The appointment of the music organisers was terminated, despite the fact that other curricular subjects still retained organisers. There was now only one inspector - Goodman himself - for over 8,000 schools. He was bitterly disappointed and set about visiting national schools all over the country, to evaluate the standard of music. He visited over 800 schools between 1906 and 1908, and wrote prolifically on his observations in the annual reports of the Board of Commissioners of National Education. His reports reveal that standards for the most part were very mixed and varied according to region.

Goodman died on 19 June 1909, (The Musical Times, 1909) and in the next annual report the head inspector paid him this tribute:

> His death will be a great loss to the cause he had so much at heart. His whole-hearted devotion to that cause, and his untiring efforts to promote it,

led in some degree to the breakdown of his health. Even to the last, his thoughts were busy with schemes connected with what had always been to him a labour of love.
(Board of Commissioners, 1900:4).

Reporting from Cork in 1910, Inspector Gloster reported that music was well established there, and he wrote that 'The wonderful revival of singing throughout the country forms a monument *perennius aere* to the memory of the late Mr. Goodman, whose talent and enthusiasm did so much to bring it about. (Board of Commissioners, 1910: 147)

After Peter Goodman's death, the initial commitment to music continued to decline. Inspectors noted a 'falling off in the efficiency of the teaching' of music (Board of Commissioners, 1910: 104 & 118). Reports in the years that followed noted that many teachers regarded music as an optional subject and were inclined to disregard it (Board of Commissioners, 1914: 170).

6.10 Dissatisfaction with the Revised Programme

Other problems in education were assuming priority, which must have also contributed to the demise of music. Teachers were beginning to feel the impact of the newly introduced subjects, and the curriculum was considered overloaded. In 1916, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) demanded a 'return to the basic subjects in primary education', claiming that the programme was overloaded with 'worthless' subjects, and that the 'three R's should form the groundwork of all education' (INTO, 1916: 453).

Irish cultural and political organisations were also becoming increasingly critical of the curriculum in primary and intermediate schools, which they maintained, did not pay sufficient attention to Irish ideals and principles. Various campaigns were undertaken by Sinn Féin and by the Gaelic League to ensure that the primary school programme would reflect nationalistic ideals and principles (Bennett, 2000: 9). There was an unsurprising backlash against the education content of previous decades, which had been prescribed and mediated by the British administration. The neglect of Irish and the overloading of

the curriculum with too many obligatory subjects were the main causes of dissatisfaction with the primary curriculum in nationalist circles. (Titley, 1983: 44).

While World War One dominated the European political scene, the nationalists in Ireland stepped up their campaign for independence from Britain. The political backdrop of the 1916 Rising, the subsequent execution of the leaders, and the events that finally led to the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 also influenced the educational agenda. From 1916-1922, progress in music education was almost at a standstill as a result of the political confusion. (O'Braoin, 1952: 37). McCarthy (1990: 204) also points out that in the opening years of the twentieth century, music had 'ridden on the crest of a wave of enthusiasm, support, goodwill and coordinated efforts.' However, from 1916 to 1921, 'shattered idealism had harnessed the development of music education to the more practical and more realistic demands of the system' (op.cit: 204).

At the INTO Conference of 1920, a resolution was passed empowering the INTO Executive to engage in a conference with other interested parties to 'frame a programme or series of programmes in accordance with Irish ideals and conditions' (INTO: 1921: 218). The outcomes of this Conference were to have long reaching implications for curriculum revision, as the next chapter will discuss.

6.11 Discussion

The first decade of the twentieth century was undoubtedly a significant one for music education in the Irish national school system. Music was introduced as a compulsory subject in 1900. As the contemporary philosophy was that the generalist class teacher should teach music, a monumental effort was made to prepare the teaching force to implement the music curriculum. During these years, the organised music courses held throughout the country achieved noteworthy progress. Goodman's commitment and enthusiasm, and the response that he and his team of organisers evoked among the participating teachers, is widely commented on in the annual reports of the Boards of Commissioners.

However, it is important to consider the nature of these sources. They are written from the perspective of the national school inspectorate, and it is fair to assume that the inspectors would wish to present favourable accounts to the Board of Commissioners, who had decreed that music was to become universal in the schools. Goodman, in particular, emerges as an individual full of zeal for his mission. It is unlikely that contemporary teachers would have criticized the programme or the in-service courses in his presence. Furthermore, it seems that he was well liked among the teaching profession. A contemporary teacher wrote that 'The personality and popularity of the late Mr. Goodman, one of its (Tonic Sol-fa's) chief exponents, helped very much to develop the system throughout the country' (Sleith, 1915: 1346).

The in-service initiative was totally dependent on the goodwill of the teachers, as participation was voluntary, and teachers attended in their own time. There was no incentive or reward for participation, though a portion of expenses was allowed for those who travelled distances. There was no incentive to pass the examination, unless teachers wished to apply for positions in other schools, when their musical qualification would be well received. The participants had already obtained their teaching positions, and were in fact taking on an extra obligatory subject by successful completion of the music course.

It is also important to point out, that while Goodman emphasised that participation in the music courses was voluntary, teachers may in fact have been under subtle pressure to attend. Individual teachers who lived within an eight-mile radius were 'summoned' to attend, and in later years, when the number of participants declined, the organisers 'visited' teachers in their homes to encourage them to attend (Ryng, 2002b). Given that something 'like a reign of terror existed among teachers' under the regime of the Board of Commissioner's inspectors, (O'Connell, 1968: 405) it is probable that these home visits, and 'invitations' would have exerted subtle pressure on the teachers.

No records survive as to the attendance patterns of the individual participants. It would be naive to assume that teachers from rural areas could have attended very regularly,

especially during the winter months, as transport in that era was not very advanced. Some inspectors, in fact, believed that attendance at courses in the evening time was too demanding on teachers. For example, Mr Heller, Organising Inspector for Science, favoured the establishment of day courses, stating that 'The efficiency of the training in the day courses is greater than that obtained by evening instruction, such teachers being free of cares and worries of school, can give the undivided attention of work of the training class' (Board of Commissioners, 1905: 45). However, daytime in-service education did not materialise.

The proportion of teachers – approximately fifty per cent – who were rated 'weak' in the end-of-course examinations is significant. The records do not reveal the reasons that they were thus labelled. However, the damage to what Mills (1991: 5) terms their 'musical self-esteem' must have been significant.

In the schools, also, the concept of musical failure was always present. The emphasis was on omitting all those pupils labelled 'non-singers' from the music classes. Inspector Hollins reported that 'a number in most schools are spoken of as non-singers, and apparently content to be so regarded, sit for the half-hour period, disregarded by the teacher, and without an effort to improve themselves (Board of Commissioners, 1911: 101). In the Omagh district in 1912, it was reported that the majority of pupils in country schools, especially boys ' can't sing' (Board of Commissioners, 1912: 42). Inspector Dalton remarked on the growth of the phenomenon of non-singers, when he wrote in 1912 that:

> The singing classes are reserved for rigidly selected pupils and sometimes limited to a small minority of the pupils; all the pupils who are supposed to be in any way deficient in 'voice' being rejected. If this practice is not checked it will eventually kill singing as a popular accomplishment, and go far towards destroying musical voice power in the next generation. (Board of Commissioners, 1912: 86).

McCarthy points out that a dichotomous view of singing ability was in operation here: you can sing or you can't. The idea of nurturing a singing voice seemed to be foreign to teachers

(1999: 86). Inspectors too, may have contributed to the promulgation of the concept of the 'non-singer', as one contemporary writer commented:

> The art of the Inspector lay in finding out if there was any individual not singing, and how he went up and down the line stooping to catch the varied tones from the frightened mites who stood trembling lest they should be put out of the class as disqualified and thus come under another eye – the eye of the disappointed master. (Sleith, 1915: 1345-6).

Consequently, a proportion of children were excluded from participation in music classes, and subsequently left primary school musically uneducated, because they were labelled unmusical. This must have contributed to the propagation of the belief that music was an inherent 'talent' and not something that was accessible to all, a concept that persists to this day, as considered in Chapter Four.

It could also be argued that there was an over emphasis during this era on the formal aspects of vocal technique and sight-reading. Goodman thoroughly disapproved of 'singing by ear' a factor that may have contributed to its lack of support in the Irish system. Retrospectively viewed, this was regrettable, because it meant that teachers were not encouraged to teach music by ear to children whose native music depended heavily on the aural tradition. The over dominance of these technical and performance aspects probably meant that the music courses were tedious and demanding, and teachers would not have been encouraged to view music as an enjoyable activity, and this may have influenced the way they taught music to their classes. It would also have contributed to the concept that music is a 'difficult' subject, as outlined in Chapter Four.

There is also some evidence that not all teachers were impressed with the music programme. Writing in the INTO journal in 1915, Sleith (1915: 1345-6) complained that 'A huge modulator is hung up before a class, and the children are asked to take mental, physical, and vocal peals on this ornamental stepladder, and this is singing – or an examination in such.' Some inspectors also commented that music education in the schools was monotonous and rigid. In the words of Inspector Hollins, reporting from Limerick ' Too often the teaching is lifeless and inefficient. The same modulator

exercises are repeated day after day *ad nauseam*, the songs are sung in an uninterested, lifeless manner, without due attention to time' (Board of Commissioners: 1911: 101).

It is interesting to note that the organisers visited local schools in the daytime, to give demonstration lessons. However, there was no follow-up support for those who had attended the music courses, though Goodman urged such provision in the form of musical advisers or specialists, such as he had seen in the larger English cities of London, Leeds, Bradford and Birmingham. 'In Ireland no such skilled aid is available for the teacher. He must struggle through his difficulties as best he can. There is no one to help, sustain and encourage him. As a consequence, music languishes in the schools ...In many places in the 'Land of Song' at the present moment, music would seem to be a lost art' (Board of Commissioners, 1898: 271). Goodman continually expressed concern that when teachers were finished with the initial in-service education they lost confidence without the ongoing support of the organisers. Writing in 1901, he lamented: 'But what happens when the organiser is gone? Does the interest of the teacher in the subject continue, or does it collapse? And even if it is still maintained- are the teachers really able to teach it now they are left unaided?' (Board of Commissioners, 1901: 149). This was a call that was to be made repeatedly in the century that followed, but to this day, musical advisors have not been appointed in Ireland.

6.12 Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the history of the introduction of music as a compulsory subject to the primary school curriculum in Ireland in 1900, and the history of the ambitious music in-service education which was offered to facilitate the newly introduced curricular area. I have also attempted to show how the story of music education and music in-service education fits into the broader educational context, because, as argued in Chapter Five, it is critical for the historical researcher to position the newly synthesised history into the previously developed research (Brickman, 1982: 76; Rainbow, 1992: 20; Cohen et al. 2000: 161).

Pitts (2002: 29) argues that we have much to learn from the study of the past in music education, not just to avoid previous mistakes, but also to capture ' the enthusiasm for music education that radiates from the pages of some of these almost forgotten texts.' Certainly, the enthusiasm and zeal that Goodman had for his mission is inspiring, and many of the aspirations that he wrote of at the turn of the last century are just as relevant today. Goodman's desire to support teachers in smaller schools in the teaching of music is an objective that is just as pertinent at the present time. Similarly, his plea for a music advisory service is one that has been re-iterated many times in the century that followed.

In this chapter, also, I have drawn attention to some key aspects of the music education and music in-service education at this time, which were:

- The music curriculum in 1900 was heavily based on song-singing, and Tonic Sol-fa was the recommended method. Technical aspects were considered essential

- The contemporary policy at the beginning of the twentieth century was that music should be taught by the class teacher

- The in-service education offered to teachers to equip them to teach music was thorough and intensive, lasting approximately sixty hours

- The courses were held in the teachers' free time, and though attendance was voluntary, some teachers may have been pressurised into attendance

- The organisers, or trainers, visited the teachers' schools during the day to give demonstration lessons

- Teachers had to pass an examination at the end of the in-service, and the records show that approximately fifty per cent of teachers failed the examinations. I conclude that this must have propagated the view that music was a 'difficult' subject

- Goodman appealed for the appointment of advisory music teachers to support the class teachers in the teaching of music, such as he had seen in the UK, though these were never appointed

- The concept of the non-singer was prevalent, and inspectors commented critically on 'non-singers'

- When the Revised Programme of Instruction was introduced in 1900, there was a general welcome for music. However, the initial enthusiasm very quickly began to wane. The historical evidence points to two reasons for this: curriculum overload, and the political background

These political events were to have far-reaching consequences for the country, and for its education system. The next chapter considers these in greater detail, and in particular considers the impact of the establishment of the Irish Free State on music education and music in-service education.

Chapter Seven: The Music Curriculum and Music In-service Education under Home Rule, 1922 – 1940s

7.1 Introduction

The subject of this chapter is primary education under the Irish Free State government, which was established in 1922; and in particular the status and content of music and music in-service education in a period of major political change and subsequent re-adjustment. This chapter also contains a description of the appointment of Donnchadha O'Braoin as Head Organising Inspector for Music in 1932, and the Revised Programme of Instruction in Music which he issued in 1939. I go on to consider primary education in the 1930s and 1940s, which suffered from a narrowness of curriculum that resulted from the newly emerged State's attempt to re-establish itself after an extended period of colonialism. Finally, the chapter provides a critical evaluation of the development of music education and music in-service education during the period 1922 to the late 1940s, which were heavily influenced by the general curricular narrowness of this era.

7.2 The political background

The political upheaval of 1916 and its aftermath, which was referred to in the last chapter, finally resulted in the birth of the Irish Free State in 1922. Responsibility for education under the new government passed from the National Education Board to the home government in February 1922. Pádraig O Brolocháin, chief executive officer of National Education under the home government, declared: 'It is the intention of the new Government to work with all its might for the strengthening of the national fibre, by giving the language, history, music and tradition of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish school.' (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1922: 2-3). This philosophy was to underpin the educational policy of successive governments during the following decades.

The early cabinet consisted almost entirely of Catholics. Titley (1983) points out that there was nothing remarkable in this as 95% of the country was Catholic. What was significant was that the Catholic members of the cabinet were remarkably devout in their religion, and advocated the central role of religion in education (Titley, 1983: 90). McCarthy (1990: 287) notes that as Irish national identity became established, Catholicism and the Irish language became twin forces for asserting that identity. This was reflected in education in the national schools, and in fact this curricular influence was to endure for several decades.

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) had looked forward to the arrival of the national government, as they hoped that education would now become a priority concern (INTO: 1996: 3). However, apart from the new emphasis on the place of Irish language in the curriculum, 'there was no real structural change in any area of education while there remained a deeply rooted tendency on the part of the Civil Service to perpetuate old ways' (op. cit.: 3)

7.3 The First National Programme Conference on Primary Education

For some years prior to the establishment of the Irish Free State, national school teachers had been complaining about the impact of the subjects introduced by the Revised Programme in 1900, and the curriculum was considered overloaded. Teachers, as well as members of the general public, were also dissatisfied with the curriculum because it did not reflect Irish culture and ideals, and in 1920 the INTO decided to call a conference to frame a curriculum in accordance with Irish ideals and conditions.

The National Programme Conference on Primary Instruction met for the first time in 1921. It comprised members representing the INTO, the second level teachers' union, and several other interested parties. Professor Timothy Corcoran of University College Dublin, an ardent campaigner for the revival of the Irish language, was advisor to the Conference. In his prolific writings, Corcoran championed an extremely strict Catholic

view of education, and he also emphasised the corrupt nature of the child, and the need for strict authoritarian teaching. He was particularly 'alarmed' at the philosophies of Froebel, Kant, Dewey and Montessori and Pestalozzi (Titley, 1983: 94).

The Conference met on a number of occasions during 1921, and in January 1922 its report was issued. This was a short document of twenty-five pages, almost all of which related to the primary school curriculum. The Report called for 'the strengthening of the national fibre by giving the language, history, music and traditions of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish schools' (1922: 4). Additional recommendations related to the training of teachers, especially in Irish; suggestions for the teaching of Irish in schools where teachers still lacked proficiency; and school attendance. Bennett (2000: 10) points out that a programme of instruction should 'contain a theoretical framework so that the values and assumptions that underpin it can be examined critically, and its content should be seen as reflecting one perspective on what constitutes valued knowledge'. He points out that the preamble to the *National Programme of Primary Instruction* was just three pages long, and there was little attempt to discuss its curricular philosophy, or to provide methodological guidance. The main aim was to raise the status of the Irish language, and to ensure that this was done, the elimination of certain subjects was proposed. The report of the conference recommended that the syllabus be modified in three significant ways: firstly, that the Irish language be elevated to an eminent position; secondly, that several subjects be dropped to allow for the introduction of Irish; and thirdly, that a distinctly Irish flavour be given to other curricular areas. Bennett (op. cit.: 10-11) argues that the architects to the National Programme were 'engulfed in a wave of cultural nationalism, and they gave insufficient consideration to developing gradually'. However, this was understandable, because a long period of colonial rule was ending, and the 'nation builders were imbued with optimism and buoyancy in their desire to build an ideal Ireland'. (op.cit.: 11)

7.4 National School Curriculum under the Free State Government

The new Irish Free State government adopted the *Report of the National Programme Conference* and it became operational for all national schools in 1922. The status of Irish was considerably elevated, and it became an obligatory subject, to be taught for one hour per day. Whenever possible, it was also to be used as a medium of instruction and particularly so in infant classes. So that teachers would have sufficient time to devote to Irish it was proposed either to eliminate entirely or to reduce drastically the time given to the following subjects: drawing, elementary science, cookery and laundry, needlework, hygiene and nature study (National Programme of Primary Instruction, 1922: 4).

Music did not suffer under this curricular pruning, probably due to Corcoran's philosophy of music as an agent of both Gaelic and Catholic identity. Corcoran advocated two forms of vocal repertoire in education: Irish songs and plainchant (Corcoran, 1923: 338-340). The emphasis was still heavily on singing, and quite a lot of the curricular content was identical to that stipulated in 1900. However, the Programme proposed that all instruction in singing ' is to be given through the medium of Irish, and all songs are to be in the Irish language' (National Programme of Primary Instruction, 1922).

7.5 Teacher In-service Education following the First National Programme

The major challenge facing the home government was to prepare the teaching profession to teach Irish, as less than one third of the teachers were competent in Irish. A major summer in-service initiative was launched in July 1922, and this continued in the summers ahead (Hyland, 1987: 25). All national teachers under the age of forty-four were required to attend these compulsory summer courses in Irish, although by 1926, less than half of the teaching force held qualifications in Irish. (Bennett, 2000: 11). Teachers also went on vacation to *Gaeltacht* (Irish speaking) regions, to develop fluency

in Irish, as their professional rating by inspectors depended on their competence in Irish, and thus it was deemed extremely important for their career development.

The Department of Education set up a committee in 1924 to examine the recruitment and training of primary teachers, in the context of the state's policy of reviving the Irish language. This committee recommended the establishment of the preparatory college system, which would prepare approximately fifty per cent of the candidates for the teacher training colleges. Seven preparatory colleges were subsequently opened, commencing in 1927, and for over thirty years they were a major recruitment source for primary teachers (Jones, 1996: 101). To gain a place in a preparatory college, which offered a secondary education for those aspiring to follow primary teaching as a career, a student had to pass a highly competitive examination, which was heavily biased in favour of *Gaeltacht* (Irish speaking) regions, and those pupils with a high standard of Irish. Six of the colleges were Catholic, and run by religious orders, while one was a Church of Ireland college. The Catholic colleges were single sex, while the sole Church of Ireland college was mixed. In the colleges, Irish was the language for all activities, and the emphasis was on the formation of a Gaelic atmosphere. Even the kitchen staff and workmen had to be Irish speakers. The preparatory college scheme continued until the 1960s, when the Catholic colleges were closed, but the Church of Ireland college was kept open until 1995 (Jones, 1996: 104).

Under the newly established Irish government, the central role of religion in education was affirmed. Successive governments encouraged strict denominationalism in education. This official sponsorship of Catholicism was also apparent in music in-service education. In 1926, the first summer school in plainchant was offered for teachers. This had official Department approval, which meant that teachers who attended were entitled to Extra Personal Vacation Days (EPV) during the following school year. These plainchant summer schools flourished until the 1940s. They equipped teachers to prepare their pupils to participate in the liturgical festivals, which were held all over the country. The liturgical festivals were a major stimulus for teaching plainchant, and also

provided an outlet for performing it, and were encouraged and promoted by the Catholic clergy. Children's choirs gathered at a central church venue, and sang the Common of the Mass. After the service, the various school choirs were examined individually, and were each evaluated. Hymns in Irish were also featured at these liturgical festivals, and many hymns were also translated into Irish (Rooney, 1952: 219).

So, as well as being viewed as a useful vehicle for the transmission of the Irish culture, singing was also perceived as a useful tool for the transmission and manifestation of religious values. All students at the Catholic teacher training colleges were obliged to obtain a copy of the *Eucharistic Congress Hymn Book*, and learn its repertoire. They were warned of the difficulty they would experience in seeking employment if they were not competent to conduct music for Mass and Benediction. Perusal of the teachers' journals of this era reveals that many advertisements for teachers requested that they be able to teach the choir for Sunday services. Many parishes also offered free accommodation for teachers who could play the organ at Sunday Mass.

7.6 Second National Programme Conference of 1926

Very soon, teachers began to express concern regarding the National Programme of Primary Instruction, as they found the aspirations regarding the teaching of Irish too difficult to implement, and the INTO requested a review. The Second National Programme was thus issued in 1926. This modified the primary school programme to take account of the difficulties that had been encountered by teachers. This Second Programme recommended a more transitional programme, which it hoped would allay the teachers' fears, while still satisfying enthusiasts. It recognised that a more gradual approach both to the teaching of Irish and to teaching through the medium of Irish would have to be adopted. The requirements in other subjects were reduced to make more time available for Irish. The aspirations regarding music did not change, and it was again recommended that as a general rule, all the songs taught throughout the course should be in Irish, especially in the junior classes (National Programme Conference, 1926: 14). This programme also contained the following introductory note:

> The programme we recommend in music is below that which, in ordinary circumstance, we would wish to see in our primary schools. We are, however, prevented from recommending a more modern and complete programme by the facts alluded to above.
> (Report and Programme presented by the National Programme Conference to the Minister for Education, 1926: 14).

These 'facts alluded to' referred to the problems involved in the revival of the Irish language. The new curriculum also upheld the place of native music. 'We possess a remnant of native music of great intrinsic and national value, handed down traditionally. It is of utmost importance that it be preserved, interpreted and appreciated.'(op. cit.: 13-14).

In the years that followed, the promotion of Irish and the fostering of nationalism in other subjects continued. No extra in-service education was offered however, as this was a modification rather than a revision of the 1922 National Programme.

7.7 DeValera and the Revised National Programme of 1934

Fianna Fáil, led by Éamonn De Valera, came to power in 1932. De Valera, who as one of the few surviving leaders of the 1916 Rising, was held in special awe by the Irish public, dominated Irish political life for many decades (Titley, 1983: 126). Kennedy (1990:29) asserts that DeValera's long tenure as an Irish political leader makes it imperative that his attitude to the arts be considered closely. De Valera advocated an Irish culture comprised of native sports, music, dancing, folklore and literature. He would support cultural endeavour only if it was in keeping with his religious and nationalistic beliefs (op. cit.: 29).

De Valera was a staunch supporter of the Irish language and of Catholicism. His vision of Ireland was of a nation of 'frugal virtuous peasants'. (Titley, 1983: 126). He was keen to press ahead with the policy of Gaelicisation (Hyland, 1987: 26). Along with many of his contemporaries, he was impatient with the rate of progress in the promotion

of Irish, and believed that the major responsibility for the revival of the language rested with the schools. He insisted on a return to the ideals contained in the 1922 Programme. Yet another Programme Conference was called in 1933, following which, in 1934, the Revised National Programme was issued. In this, there was a return to the aspirations of the 1922 Programme regarding the Irish language, and the teaching of English in infant classes was forbidden if the teacher possessed the necessary competence to teach through Irish. While a limited curriculum was proposed, the teaching of singing stayed on the curriculum, for nationalistic and religious reasons. This remained, to a broad extent, the official curriculum of the national school system until 1971, though the music programme was modified somewhat in 1939, as this chapter will later describe.

DeValera also was responsible for making the Primary Certificate Examination compulsory in 1943. Prior to this, the examination, which was introduced in 1929, was optional, and was only taken by approximately 25% of eligible pupils, the vast majority being from large city schools (Coolahan, 1981: 43). The assessment, which previously included written, oral and practical elements, now became solely a written examination in Irish, English and arithmetic. The INTO resisted the concept of compulsory testing at primary level. However, DeValera persisted, in spite of the teachers' opposition.

> I do not care that teachers are offended by it, I say that it is right that the State should inspect the schools; see what the teacher is doing during the day and how he is teaching. I am less interested in the teacher's method of teaching than I am in the results he achieves, and the test I would apply would be the test of an examination.......Let us who represent the community say here and now that there will be an examination no matter who may oppose it.'
> (Dáil Eireann Proceedings, 1941, reported in Hyland and Milne, 1987).

The element of compulsion attached to the Primary Certificate meant that the curriculum became very narrow in focus, concentrating mainly on Irish, English and Mathematics. De Valera however, was unapologetic. He believed that primary education should concentrate on the bare essential – the three R's with, of course Irish. In the words of DeValera: '*I am cutting off every frill possible so as to make certain the essentials are*

properly done.' (Hyland and Milne, 1987). This meant that the all other subjects were regarded as peripheral to the curriculum.

De Valera also made himself unpopular with teachers by introducing salary cuts. Teacher training places were reduced, though ironically the provision for training nuns was increased. (Titley, 1983: 133). The marriage ban was introduced, whereby female teachers were obliged to retire on marriage, and a regulation passed in 1938 forced women teachers to retire on reaching the age of sixty years. Nuns, however, were excluded from this directive. A period of tension between the government and the teaching profession prevailed (INTO, 1996: 9-18).

7.8 The Revised Programme of Instruction in Music for National Schools, 1939.

In 1932, Donnchadha O'Braoin, a primary teacher who had taught in Cork, and who was very involved in choral work there, was appointed to the position of Head Organising Inspector of Music, and for the next twenty years he worked enthusiastically to promote music in the education system. O'Braoin deplored the contemporary state of music in the primary schools, declaring that from 1916 to 1922, progress was almost at a standstill as a result of the political confusion, and that from 1922 on, the concentration on the Irish language created further 'dislocation' (1952: 37).

O'Braoin was responsible for the introduction of the *Revised Programme of Instruction in Music* in 1939, a programme he himself described as 'rational and detailed' (1952: 38). The *Revised Programme* stated that:

> From the beginning the teacher should keep in mind the final end, i.e. that the pupils should leave school having:
> - Memorised accurately as many songs as possible (words and music)
> - Cultivated the habit of listening carefully and intelligently to music
> - Acquired the power and more especially the desire to take part in choral singing. This implies a satisfactory knowledge of sight reading, and should include practice in the writing of music notation
> (Department of Education, 1939: 2).

This was an advance on the previous programmes, insofar as listening to music was now included. However, it is evident that the main emphasis was still on song singing, and on technical choral singing skills. The programme was outlined systematically, and also provided practical advice for the teacher. A set of *Notes for Teachers* was published in conjunction with the syllabus, and this outlined methods for teaching the basic components of the course, under the following headings:

1. Vocal technique
2. Ear training and the modulator
3. Attention and memory
4. Notation and Sight-Reading
5. Songs

Tonic Sol-fa was prescribed as the method of instruction up to and including 4th Class, and staff notation from 5th Class upwards. However, the transition from Tonic Sol-fa to staff notation rarely took place, 'for the simple reason that it was the occasional teacher indeed who had any acquaintance with staff notation' (Fleischmann, 1971: 71). Indeed, O'Braoin himself objected '*in toto* to any attempt to introduce staff notation, until sol-fa work has reached a much more advanced stage than it has...Forty five years of close observation of primary school work has given me a strong mistrust of any premature attempt to teach staff notation. In fact it is advocated only by those who are without actual practical experience of primary schools' (1952: 43).

It is also interesting to note that O'Braoin himself published booklets containing songs, arranged for choirs, and notated completely in Tonic Sol-fa, as his predecessor, Goodman, had done. As the use of Tonic Sol-fa to teach Irish songs was the norm, a multitude of such songbooks were published in Ireland during this era (Kelly, 1978: 245).

Writing in 1971, Professor Aloys Fleischmann of University College Cork declared that:

> Vocal music has been a compulsory subject in Irish primary schools since 1900, but not until 1932, with the appointment of the late Donnchadha O'Braoin as organising inspector of Music, was any determined effort made to put music on some proper basis; first of all, by the issuing of a guide-book for teachers; secondly through a quite extraordinarily achievement by Donnchadha O'Braoin. He succeeded in making it necessary for students to pass a singing test before being accepted for entrance to one of the training colleges....If the test was failed, exemption was possible only for boys securing a sufficiently high mark in the Leaving Cert examination.
> (Fleischmann, 1971: 69).

Fleischmann was incorrect in stating that the appointment of O'Braoin was the first determined effort to put music on a *'proper basis'* because this statement completely overlooked the work of Goodman and his team of organisers in the opening years of the century, but O'Braoin's appointment did in fact mark the first determined effort by the home government to actively promote the teaching of music.

7.9 Music In-service Education following the Revised Programme of Instruction in Music, 1939

O'Braoin was very concerned with the actual capability of the teaching force to teach music adequately, recognising that 'The students enter the colleges without the necessary musical foundation, and consequently leave them unable to teach music effectively, thus perpetuating the very conditions which denied to themselves a proper foundation' (1952: 37). He also believed that because approximately seventy per cent of Irish schools had just one or two teachers, it would be essential that all primary teachers should be capable of teaching music effectively. This echoed the view expressed earlier by his predecessor, Peter Goodman (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1905: 4). To help advance this aspiration, O'Braoin succeeded in making it compulsory that all entrants to teacher training colleges had to pass an examination in singing (Fleischmann, 1971: 70), and these singing examinations persisted into the 1970s.

To remedy the low levels of mastery among the teaching profession, O'Braoin introduced annual summer music courses for primary school teachers, and between 1939 and 1951, over 4,000 teachers attended them – a number that O'Braoin claimed represented about one third of the teaching force. O'Braoin believed that these courses were very effective, but that they were restricted by the inadequate staffing levels, as he had just three assistants (O'Braoin, 1952: 38).

Much effort was devoted to developing vocal technique during this period, and indeed a very wide vocal range was expected from the children and teachers. O'Braoin advocated choral music, declaring that 'Choral singing is the obvious and inevitable subject in primary schools, since it does not demand specialist teachers or a long and arduous period of training, as instrumental music does' (O'Braoin, 1952: 40-41). He also believed that one of the significant functions of primary school music education was to ensure that 'the music for Church services is performed with the dignity and reverence which it demands'(op.cit.:41). He believed that the music curriculum should not be expanded to include elements such as 'the general use of percussion bands and eurythmics' until music standards had risen in Irish schools (op. cit.: 42).

However, the organisation of tin-whistle bands and percussion bands did enjoy some limited success from the late 1930s onwards. The INTO journals of this time feature articles on the organisation of percussion bands, and Carl Hardebeck, an Irish composer, also published a tin-whistle tutor for use in Irish schools in 1937 (Hardebeck, 1937). The teaching of tin-whistle through Tonic Sol-fa became popular at this time.

A noteworthy initiative in music education in the 1930s was a series of radio broadcasts that were organised in consultation with the Department of Education. Beginning in 1936, and continuing until 1941, the programmes consisted of concerts played by the Army Band, with commentaries describing the instruments played and the composers' lives (Gorham, 1967: 109). Irish music, ballads, children's percussion bands and tin whistle and harmonica tuition were also featured, and lessons on plain chant were given

by Father Burke, who had initiated the summer schools in plain chant. Aimed at school children, the broadcasts would have been a source of ongoing music in-service education for the teachers at this time, although only a small proportion of schools availed of the service, ranging from 400 in 1937 to 750 in 1939, and only 76 in 1941. (op. cit. : 110) This participation rate was probably due to limited access to radio sets, because while the Department of Education supported the broadcasts, they did not offer financial help to schools to help procure radios. The impact of World War Two caused the cancellation of these broadcasts in 1941 (Gorham, 1967: 144-145).

The Department of Education also organised annual Summer Schools of Music in Dublin, from 1946 – 1949, at which courses were given in choral and orchestral conducting, instrumental performance and composition (Fleischmann, 1952: 120). These Summer Schools were geared to the music 'specialist', and more second level teachers than primary teachers attended. Admission to the choral and orchestral conducting classes was confined to conductors of school or adult choirs or orchestras, while the instrumental and composition classes were reserved for experienced performers. No fees were charged, and travelling expenses were reimbursed. This represented a valuable initiative for the more musically educated teachers, as records show that in 1946, for example, there was an attendance of over sixty at the two weeks' course of lectures given on the training of school orchestras. In 1948 and 1949, B.W. Appleby, Organiser of Schools' Music in Doncaster, gave lectures and demonstrations on school music. Many other guests were invited from Europe to give input in the teaching of instrumental performance, composition and music appreciation (Fleischmann, 1952: 118-121).

7.10 Education in the 1930s and the 1940s: Behind the 'Green Curtain'

From 1922 to the 1950s, the curriculum was narrow and there was heavy emphasis on Irish, English and Mathematics. This was due to the pressures exerted by the Primary Certificate examination, made compulsory by DeValera in 1943. Furthermore, since DeValera had changed the format of the examination to a completely written

assessment, the emphasis was on written Irish, rather than on oral Irish, and the examination, in fact, was contributing to the decline of the language. Pedagogy was didactic and textbook dominated, and little attention was paid to artistic education. Writing in 1945, Kenneth Redding stated that 'Irish education is narrow, stereotyped, uninspired, unenthusiastic, without fervour or imagination. It is Victorian' (Kennedy, 1990: 50). Sean O' Faoileáin argued of Irish society in 1951 that 'we are snoring gently behind the Green Curtain that we have been rigging up for the last thirty years.' This, too, was undoubtedly reflected in Irish primary education. It was based on a philosophy and a curriculum that were archaic and outmoded, and curricular reform was long overdue. Coolahan (1989: 27) argues that the national school system after independence did not present an impressive image. 'When the curricular and organisational matters of the 1920s had been achieved, there was a striking lack of policy or public concern for the national school system.' The next chapter will investigate the events that led to the subsequent curricular development in greater detail.

7.11 Discussion

McCarthy (1999: 136) points out that music education and development in the period between 1922 and 1960 was an integral part of the highly complex and challenging process of constructing a new nation state. Emphasis was heavily on reviving the Irish language and promoting Catholic Church music. Mastery of the Irish language became the primary goal of education policy, and several subjects, including science, were removed from the curriculum to allow for the centrality of Irish. In fact, Durcan (1972: 156-157) asserts that since the foundation of the State the Irish language has played a big part in the stagnation of the educational system. 'It was to be expected that the State would make efforts to preserve the language, but the obsession to make it the spoken language of the country has resulted in a neglect of other educational activities' (op. cit.: 157). Music was promoted, not for its aesthetic and intrinsic merit, but rather to act as a tool in the promotion of what became the 'twin markers of Irish identity' – Irish language and Catholicism (McCarthy, 1999: 287). The in-service education offered was

designed to equip the teaching profession to address the new emphases in the curriculum, with Irish being viewed as a priority area.

At a time when established models of music education were being evaluated and new concepts formed in Britain and elsewhere, the Programme Conferences of 1922, 1926 and 1934 resulted in a music programme that was outmoded, and over dependent on the use of Tonic Sol-fa. In fact, Irish composer and scholar, John Larchet, claimed at the opening of a teachers' music course in Cork that he 'thought it possible that the British had imposed the Tonic Sol-fa system on this country as part of a well-designed plan to prevent our children from being educated in Music' (INTO, 1939a: 695). Areas of music education other than song singing were neglected. The shallowness of music teaching in the new regime was frequently criticised, both then and since. 'Both repertoire and pedagogical orientation were subservient to the propagation of a language that continued to lose significance in contemporary Irish culture' (McCarthy, 1990: 283). While the Revised Music Programme of 1939 included reference to an aspect of music other than song singing, namely listening to music, the emphasis was still heavily on choral singing and technical training. Most schools did not in fact have access to radio or gramophone sets to facilitate such a music appreciation programme.

The use of music as a tool in the teaching of Irish was not satisfactory for many reasons. Not surprisingly, pupils experienced difficulty in learning the words of the repertoire. Inspectors' reports from the late 1920s onwards complained of the pupils' superficial knowledge of Irish language songs (e.g. Department of Education, Report of 1929-30: 38; Report of 1930-31: 22; Report of 1932-33: 26). Similarly, when the Revised Programme of Instruction in Music was introduced in 1939, the Kerry County Committee of the INTO complained that it was beyond the capabilities of teachers and pupils. They concluded that the teaching of Irish language songs was not a musical process; since the words presented such an obstacle that music learning was 'less a pleasure than a strain' (INTO, 1939b: 1014).

The in-service education offered in the early years of independence concentrated on Irish language, so that by 1943, two thirds of the teachers were rated competent to teach Irish. Proficiency in Irish was very important for teachers, as their professional rating by inspectors depended on their personal proficiency, therefore courses in Irish would naturally have assumed high priority for the teachers.

O'Braoin, with his enthusiasm and zeal for music education, could be considered a worthy successor to Peter Goodman, who had died in office in 1909. While there were several other Head Organising inspectors for Music in the intervening years, the political and educational situations rendered their impact minimal. Prior to his appointment in 1932, O'Braoin, (or Denis Breen as he was then known, as he used the English form of his name prior to his appointment) came to prominence through his involvement with children's choirs in Cork, and through his writings on the importance of music in education in the INTO journals. O'Braoin was responsible for the introduction of annual summer courses in music, which commenced in 1939, and these continue to this day, though the inspectors are no longer involved in their delivery. While O'Braoin himself boasted that 4,000 teachers attended from 1939 to 1951 (1952: 38), the records do not tell us how many of these were repeat attendees. It is quite possible that many teachers attended on multiple occasions, as there was an incentive for attendance on summer in-service, in the shape of three Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days, which could be taken at the discretion of the teacher in the following school year. One retired teacher I interviewed, told me that she attended music courses every summer – 'always music – I loved the singing.' (Interview with M.L. 24/9/2002).

The other marker of Irish identity – Catholicism – also exerted influence on the music curriculum, and the subsequent in-service education offered to teachers. Courses in plainchant were first offered in the 1920s, and to this day, a summer course in plainchant is offered every year in Maynooth.

The practice of labelling some children 'non-singers' continued during this era. In his 'Notes for Teachers' issued in 1939, O'Braoin emphasised in italics that:

> *No singing of any kind should be allowed in any class until absolute unison has first been secured by* (1) Weeding out the hopeless cases; (2) *gradually improving the defectives,* practising them with the good singers first in groups of two, three, or four notes and so on, to the complete scale.
> (Department of Education, Notes for Teachers, 1939: 5).

O'Braoin cautioned that if a child found it difficult to sing above a certain pitch, but was accurate lower down, he was probably suffering from a 'physical or nervous defect, and the school doctor should be consulted' (op.cit.: 4). He warned that children who could produce one fixed sound should be segregated. These children should not be labelled 'non-singers' too quickly, but should be re-tested annually up to Fourth Class. If they did not manage to sing in tune in Fourth Class, then they were 'permanently defective, and they should be put at other work during singing lessons' (op.cit.: 4).

Music education in this era was thus heavily based on song singing, and the song repertoire was chosen to promote Irish and religious values, rather than to provide an aesthetic education for children. Tonic Sol-fa was still in widespread use, even though it had long been dropped in neighbouring countries. The music in-service courses offered to teachers propagated this narrowness of curriculum, and were heavily based on song singing and technical choral education. Teachers who lacked confidence in their own singing ability must have become further alienated from music teaching. If the Department of Education recognised the presence of 'defectives' and 'non-singers' among the pupil population, it stood to reason that a similar diagnosis could be applied to the adult population, including the teaching profession. This must have had an inhibiting influence on many teachers.

This narrow concept of music in education was also reflected in society in general. In the 1930s, Conradh na Gaeilge, an organisation dedicated to the promotion of the Irish

language and Irish culture, launched an anti-jazz campaign, claiming that jazz had a denationalising influence on Irish culture (Ó'Fearaíl, 1975: 47). The organisation sent a deputation to the government in 1933, requesting that more Irish music be played on Irish radio, and that the airing of jazz music be restricted. In 1935, the organisation requested a total boycott of jazz music (op.cit.: 47 - 48). Conradh na Gaeilge continued their campaign in the years that followed, until the government finally banned 'jazz and crooning' from the airwaves in the early 1940s (Gibbons, 1996: 75).

7.12 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the developments that occurred in primary education following the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922. It has attempted to identify the reasons why the music curriculum and music in-service education lagged behind that of neighbouring countries, and why the programme content was heavily based on Irish and religious songs. The chapter also described the appointment of Donnchadha O' Braoin as Organising Inspector for Music in 1932, and documented the curricular emphases in music that he spearheaded.

The key aspects pertaining to music education and music in-service education that I identified during this period were:

- The political background influenced the music curriculum, as the newly appointed home government sought to establish the Irish language and the Catholic religion as symbols of Irish identity. Music became a tool in the teaching of Irish even though, at times, the words were rated too difficult for the pupils
- It was also believed during this era that the class teacher should be responsible for teaching music
- Tonic Sol-fa persisted as the chosen method of teaching music, and the curriculum was heavily weighted in favour of song-singing. Even though the concept of music appreciation was introduced in the 1930s and the 1940s, few schools had access to audio equipment to enable this policy become a reality

- The concept of the 'non-singer' persisted. O'Braoin recommended 'weeding out the hopeless cases' and giving support to the 'defectives'. If these ' defectives' didn't improve by Fourth Class, he recommended that they should be given other work during singing lesson (O'Braoin, 1939: 4). Such treatment must have had impact on many individuals' musical self esteem

- In-service education in the years following the establishment of the Free State in 1922 concentrated on the Irish language, and this was compulsory for all teachers aged less than forty-four years. Summer schools in plainchant were offered from 1926, and the clergy encouraged participation on these. O'Braoin introduced elective summer courses in music from 1939, and the records show that these were well attended, though many of the participants may have attended on multiple occasions

- Education following Home Rule was narrow, and the dominance of the Primary Certificate Examination meant that schools tended to concentrate on the three examination subjects, which were Irish, English and Mathematics, a factor which led to neglect of arts subjects generally

- The evidence leads to the conclusion that both the content of the music curriculum, and the methodology used in teaching it in the classroom were inadequate and pedagogically unfriendly

The Arts Council (1979: 21) pointed out that educational systems are closely interlocked with wider political, economic, social and moral elements of the society at large, therefore at certain stages of development school systems can only achieve limited goals, and the place occupied by the arts may not have high priority. Certainly, this was true of primary education in Ireland in the era following Home Rule. The next chapter will describe in detail efforts that were made to reform the curriculum, and give music a central place in primary education.

Chapter Eight: Towards the Primary Curriculum of 1971, and Subsequent Music In-service Education

8.1 Introduction

In Chapter Seven, I concluded that primary education in the years following Home Rule was narrow, and that the arts subjects were generally neglected. When retrospectively viewed, both the content of the music curriculum and the teaching methodology could be considered inadequate and pedagogically unfriendly. In this chapter, I describe the events that led to the formulation and publication of the Primary Curriculum of 1971. I will specifically examine the 'new' music curriculum, and consider the in-service education provided for teachers to help them to implement this. Finally, I will argue that the music curriculum was not satisfactorily implemented as intended, and I will attempt to identify some of the reasons for this.

As well as using documentary sources to obtain the evidence on which this chapter is based, I also made use of oral sources, as described in Chapter Five. I interviewed individuals who worked as inspectors, music trainers and teachers during this era, to extend and lend greater depth to the data gleaned from the documentary research. I make use of a quantity of direct quotation from the oral evidence in this chapter, to lend immediacy and richness to the writing. As I discussed in Chapter Five, Garraghan (1946: 407) recommends this approach, arguing that, it can be much more effective in portraying a person or situation than any paraphrase or summary could be.

Note: contemporary documents now use ' tonic solfa' instead of 'Tonic Sol-fa', which was used in the earlier years of the period of investigation; therefore I also use the form which was common during the era under consideration.

8.2 Towards curricular reform

Economic historians are agreed that between 1946 and 1951, the Irish economy experienced remarkably rapid growth (Kennedy, 1990: 66). The country took a more vigorous role in international affairs, joining the Food and Agriculture Organisation in 1946, the World Health Organisation in 1948, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation in 1948, and the Council of Europe in 1949. In 1948, the link with the British Commonwealth was finally broken by the declaration of the Irish Republic. The beginning of co-ordinated economic planning signalled by the publication of a Government White Paper on Economic Development in 1958 heralded a period of unrivalled prosperity. Irish television commenced broadcasting on New Year's Day 1961. Television had a profound impact on Irish cultural development. It provided proof of the dominant influence of the English language, and served as an agent of Anglo-Americanisation (Kennedy, 1990: 142). It was also indicative of a growing openness to foreign cultures. Attitudinal changes were also influenced by Ireland's links with international organizations such as United Nations, the Council of Europe and Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and there was an aspiration to join the European Economic Community.

The time was becoming ripe too for educational reform. As the previous chapter has described, in the 1920s, 1930s and the 1940s, the primary curriculum was narrow, and there was heavy emphasis on the core subjects of Irish, English and Mathematics. Dissatisfaction with the general primary school programme was expressed in various quarters from the 1940s onwards. Criticism focused on the narrowness of the curriculum, and calls were made for the subject areas to be broadened, and for a more 'child-centred' approach (INTO, 1947; Department of Education's Council of Education, 1954).

Hyland (1987: 26-27) suggests that it was actually the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) that initiated the review which culminated in the new curriculum of 1971, with its publication of a *Plan for Education* in 1947. At this time, the INTO were in dispute with DeValera's government, having been on a seven month strike in

Dublin 'as a result of widespread dissatisfaction among teachers with the direction of educational policy and with their treatment at the hands of the educational administration' (INTO, 1996: 1).

The *Plan for Education* was the work of a special committee appointed in 1943 to set out in a general way 'the educational ideals of the organisation' (INTO, 1947: 2). The report was highly critical of Government policy towards the Irish language, and suggested that the Department of Education, so eager to promote the language, was in fact 'contributing to its demise' through its insistence on written examinations. The Plan also criticised the Department's policy with regard to the cultivation of musical taste and appreciation, warning that 'both our own treasure of native music and the masterpieces of Europe have been all but suffocated by the all-pervading jazz. And yet we stand by, impotent and unseeing, our only antidote being a meagre stock of school-songs – and a tin whistle!' (INTO, 1947: 55). The *Plan* urged more emphasis on music appreciation, acquisition of radio sets in every school, a scaling down of the ear-training requirements, introduction of violin lessons in larger schools, and an expansion of music education at pre-service and in-service levels (op. cit.: 54-58). The INTO also called in the *Plan* for a Council of Education to be established, which would review all aspects of educational policy in a Post-War Ireland (op. cit.: 18-22).

The Fianna Fáil government rejected the report, and alleged that the points raised in *A Plan for Education* were not worthy of consideration. In fact the official verdict was that educational progress had been made '*ach amháin gur chuir an stailc isteach go mór ar chuid de scoileanna sa Bhaile Átha Chliath.*' (except that the strike interfered greatly with some Dublin schools) (INTO, 1996: 47).

Preparations were now underway for a general election, and the INTO, who were very hostile to DeValera's government because of his handling of the 1946 strike, as well as the lack of consultation in educational matters generally, firmly supported a newly emerging political party, Clann an Poblachta. In fact, it has been written that a notable feature of the new party was 'the number of teachers associated with it' (INTO: 1996:

16). The INTO club in Dublin virtually became Clann na Poblachta's headquarters, from which a nationwide campaign was directed (Coogan, 1993: 636). Clann na Poblachta entered into coalition with other political interests, and succeeded in toppling DeValera's Fianna Fáil at the election. The newly installed government committed to a wide range of the INTO demands, which included settlement of the long-outstanding pay and pensions issue, and gave an undertaking to set up a Council of Education, which would 'concentrate on the higher aims of education' (INTO, 1968: 241).

The Council of Education was established in 1950 to 'advise the Minister, in so far as pertains to the powers, duties and functions of the State, upon such matters relating to educational theory and practice as they think fit and upon any educational questions and problems referred to them by him' (Department of Education, 1954: 1). The Council published its report in 1954, and this report also highlighted the narrowness of the primary curriculum. The Council's *Report* also criticised the current music programme, and noted that:

> The movement initiated in recent years to extend and improve the teaching of music in our schools is one that the Council unreservedly commends; the co-operation of the Department and the teachers in this field is deserving of the highest praise. That their efforts be further extended and enlarged is the wish of every member of this Council.
> (Department of Education 1954: 184)

The Council insisted that there should be 'no school without a teacher competent to teach vocal music.' It also recommended that in the future all teachers should be given a training in musical appreciation, whether they were qualified to teach vocal music or not. While it recognised the value of public performance, and advocated the promotion of school bands and choirs, the report stated that the training of choirs and bands was secondary to the training that should be given to all children. It also advocated that all pupils should be given a training in music appreciation, as 'A generation trained to appreciate and love music, to understand that the lack of a voice does not deter from the enjoyment of song will in time be followed by generations possessing greater gifts of music. It is on this basis that our musical traditions can be rebuilt' (op.cit.: 186).

The Council urged the acquisition of a radio set in each school, and advocated that a programme in music appreciation should be broadcast regularly. The Council upheld the inclusion of Irish songs, but stated that the words of these songs should be learned at Irish class, and it also supported the inclusion of religious music, 'The claims of religious music, plain chant, hymns etc, to a place in the regular curriculum cannot be disregarded and wherever circumstances permit such music should find a place in the Music class. The influence of church musical standards has always been considerable and its importance in religious worship demands that is should be taught in the schools'(op.cit. : 186).

At this time, a national organisation, Fóras Éireann, was also active in the promotion of music in Ireland in the 1950s. The organisation commissioned Professor Joseph Groocock in 1957 to survey music in the republic of Ireland. Funded by the Carnegie Trust and the Dorothy Mayer Foundation, the Report was published as *A General Survey of Music in the Republic of Ireland* in 1961. This report pointed out that music was an official subject on the syllabus of all primary schools, and that national teachers studied music along with other subjects at their training colleges. In theory, then, they should be as well qualified to teach music as to teach reading, writing and arithmetic. However, Groocock asserted that 'No justifiable claim can be made that the average Irish child at present leaves his primary school with as good a grounding in music as in other school subjects' (Groocock, 1961: 9).

Groocock insisted that there was too much complacency regarding the use of tonic solfa. He pointed out that when solfa was invented, it was as a means to an end, but that many teachers were now using solfa 'as if it were an end in itself.' He did not want the abolition of tonic solfa, rather that it should be used in conjunction with staff notation (op.cit.: 10).

Groocock concluded that the only way to 'improve the standard of music in primary schools was to start with the teachers', a sentiment that was expressed by Goodman in

1905 (Board of Commissioners, 1900: 81). Groocock recognised that the training given in Training Colleges was not sufficient to turn the teachers into effective music teachers. He identified that not all teachers attended music in-service education; therefore 'something drastic' was needed. His drastic proposal was that the authorities should recognise that the teaching of music was a specialised art, and that five hundred specialist teachers be appointed, each responsible for music in ten primary schools in a certain area (op. cit.: 23).

This educational debate was not happening in a vacuum – rather it formed part of the significant changes in attitude that were occurring in Irish society generally. Political and economic programmes demonstrated attitudes which were a marked departure from De Valera's dream of a rural self sufficient Ireland. Economists now began to emphasise education as an economic investment, where the prosperity of a technological society depended on the availability of a suitably educated workforce. Education was viewed as a 'social escalator' and it was in this context that education was debated. Education was also assuming new a priority for the Government, because from 1961 the population began to increase, and therefore a need for additional schools emerged. A new generation was growing up in a period of prosperity (Kennedy, 1990: 143).

However, the curricular review which was advocated by the INTO's Plan for Education (1947) and the Department's Council of Education (1954) took a long time to happen. The review finally commenced under Donogh O'Malley, who was appointed Minister of Education in 1966, and who revolutionised the Irish educational system. O'Malley introduced free second level education - up to this year, pupils had to pay for secondary education - he closed small rural schools and introduced free school transport to bring children to the larger schools. The Primary School Certificate Examination was finally abolished during his term of office.

O'Malley also invited the Primary School inspectorate to produce a submission on primary schools, which would form the basis for a Green Paper, and ultimately a White Paper on Education. Various inspectors took responsibility for different aspects of the

proposed paper, and during January and February 1967, a very comprehensive document was drawn up. The White Paper never came to fruition, however. In his memoirs, Seán O'Connor, who was senior Civil Servant in the Department of Education at that time, gives a very succinct reason why this was so. He nominates O'Malley as the 'folk hero of Irish Education', but declares he 'was all the more a hero because he had common failings' (1986: 192). O'Connor stated that the Minister was a restless man, who seemed to have a foreboding that his time was short. (O'Malley actually died suddenly in office in 1968). On hearing that it would take up to three years before any definitive proposals could be made in the form of a White Paper, O'Malley lost interest, and stated that there were many matters more urgent and important, and, in the words of O'Connor, 'that finished the Green Paper' (op. cit.: 193). However, the small group of primary inspectors who were working on the curriculum of the national schools 'were so much involved in the project that they were unwilling to discontinue' (op. cit.: 193). Through the perseverance of these inspectors, the curriculum formulation proceeded, and a draft was issued to teaching and management interest groups in 1968. In Spring 1968, approximately 200 schools, out of a total of 4,300 were chosen to pilot aspects of the revised curriculum. Some small changes were made in the draft programme before its publication in a definitive form in 1971 and the 'New Curriculum' as it was called, became the official national school curriculum in 1971.

8.3 The Primary Curriculum of 1971

The 'New Curriculum' represented a fundamental change of direction for primary education, with cultural nationalism being replaced by a philosophy of education that placed the child at the centre of the educational process. The emphasis was now on the child as an individual, and the function of the curriculum was to cater for the 'full and harmonious development of each child' (Department of Education, 1971: 13). Bennett (1994: 16-17) points out that the 1971 Curriculum was a significant landmark in the history of primary education in the Republic, because its child-centred philosophy had far reaching implications for 'teaching methods, resource provision, in-service education, curricular content and curriculum development'. The 1971 Curriculum allowed for greater flexibility in teaching style and content. It allowed a wide measure of

freedom to the teacher and the pupil, and was designed 'to enable the child to live a full life as a child and to equip him to avail of further education so that he may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society' (Department of Education, 1971: 12). The curriculum was published in two volumes, and was offered as a general guideline rather than as a blueprint for what should be taught.

Although the curriculum stated that it was to be regarded as 'an integrated entity, involving linguistic mathematical and artistic organisation of the child's knowledge and experience' (Department of Education, 1971: 20), for the purpose of convenience its various aspects were arranged under seven headings as follows: Irish, English, Mathematics; Social and Environmental Science (including History, Geography, Environmental Studies and Civics); Art and Craft Activities; Music; and Physical Education.

8.4 Music in the 1971 Curriculum

The 1971 music curriculum was innovative and ambitious, and represented a marked departure from its predecessor, both in terms of content, methodology and its child centred approach. It proposed that children would use music as a means of self-expression and that music would be an integral part of school life.

The introduction declared that:

> Music should...be a pleasant and living element of school life; it should be a vital means of self expression, a preparation for social life and a basis for future music appreciation and creation...The teacher should ensure that the children's powers of perception and performance are developed by providing them with the most effective and up-to date musical skills and by enlarging their music experience in every way possible, through song-singing, music making and listening or moving to music.
> (Department of Education, 1971: 211).

The main components of the new music curriculum were singing, vocal technique, ear training, music and movement, literacy, and creativity; and the principle of integration with other school subjects was advocated. The programme was divided as follows:

For Junior and Senior Infants:

1. Song singing and vocal technique
2. Ear Training
3. Music and Movement
4. Music Corner

For First to Sixth Classes:

1. Song singing and vocal technique
2. Ear Training
3. Creative work

The curriculum recommended that approximately half of the music teaching time should be devoted to song singing, and the second half to the other aspects. For the first time since the introduction of music to Irish primary schools, staff notation in conjunction with tonic solfa was prescribed as the system of music notation, rather than solfa as a system on its own. Formal reading of music, on an abbreviated three line stave, was recommended from First Class, and it was hoped that on leaving primary school, children would be sight reading fluently in keys with up to four sharps and flats, using tonic solfa names to vocalize the notes. The Curriculum expressed the aspiration that this method of combining staff and solfa would be in general use in the schools in a short time (op. cit.: 214). This was significant, because not only did it anticipate the achievement of music literacy within a short time, but also it indirectly demanded a knowledge of and skill in music notation from primary teachers if the curriculum was to be implemented successfully. This of course, would have considerable implications for in-service provision. Listening to music was also advocated, and a list of suggested pieces given, most of which were in the Western Classical tradition (Department of Education, 1971: 270 – 271).

For the first time too, since music was introduced as to the primary curriculum in Ireland, the concept of creativity was proposed. Activities such as 'question and answer

phrases', 'interval work' and 'setting notes to rhythmic patterns' were suggested (op. cit.: 244; 251-253; 255-256). Composing was not emphasised in this section; where the sub-categories were 'rhythmic', 'vocal', and 'project work'. However, the concept of creativity was more an aspiration rather than a reality, as I will discuss later in this chapter.

While the curriculum did not prescribe the amount of time to be given to the different subjects, the inspectors gave a recommended timetable at the subsequent in-service courses, and this became the generally accepted norm. The time allocation for music was thus set at one hour per week, to be divided up at the discretion of the teacher.

8.5 Investigation of the Music Curriculum Design

The music curriculum was written by four music inspectors in the Department of Education: Proinnsias Ó Ceallaigh, (since deceased); Proinnsias Ó Súilleabháin (also deceased); Seán Creamer and Brian Ó Dubhail. As part of this study, I interviewed the two surviving inspectors in February 2000, to investigate the philosophy behind the 1971 curriculum, and to research the subsequent in-service education provided for teachers.

The interviews yield very interesting evidence. It emerges that the 'music' inspectors were actually known as 'Organising Inspectors for Music', a rank that was held by their predecessors Goodman and O'Braoin (See Chapters Six and Seven), and as such they were on a different rank to the rest of the inspectorate, who were ranked District Inspectors or Department Inspectors. The Organising Inspectors of Music were on a lower salary scale, and a lower expenses scale. They themselves campaigned against this pay inequity, but the official view was that if they wanted to achieve parity, they had to accept the rank of District Inspectors. These individuals wished to remain in service as music inspectors. The debate continued for several years, until eventually a compromise was worked out, and in return for salary parity, the Organising Inspectors for Music were also allocated a certain responsibility for second level music. However, in the words of Inspector A:

> The post-primary went to the four winds to a very large extent, it ended up we weren't doing very much in the post-primary at all, still mainly primary, you know. That was just to give us the same salary as the rest. There was another thing about our little group. We had absolutely no avenues for promotion of any sort. ...It was our chosen niche in life, to stay there.

As these inspectors retired, the rank of Organising Inspector for Music was also phased out. All new appointees to the service are ranked District Inspectors, and these inspectors are generalists, and as such do not have responsibility for a single curricular area.

Prior to their appointment, the two inspectors that I interviewed had been teachers, either at first or second level, and they both had a degree in music. They were not given specific training for their position as inspectors, rather they were sent to work directly with the other music inspectors. Inspector A. describes his very first day in the Department of Education, fresh from the school situation:

> I was ushered into the Chief Inspector's office, a small little man, and he gave me a sort of a lecture on how to be a good inspector, and what to avoid. First of all, to avoid drink '*It's very easy to get hooked on the drink, you know. You're going around to these convents, and the nuns will be putting up bottles of whiskey on the lunch table and...*'....He showed me a map hanging up on the wall, and all the different districts were marked out on it........he said, there's only x, and y and z already, so you'll have a quarter of the country wherever you end up! Then I met a civil servant, who showed me all the papers I had to sign. Then he said, *I don't know what to do with you now*...so he went ringing up and found all the music inspectors were down at a music course in Carlow....So I got in my car and drove away to Carlow......I was a real green horn.....The course was over and they were having high jinks....they were heading on to Westport and then to Mallow, for two more courses, so I joined then...And from that until I retired, for thirty years I suppose, I gave at least three courses every summer. Sometimes up to five or six courses. We divided into pairs and we went and gave six courses in July and maybe two in August, so it was hectic!

The actual work of writing the music curriculum was apportioned between the individual inspectors, though they all had a certain overall input. Proinnsias Ó Ceallaigh, the Head Organising Inspector for Music, wrote the introduction, and was responsible for the literacy component. The 'Ear Training' section was formulated by Proinnsias Ó Súilleabháin. 'Listening to Music' and 'Percussion Work' were the products of Brian Ó Dubhail. Micheál Ó hEidhin, who had not as yet become Organising Inspector for Music, was invited to write the Irish Music section. Seán Creamer was responsible for the inclusion of the Creative Element.

The music inspectors worked on the formulation of the curricular content, and the various drafts were given to the Steering Committee – consisting of the Chief Inspector and other senior inspectors, who were responsible for the overall formulation of the curriculum. The Steering Committee's work was to oversee the layout and style of the various subjects, rather than to monitor the curricular content. The group did not study curricula or exemplars from other countries prior to writing the curriculum. The music curriculum was not piloted prior to publication, as some of the other curricular areas were.

There was a strong emphasis on literacy and interval training in the curriculum. The influence of the Ward method of music teaching, originally devised in US by Justine Ward (1879 – 1975) to teach Catholic liturgical music, and introduced to Ireland by Father Sean Terry in 1965, exerted certain influence on the curriculum. This was a methodical approach to the teaching of sight-singing, which utilised a certain system of hand signs to teach intervals. The hand signs used in the Ward method were advocated as an aid to the teaching of intervals. Inspector B. stated: 'Looking back on it now, I suppose, it was extraordinary that it should have been left to a few people in the Department to formulate it, but it worked out okay.'

8.6 In-service education for the 1971 Curriculum

The Department of Education actively addressed the implications of the introduction of a child-centred curriculum, and during the period 1968-1972, an impressive programme

of action was undertaken (Bennett, 2000: 17). During the summers of 1969-1972, residential courses of a week's duration were organised for over 4,000 principals to familiarise them with the philosophy underlying the new curriculum, and with the strategies for its implementation. Summer courses and weekend courses were organised for teachers at national, regional and local level, though attendance on these was voluntary. All teachers were offered a single day's in-service education during the school year, which was the only training that many teachers received. In this day's training, all curricular areas were overviewed, and teachers involved in the piloting of the curriculum gave some demonstration classes.

Annual summer courses in music, which commenced under O'Braoin in 1939, continued. The Organising Inspectors for Music I interviewed - both now retired - confirmed that they gave anything from two to six summer courses each year, at venues all over the country. As these were funded by the Department of Education, attendance was free to teachers, and also entitled participants to Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days. The retired inspectors were also involved in delivery of summer music courses to teachers, and Inspector B. lamented:

> The converted come to the courses, or perhaps sometimes those who come for reasons other than the music. Over the years we always had a bit of disappointment when we wondered where did all the stuff we give out at these summer courses go. All the songs we gave out, and we gave copies of everything, what happened to them all?

Teachers' Centres were established, commencing in 1972, and it was intended that they would facilitate local in-service initiatives. These became a significant provider of in-service education, using local teachers who had expertise in certain curricular areas. Teachers paid for attendance on these courses, and the Centres used these fees, together with the annual grants they received from the Department of Education, to pay the course costs. These courses were voluntary, and held outside of school hours. Teachers' Centres could also offer summer courses, which would be 'approved' for the three EPV days, provided they submitted the course proposal to the Department in advance, and provided the course met some criteria. While the decentralisation of course provision

was to be desired, there was also a negative implication. As the Centres used mainly local trainers, the in-service courses they offered thus tended to be influenced by the expertise of the trainers rather than the needs of the schools or the curriculum. In addition, there was no overall co-ordination or evaluation of such in-service courses.

8.7 Training of 'Oilteoirí' (Trainers), 1972, 1973 and 1974

A major in-service innovation was the presentation of residential summer courses for teachers in St. Patrick's Seminary in Maynooth. These courses were offered in each of the curricular areas, having approximately fifty participants for each subject. The first course, which was of three weeks duration, was held in 1972. A further two courses, of two weeks duration only, were held in 1973 and 1974.

It was originally intended that the participants would act as trainers in their own localities, but for some reason this never materialised. The key participants are hazy concerning the reasons why this aspiration never materialised, but some of them allege that it was because of a disagreement between the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) and the Department about the organisational implications regarding release time and pay for the trainers. The downturn in the economy, and the subsequent lack of an adequate budget may also have had an impact.

As part of the research, I also interviewed the two surviving Organising Inspectors for Music regarding these residential courses. In addition, I traced nine of the participants on the Maynooth music courses through an advertisement on the INTO journal, and I held telephone and face-to-face interviews with them. The evidence of the inspectors and participants may be summarised as follows:

The music courses were not supervised by the Proinnsias Ó Cheallaigh, Head Organising Inspector of Music, but by Pádraig O Máille, who was actually a Department Inspector, though he did hold a degree in music. This was probably because of the higher status held by Department inspectors. The participants were nominated and invited to attend by their District Inspectors, and were usually selected because of their

involvement with school choirs and bands. According to Inspector B., there were generally recognised as being the 'cream of the country'. The Organising Inspectors of Music were not involved in the selection of participants. This was solely at the discretion of the District inspectors. Inspector B. commented: 'We felt awfully sore that the music inspector had no say. We never had any say on the people who went. Though the people who went were excellent.'

The participants were known in the Department of Education as '*Oilteoirí*' (trainers). The 1972 participants that I interviewed did believe that the reason they were invited to participate in the Maynooth courses was because they were to become Music Trainers, but were generally hazy as to why this never actually happened. The participants that I interviewed who attended in the later years did not have the same understanding that they would become trainers, but believed that the residential course was for their own professional development. This would seem to suggest that the earlier aspiration to use the participants as 'Trainers' had waned very quickly.

There was no incentive for participants to give up two or three weeks of their summer holidays to participate on the courses. They were provided with accommodation, food and training, but apart from that, the initiative relied on the enthusiasm and goodwill of those attending. All interviewees spoke of the 'awfulness of the cells' – they slept in cubicles normally reserved for student priests and they were provided with jugs of cold water for ablution purposes. Bathrooms were usually at quite a distance. However, both the inspectors and the participants spoke very positively of the overall experience. While the accommodation conditions were austere, there was a real sense of camaraderie and enjoyment, and the social interaction added an enjoyable dimension. In addition, the inspectors spoke highly of the enthusiasm and excellence of the participants.

All of the participating teachers that I interviewed reported that the course was heavily dominated by choral work, and tended to focus on quality choral production. They described a marked emphasis on vocal technique, ear training and interval training. Song repertoire was provided, handwritten by the inspectors, and reproduced on a Gestetner.

Many interviewees contend that they used the song repertoire for years after the courses, and one interviewee reported that she still possesses and uses the music she obtained on the course. At the conclusion of the courses, the participants gave a choral performance in two and three parts, which were attended by participants on the other curricular courses, as well as Department of Education inspectors.

Presentations were also given on listening to music. Inspector A. reported giving a piano recital himself one evening. There were visits to music performances, and guest presenters and performers also gave talks and demonstrations. Father Sean Terry, the exponent of the Ward Method in Ireland, attended the first residential course, both as presenter and participant, although he was a Secondary School teacher. Father Terry's presence on the course indicates the influence that his courses in the Ward method had on the curriculum.

Apart from minimal improvisation on interval singing, little attention was paid to creativity in music. The inspectors report that this was because they needed to focus on developing staff notation. The participants at the Training of Trainers initiative in Maynooth were also hazy about what constituted creativity. One of the 1974 participants I interviewed recounted that:

> I remember asking one of the inspectors about that (creativity), what was it all about. And he said it's like singing 'What's your name' on Doh and Soh, and the children answer back 'My name is whatever' on Soh and Doh. So I said 'just like cadences?' and he said 'Yes'. So I said to myself that was crazy and that would not work. And we never had anymore of that.
> (Maynooth Participant 3).

Only one of the participants I interviewed gave regular in-service education to teachers following participation on the Maynooth course. She was subsequently invited to give several presentations on *'Music for Infants'* and *'Integration of Music across the Curriculum'* at summer courses organised by the Organising Inspectors for Music. She was paid by the Department of Education for this. A further participant recalls giving

one demonstration lesson subsequently at the invitation of her local inspector; another helped her colleagues at their request, while the others interviewed were not subsequently involved in delivery of in-service education. One participant, Maureen Lally, subsequently wrote a series of graded textbooks for primary school pupils, based on the content of the courses. The series was entitled 'Listen, Sing and Play' and was very popular in the late 1970s and the 1980s. Lally also gave in-service courses to teachers, based on her books, and in this context, there was some dissemination nationally.

The inspectors I interviewed regret the fact that the subsequent deployment of the participants as *'Oilteoirí'* (Trainers) did not materialise. While they are in agreement that the initiative must have had positive impact on music education in the participants' own classes, they regretted the loss of opportunity for wider dissemination as envisaged. As Inspector A. stated that:

> It was a pity it didn't come to anything as it should. It had nothing to do, I think with the expertise either of the presenters or those attending. It was other matters.....I don't want to point an accusing finger but my understanding is that the stumbling block was when it came to Trade Union matters, it just couldn't work. I don't know the details because in those days a lot happened behind closed doors and there was nothing we could do, but it probably had to do with teachers getting off school and perhaps not being replaced or not being paid properly....all things around that sort of matter, and it came to a deadlock....It never happened. .Pity....pity.. And it's very hard to see at this stage how those things couldn't be ironed out. But then, I suppose, you're talking about events over thirty years ago now. I suppose, things were very different. Financially, there were constraints.'

No evaluation was ever conducted on the initiative. Inspector B. reported : 'It just came to a dead end and evaporated. We certainly weren't involved in any evaluation, except when we met people afterward in our normal progress around the schools'.

8.8 Decline of In-service provision

Regrettably, the provision of in-service education to facilitate the implementation of the 1971 Curriculum was not sustained. With the onset of the world oil-crisis of 1973-1975, there was a downturn in the Irish economy, and the recession meant that spending on education was drastically cut. While the annual costs of in-service courses to facilitate the new curriculum increased from £30,000 in 1969 to over £80,000 in 1974, the sum for 1975 was reduced to £12,000, and the money allocated to in-service provision remained inadequate in subsequent years. (Coolahan, 1989: 52). The failure of the Department of Education to sustain the original momentum angered the INTO, and it took a decision not to hold any courses itself, and it prohibited its members from organising any courses for a number of years (Coolahan, 1989: 52).

8.9 Implementation of the 1971 Music Curriculum

The introduction to the 1971 curriculum stated that the curriculum should be subject to on-going review. (Department of Education, 1971: 20). However, probably due to the financial cutbacks, an official review did not materialise. Nevertheless, a number of evaluations did take place by other interested parties in the decade following its introduction. These were *Evaluation of the New Curriculum for Primary Schools* prepared by the Conference of Convent Primary Schools in Ireland, 1975; *Primary School Curriculum – Curriculum Questionnaire Analysis* prepared by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, 1976; and The *New Primary School Curriculum – Its Implementation and Effects* prepared by the Educational Research Centre, 1977. Results showed that the subjects in which teachers were experiencing most difficulty were Arts and Crafts, Physical Education and Music. All three surveys pointed to the difficulties being experienced by teachers in implementing aspects of the new music programme, which may be summarised as follows:

- Twenty per cent of teachers admitted to teaching no music
- Half of the teachers experienced difficulty in implementing aspects of the programme

- One survey in particular – *Report of the Conference of Convent Primary Schools* – highlighted the particular difficulties in the creative sections of the new programme. The other two surveys did not consider the area of creativity in music.

It was to be expected that there would be initial difficulties and teething troubles in implementing the new curriculum. However, it should also be expected that certain improvements would become visible after a number of years, as the newly qualified teachers emerged from the Teacher Training Colleges. However, the subsequent research does not point to any significant improvement in the situation

In 1983, the Department of Education's Curriculum Unit conducted a national survey on the implementation of the 1971 music programme. While the report indicated satisfactory levels of achievement in song singing, very low levels of mastery were recorded in knowledge of intervals, musical literacy and aural skills. Creative music making was not included in the survey, another indication that it existed in policy, but not in practice.

In 1985, the Curriculum and Examinations Board published its Discussion Paper, *The Arts in Education*, which argued that the conceptions which dominated Irish Education were verbal and numerical. Music was often treated as an 'extra' subject in schools, because students and parents did not see it as a necessary core subject. It went on the declare that the 'music programme for primary schools is challenging. However, not all primary teachers have had adequate music education. The role of the colleges of education in preparing student teachers for teaching needs to be developed' (Curriculum and Examinations Board: 1985: 15).

Later in the year, which was European year of music, a report released by the Arts Council identified the overall situation as 'little short of appalling.' (Arts Council, 1985: vi). It identified the primary pupils' music education as 'haphazard at best', though the situation was slightly better in infant classes. It noted that in the senior primary school classes, the child's music education was dependent on the individual teacher's

motivation and talent (op. cit.: 3). The Report concluded that the majority of Irish primary school children left school musically illiterate, with little vocal or aural training, and with a repertoire of songs that were usually learned by rote. As a result, they had no worthwhile basis from which to extend their repertoire, or to avail of music at post-primary level (op. cit.: 2). The report also noted the fact that the grade of Organising Inspector for Music had been abolished by the Department of Education (op. cit.: 6), and deplored the lack of specialist inspectors, curriculum advisors, and adequate in-service and pre-service education in music.

Evaluation of these reviews demonstrates that the laudable aspirations of the 1971 Music Curriculum were not realised in practice.

8.10 Discussion

The 1971 Music Curriculum, in its philosophy and content, was a radical contrast to that which had existed previously. It must be acknowledged that the music inspectorate did commendable work in devising the new curriculum in a short time-span, and with limited resources. However, on retrospective and critical evaluation, it could be argued that, while their aspirations were laudable, the manner in which the music curriculum was drafted by the Organising Inspectors for Music was haphazard and subjective. For example, in outlining to me how the Listening to Music section came to be written, Inspector B. recounted:

> Well, I had been giving courses since 1959, and at all those courses, as a kind of rest for the teachers, from academic or classroom things, I would put on these pieces for the teachers to listen to and they seemed to enjoy them. So we thought, okay, we'll put that in for the kids as well, but it wasn't anything deeply philosophical or anything like that, it was just there were things that we had tried and things that we had done and we thought – that's going in the curriculum!

The reference to creative music making came about in a similar manner. It was included at the behest of Seán Creamer, and came about through interaction with an American, Jim Fritchel of Watburg in Iowa, who had adjudicated at the Choral Festival in Cork

with Creamer. Fritchel described his experimentation with music composition to Creamer, who subsequently advocated its inclusion in the Irish curriculum. In the interviewee's own words:

> ...and he said to me, well do your children write music? And I kind of thought children writing music, come on children don't write music, and he talked to me and explained how he did it with university students and when the curriculum came around I thought, gee, we'll have a go at this, getting kids to write music. I think we were too ambitious..............I can't say that I ever knew of any school that took up creativity in a serious way that we could have looked at and said now that's the way it should be done or anything like that.

When I asked why the creativity element was not taught at the subsequent in-service courses, Inspector B. stated that it was because the participants couldn't teach basic literacy, and they needed to focus on that. He summed up the contemporary attitude to creativity in the music curriculum by stating: 'Nobody was quite sure what to do about it!'

The recommendations regarding the choice of song repertoire seemed heavily influenced by the past, as the 1971 curriculum recommended that songs in Irish should be given pride of place – a recommendation which may be considered more nationalistic and historical than pedagogic. The greater emphasis placed on Irish language folksongs for a junior class is difficult to comprehend, since children at this stage have less mastery of the language than their senior counterparts. Furthermore, as O'Flynn (1990: 59) pointed out, there are relatively few Gaelic folksongs which have a compass of one octave or less, compared with folksongs of Anglophonic traditions. Another unfortunate statement, and one which would not be considered politically appropriate nowadays was that 'Some songs are particularly suited to boys, e.g. martial, gay, humorous, rhythmic airs. Others are more suited to girls e.g. lullabies, spinning songs, songs tender in content and expression.' (Department of Education, 1971: 213).

However, the music inspectors who were responsible for drafting the curriculum undoubtedly worked extremely hard, and were totally committed to the improvement of music education in primary education. When I asked them how the teaching profession reacted to it, Inspector A. reported:

> We thought they loved it, but then like I always say, teachers are the most polite people in the world. No teacher will say up to your face that it's a rotten curriculum, I hate it, it's unfit for schools. They all told us how great it was and how wonderful it was - things like that. So nobody ever said, to me anyway, I don't like that curriculum and I don't think it will work in schools. And that's the only thing I can tell you about the teachers.

The Teachers' Study Group, on reading the curriculum prior to its dissemination, made several recommendations. Significant among there was their recommendation that 'Talented teachers be identified, and trained as curriculum specialists' (1969: 39). Perhaps this exerted some influence on the thinking behind the designation and training of 'Oilteoirí' (Trainers), as outlined earlier in this chapter, but unfortunately, this project did not proceed as originally envisaged. In fact, teachers that I interviewed who attended in 1973 and 1974 were not aware of the fact that they were meant to be trainers. It is to be expected, however, that the teachers who attended the Maynooth music courses, numbering approximately 150 over the three courses, would have been a quality resource in their own schools. At least in their classrooms, music as envisaged must have flourished. The participants that I interviewed reported that they used the repertoire obtained on the courses for years after, though this in itself is not necessarily an advantage, because it could be considered to demonstrate a certain unwillingness to experiment, or to use newer publications and song collections. One interviewee responded that she didn't subsequently teach staff notation. 'I put the tonic solfa over the notes and used that. My mother was a teacher too, and always used tonic solfa. It was in me.' (Maynooth Participant 6).

As the evaluations considered in the previous section have revealed, the curriculum as planned was not actually realised in schools. The historical evidence points to a number of factors which influenced this lack of success, and I now propose to consider these.

The budgetary cuts, with the subsequent decline in in-service activity, were undoubtedly a significant cause. Reports show that the additional funding allocated to in-service education represented four per cent of the national education budget in 1900, and two per cent in 1922. In 1971, additional funding represented only one per cent of the national education budget (Hyland, 1987: 34). The importance of in-service education for teachers was widely acknowledged with the advent of the curriculum. For example, in 1971, the Minister for Education announced that he had appointed a special committee to plan long-term in-service education provision. He announced that he hoped that all teachers between twenty-five and sixty years would have formal entitlement to in-service education courses every fifth or seventh year (Coolahan, 1989: 52). However, the decline in the economy caused budgetary cutbacks, and the Minister's proposals were never realised.

Another factor that militated against the success of the curriculum implementation was the large class size in Irish school. Teachers themselves were very quick to point out that the pupil-teacher ratio in Irish primary schools was high, and that the funds allocated to education resources were low. For example, in 1971, 35% of pupils were still in classes of more than forty pupils, while 6 per cent were in classes of more than fifty. In Dublin, 77 per cent of pupils were in classes of more than forty (Coolahan, 1989: 34). In rural areas, pupil numbers were smaller, but more of the classes were multi-grade classes. Undoubtedly, this militated against the full implementation of the 1971 curriculum.

However, the budgetary constraints and large class sizes were not the only causes for the inertia regarding the music curriculum. Second level schools, which had not been consulted about the formulation of the new curriculum, began to replace the now obsolete Primary Certificate with Entrance Examinations. Instead of sitting the Primary Certificate at the end of primary education, students now had to prepare for these Entrance Examinations, and many pupils had to take several examinations in order to secure a place in a post-primary school. Primary teachers, long used to using didactic and textbook driven methods, did not embrace the changes in pedagogy as proposed by

the new curriculum, but bowed to the pressures exerted at school and local level. The dominance of Irish, English and Mathematics persisted, as these were the subjects tested by the Entrance Exams, and cramming for the Primary Certificate was replaced by cramming for the Entrance Exams. Therefore, subjects such as music were still peripheral in the reality of classroom life (INTO, 1985: 2-3).

Furthermore, the music curriculum itself may have been somewhat to blame for its lack of general adoption in schools. While the aspirations it contained were commendable, when retrospectively considered it is clear that substantial portions of its content was perhaps over ambitious. Writing in 1971, Professor Aloys Fleischmann of University College Cork asked 'Is the teaching apparatus there to make these noble aims a reality?' (1971: 69). The author argued that of the 15,000 primary school teachers in Ireland at the time, only from 500 - 1000 were in a position to set about doing what the new curriculum prescribed, 'with any degree of competence' (1971: 72). Fleischmann argued that the only way to ensure its implementation was to employ 500 peripatetic music teachers, with responsibility for about ten schools each, a sentiment earlier expressed by Goocock (1961: 23).

The meagre music in-service education provided was not sufficient to ensure the effective implementation of such a demanding curriculum in the schools. Unfortunately, the music curriculum was not piloted, as some other curricular areas were. The music literacy programme, in particular, demanded skills that simply did not exist among the general teaching profession. Therefore, it is not surprising that so many teachers, finding themselves unable to address the technical requirements of the curriculum, simply abdicated responsibility for teaching music altogether, at worst, or at best, taught some songs or tin whistle by rote. Inspector A, whom I interviewed, stated:

> Yes, I suppose you could argue that the aims (in literacy) were too high....I don't know if anybody ever succeeded in putting all the aims into operation you know. If you don't aim high, will you get anything at all? However, I don't think that criticism, even if you did believe it, is a sufficiently strong enough reason to downgrade the curriculum.

8.11 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I considered the circumstances that led to the formulation and publication of the New Curriculum in 1971. I reviewed the in-service education which was provided for the teaching profession, and described why the original momentum was not sustained. I considered the major evaluations that were conducted of the 1971 music curriculum, which all indicated that its objectives were not realised, and which all indicated a general apathy towards music. The chapter finished by attempting to identify the major reasons for this failure.

Several key issues in the history of music education emerged during the examination of this era, which were:

- The official policy in the 1971 curriculum was still that music would be taught by the generalist class teacher, though contemporary critics doubted if the expertise necessary to deliver such an ambitious curriculum existed among the teaching population (Fleischmann, 1971: 72)

- In the 1971 Curriculum, the approach regarding music literacy was that staff notation would now be used in conjunction with tonic solfa. The attainment objectives regarding literacy were demanding, and it was suggested that pupils in senior classes should read in keys of up to four sharps and four flats

- Song-singing was still a major aspect of the curriculum, which must have been a deterrent for those lacking confidence in their singing ability. It was recommended that songs in the Irish language were to be given 'pride of place' which demonstrates that some of the philosophy of the curriculum in the early days of Home Rule still had not dissipated

- The notion of creativity in music was proposed in the 1971 curriculum. McCarthy (1990: 382) claims that 'A fundamental characteristic of music instruction which had not been highlighted in primary education before 1971 was that of creativity. Now under the influence of international education, creative activity in music became a central feature of the curriculum'. This is a mistaken view. While a sub-section of the written curriculum was indeed devoted to

creativity, there was little or no development of the concept of creativity in the actual in-service and pre-service education that ensued, or in the teaching in the classroom, as my investigation of this period revealed. In fact, one interviewee, a contemporary music trainer, on hearing McCarthy's statement, exclaimed that 'She was dreaming!'

- Following the introduction of the 1971 curriculum, there was initially a determined attempt to provide adequate in-service education for teachers, but this quickly waned. The chief reason for the decline of the in-service provision was the budgetary cutbacks due to the downturn in the national economy

- Elective summer music courses continued, and those delivering the training included the Organising Inspectors for Music (until these inspectors retired and were not replaced), the Education Centres, and the exponents of the Ward Method. However, once again the figures do not demonstrate how many participants were repeat attendees, and in the words of Inspector A. ' the converted came to the music courses.'

- The residential training of trainer courses in Maynooth were an innovative and ambitious attempt to disseminate the new curriculum in a cascade model. Retrospectively viewed, it is regrettable that the subsequent dissemination as originally envisaged did not occur

- Just as the curriculum tended to focus on Irish, English and Mathematics in the era of the Primary Certificate examination (1943 to 1966), after the abolition of the Primary Certificate many schools tended to focus on the same small core of subjects, due to the prevalence of Entrance Examinations, which meant that the arts subjects continued to be marginalised

- Concerned parties during this era also called for the appointment of music advisors to support primary school teachers in the delivery of the music curriculum, (Teachers' Study Group, 1969; Arts Council, 1979 & 1985) though these were not appointed. The Arts Council (1985) also called for the re-instatement of music inspectors to help the implementation of music in the schools, though this was never done.

In conclusion, the child-centred curriculum of 1971 did not manage to elevate the status of music in the curriculum to the level it aspired to, nor did it succeed in raising the levels of achievement among teachers generally. However, it did succeed in introducing new concepts of music in education in Ireland, even though these were not developed or implemented during this era. In the next chapter, I will investigate the events that led to the next curricular revision, which took place in the final decade of the twentieth century.

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Chapter Nine: The Revised Music Curriculum of 1999 and the Proposed In-service Education in Music

9.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has outlined some of the key reasons why the music curriculum of 1971 was not generally implemented as envisaged. This chapter will describe the events that finally led to the review of that curriculum, and the subsequent publication of what became known as the 'Revised Curriculum' in 1999. This Revised Curriculum is currently (Summer 2004) being introduced on a phased basis, and the delivery of in-service education in music is scheduled to commence in September 2004, with implementation of the music curriculum in the following year. The chapter will also describe the appointment of a team of music trainers to disseminate the music curriculum nationally, and consider the training these trainers received.

The documentary review conducted for the writing of this chapter was illuminated and enriched by my participation in three of the recent major music education initiatives, namely

- The writing of the 1999 Music Curriculum, which commenced in 1992
- The Training of Music Trainers in 1994-1995
- The appointment of Primary Curriculum Support Programme Music Trainers in 2002, and their training, 2002 - present

This chapter brings us up to the present, and as such, could be termed contemporary history. Garraghan (1946: 19) argues that strictly speaking, there is no such thing as 'contemporary history' as, when defined, the terms 'history' and 'contemporary' are seen to be mutually exclusive. However, he goes on to point out that 'living past' is with us today, and can thus be called contemporary (op. cit.: 30). When considered in this context, the events that are discussed in this chapter could be viewed as contemporary

history, history that was being formulated as I wrote this thesis. It must be acknowledged that much of this chapter is based on personal recollection and materials such as letters and records of meetings, as not much has yet been written about this recent past. One of the consequences of this is that the discourse and discussion may seem more immediate than in other chapters of the study. Although I would admit that there are problems with me attaining the critical distance I hope has been apparent in other sections of this thesis, I believe that it important to document these recent developments in music education, and to begin to analyse them, as they form part of the history of music in-service education in Ireland. Furthermore, this chapter may provide some material for another researcher who may wish to continue the enquiry in the future, and my evidence, as a primary participant in this part of the jigsaw, make his/her task a little easier.

9.2 Toward Curriculum Review

In 1986, the Fianna Fáil election manifesto contained a commitment that a review of the 1971 Primary School Curriculum would be carried out, and following their election victory, this pledge was honoured (Coolahan, 2003: 7). In 1987, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) was established, and it replaced the former Curriculum and Examination Board (INTO, 1998: 9). Its brief was to focus on curriculum and assessment issues in education. Also in 1987, the Review Body on Primary Curriculum was established, chaired by Dr. Moya Quinlan, and the Review Body published its report in 1990, as *The Report of the Review Body on Primary Curriculum*, which became widely known as the *Quinlan Report.*

9.3 The 1990 Report of the Review Body on Primary Curriculum Of 1971

The *Report of the Review Body* of 1990 was a significant document in Irish education, as the recommendations of this report were to form the basis for the next revision of the primary school curriculum, and in fact this report was a major influence in the work of the NCCA (INTO, 1998: 4). The Review Body noted the absence of any rationale in the

1971 Curriculum for the teaching of the arts as a whole, and recommended that this should be addressed (1990: 59). It went on to make the following recommendations regarding the music curriculum:

- The music section should be revised to take into account developments since 1971 and to provide a more formal statement of aims and objectives
- The balance between the different aspects of the music curriculum should be reconsidered to take account of both vocal performance and music appreciation
- More realistic and attainable objectives should be set for music literacy, because the view of the committee was that it involved unrealistic objectives
- A more varied repertoire of songs (including the songs of the great composers, folk and popular songs) should be taught and the necessary materials (sheet-music and tapes) made available
- Adequate materials should be provided for music appreciation
- Pre-service education of teachers should be reviewed with a view to equipping teachers with the skills to teach the total music programme
- To assist the professional development of teachers, a major expansion of in-service programmes should be undertaken as a matter of urgency in order to provide a series of graded courses suited to the varying levels of teaching expertise. Such in-service work should be integrated with school work
- Teachers with particular expertise in music should be given the opportunity to improve the expertise of other staff members, rather than be expected to take the responsibility for teaching music to several classes
- Specialist teachers of music, seconded from the teaching force, and additional Department advisors/inspectors with appropriate qualifications should be appointed. These specialists should also have a sensitivity to and an awareness of the full range of subjects on the curriculum

(Report of the Review Body on Primary Education, 1990: 62 – 62).

It is interesting to note that the Report does not mention the creative music aspects of the 1971 curriculum, which is yet another indication of the fact that 'nobody quite knew what it was about' as Inspector B., the individual responsible for its inclusion, reported.

9.4 Curriculum Revision

In mid 1991, the Minister for Education invited the NCCA to conduct a continuing review of the primary curriculum. The curriculum was to be updated mainly in the light of the recommendations of the Report of the Review Body of 1990 (INTO, 1998: 8). A total of six specialist curriculum committees, drawing on a wide range of interests and expertise, and involving all the partners in education, were established on a phased basis, in the following curricular areas:

- Irish
- English
- Mathematics
- Social, Environmental and Scientific Education
- Physical Education and Health Education
- Arts Education

(INTO, 1998: 9).

I was a member of the Arts Education Committee, which had responsibility for Music, Visual Arts and Drama. In all, there were twenty committee members, who were each nominated by one of the representative bodies, which were as follows; Department of Education and Science (DES), Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), Catholic Primary School Managers' Association, National Parents' Council, Association of Primary Teaching Sisters and Teaching Brothers, Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education, Irish Federation of University Teachers, Management of the Colleges of Education. One third of the membership of each committee consisted of teacher union representatives, so teachers played a big part in this curriculum reform (INTO, 1998: 9). The individuals were nominated by their respective bodies because of their expertise and interest in the particular curricular area, and I was a nominee of the

INTO. At the inception of the Arts Education Committee, it was envisaged that there would be two sub-committees, one to plan for arts curricula for the junior section of the primary school, and the other to plan for arts curricula for the senior section of the school (INTO, 1998: 9). However, the committee members subsequently decided that this would not be an effective sub-division, and instead established a sub-committee for music and another for visual arts. Committee members were assigned to one or the other sub-committee according to their area of expertise, but the entire committee had the overall decision making as to what went into each of the curriculum documents.

The curriculum revision was a lengthy process, spanning the period 1992-1999 in the case of the Arts Education Committee. Meetings took place at the NCCA's offices in Dublin Castle, usually on a monthly basis. Teaching members of the committee were allowed time off school with substitute cover to attend, and in addition travel and subsistence expenses were provided. Each committee had an Education Officer, who was usually a primary school teacher (INTO, 1998: 9). The Education Officer was seconded from school for significant periods of time to compile and edit the work of its committee, and present this to the Co-ordinating Committee, which had responsibility for the overall layout, coherence and continuity of the curriculum. Individual members of the committee were also released from school for various periods of school to work on aspects of the curriculum. For example, I was allocated one two-week period, and one week-long period, to work from home on various aspects of the curriculum, with full substitution for my class.

The curriculum revision progressed more slowly than was originally envisaged, One of the reasons for this was a downturn in the economy in the mid 1990s, with subsequent budgetary cutbacks, which led to a suspension of all committee meetings for some time (INTO, 1998: 10). While it was originally envisaged that the curriculum would be ready by 1996, it was actually September 1999 before the Revised Curriculum was published and distributed to all schools.

9.5 Training of Music Trainers by In-Career Development Unit

An interesting development occurred during 1994 - 1995, while the curriculum formulation was in progress. In 1994, the Department of Education and Science (DES) set up the In-Career Development Unit (ICDU) whose task was to organize and implement in-service education for teachers. The ICDU had access to a large budget - £40m between 1994 and 1999, which was part of the EU Structural Funding for 'Training of Trainers' initiatives. During the school year 1994-1995, the newly created ICDU held residential 'Training of Trainers' courses in the following areas:

- School Development and Planning
- School Self-Review
- Parental Involvement in School
- Gender Equity in Schools
- Music

(DES, letter dated 20/05/1994, personal archive.)

The Trainers were invited to attend training on the nomination of their local inspectors, and were chosen because of their expertise and interest in the particular areas. Approximately twenty-five teachers were selected for each programme. I was a participant on the music programme. The training commenced with a weeklong course in Dublin in Summer 1994, followed by a three day course in Kilkenny in Autumn 1994, and a three day course in Limerick in Spring 1995 (DES, letter dated 28/2/1995, personal archive).

To an extent, these Training of Trainer courses mirror the Maynooth Training of Trainer courses of the 1970s. It is interesting to note that music was the only curricular area designated in the 1990s, and that the training was held prior to the publication of the revised curriculum, which was actually in the formulation phrase. The revised music curriculum was not yet completed, and there appeared to be secrecy surrounding its contents, due to tensions created by the fact that a series of music books had been

written by a committee member prior to the official publication of the curriculum, which generated disquiet in the Arts Education Committee.

I interviewed some of the participants who completed this Training of Music Trainers initiative, to obtain their perspectives on the initiative. To summarise the findings, the respondents, while welcoming any project to promote music in education, thought the training given was not of great quality. One respondent reported: 'We wasted a lot of time doing team building skills using the Irish Times newspaper, and listening to lectures in gender equity. Not enough time was devoted to music. In fact, we were a few days into the first week before we actually engaged in any music whatsoever' (1994 Music Trainer 11). Frustration was also expressed at the lack of information regarding the music curriculum which was at that time being formulated. In the words on one of the participants: 'Here you have two arms of the DES, namely the In-career Development Unit, and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, and neither knows what the other is doing. It is a ridiculous situation. Significant public funding was committed to the training of music trainers, yet the music curriculum could not be revealed to us. This could have been a real opportunity to pilot the new music curriculum, and it was not utilised as such' (1994 Music Trainer 3). Yet another respondent wrote: 'This training was supposed to equip us to become music trainers. I waited and waited to be invited to train teachers, but no-one came knocking on my door' (1994 Music Trainer 9).

Two of the trainers, Gary O'Donnchada and I, were seconded from school for a period of two weeks to commence work on preparation of a 'Music Trainers' Manual', which was to be provided for the trainers at the next meeting (MacSitric, circular dated 20/04/1997, personal archive). However, following this initial preparation period, the ICDU did not proceed with the writing of the Trainer's Manual, and the trainers were not formally brought together again. All the parties concerned were very aware that the revised Music Curriculum was imminent, and that it was not very productive to pursue the initiative until the curriculum was actually available.

In December 2000, I interviewed Emer Egan, then senior inspector with the primary branch of the ICDU, regarding this initiative. She revealed that the funding was made available for this initiative under the *Training of Trainers* measure of the EU Structural Funds Programme. The DES had made a case to the relevant body in the EU that teachers had a major influence on the learning of the pupils, and that therefore they should be treated as trainers. The DES also stressed in its application that the system in Ireland was undergoing reform and that teachers were a central part of that, and that to bring this reform to fruition, an investment in teacher education was needed. Ms Egan pointed out that it was quite unusual for the DES to secure funding for the in-service training of teachers under that particular EU initiative.

Ms Egan acknowledged that the timing of such a music initiative was not ideal, in that the revised music curriculum was not yet ready. However, she pointed out that, as the EU funds were available at that particular time, the decision was taken to use the opportunity to improve music in education. She also reported that, on completion of the training, the ICDU wrote to all Education Centres, to inform them that there was now a pool of designated trainers with expertise in various areas. The DES offered full funding for any courses that the Education Centres offered utilising this expertise. However, as one Centre Director I interviewed pointed out, many Directors were piqued that they had not been consulted on this initiative, and that some of their regular trainers were not invited to participate. Some directors were also annoyed at the imbalance of course fees they now had to charge – certain courses would incur a fee for the participating teachers, whereas other courses, offered by a DES Trainer, would be completely free of charge to the participants (Interview with Education Centre Director number 1, January 2001). This obviously created tensions at local level, and it is not clear to what extent the Education Centres nationally promoted the utilisation of these trainers. Some of the trainers did individually organise local courses through the Education Centre network, but this happened on a haphazard and ad-hoc manner, and to an extent, this Training of Trainers initiative mirrored the Training of Trainers in Maynooth almost twenty years earlier, in that 'the whole initiative just vanished into thin air' (1994 Music Trainer 5).

9.6 Publication of the Revised Curriculum in 1999

In 1999 the long-awaited curriculum was published and distributed to schools. Compared to its predecessors, the documentation that comprised the 1999 Curriculum was comprehensive, attractive and user friendly. The complete curriculum was presented to each teacher in a rigid box of twenty-three books. The first book was an overarching statement on the aims and principles of the curriculum. Each curricular area was presented in the format of two books. The first book was the curriculum statement, which included an introduction to the subject, its aims and broad objectives, content and assessment strategies in terms of the skills and concepts to be developed at the each of the class levels. The second book in each subject area was a set of teacher guidelines, which provided guidance and exemplar lessons for the teacher, as well as an outline of possible approaches, methodologies and planning approaches.

In the 1999 Curriculum, the diversity of individual modes of learning was recognised as an intrinsic principle of education. The curriculum recognised that different children have 'innate dispositions for different types of learning' (DES, 1999: 4), and it advocated, therefore, that the curriculum 'should take account of not only what children learn, but also how they learn it' (op.cit.: 5). It recommended that this should be reflected in the breadth and variety of its content and in the range of the teaching approaches, strategies, technique and organisation contexts employed to mediate such content (op. cit.: 5).

Unlike its predecessor, the 1999 curriculum made recommendations regarding the time allocated to each subject, and provided a proportion of discretionary time that could be allocated to subject areas at the discretion of the school and/or teacher. The amount of core time allocated to music was set at one hour per week (DES, 1999: 145).

9.7 Music in the 1999 Curriculum

The Music Curriculum of 1999 shows a marked departure from earlier music curricula. There is a much broader concept of music in education, and a departure from the previous over dominance of technical and mechanical aspects of song singing. A

rationale for music is provided, which asserts that music education is 'part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence' (DES, 1999: 5). The curriculum recognises that music education involves learning in the major domains of knowledge, skills, attitudes and feelings. The potential of music to contribute to the personal, social, mental and physical development of the pupil is asserted. The curriculum argues that 'Children of all ages and abilities have potential in music, and music education celebrates individual differences among them. The child's musical expression and responses to musical experience are valid, and his/her creations and innovations in musical compositions are fostered and valued' (op. cit.: 5).

The Curriculum is divided into the three inter-related strands of (i) Listening and Responding (ii) Performing and (iii) Composing, each of which have equal status. In the *Listening and Responding* strand, a new emphasis is placed on the range and depth of experiences in listening to music, and on becoming an 'active listener.' The *Performing* strand emphasises the importance of active music making, beginning with the voice, but also including instruments, as a means of developing music understanding. Music literacy is included as an integral element of the *Performing* strand, but it is emphasised that participation in music making is not contingent upon knowledge of, or fluency in, music literacy. The *Composing* strand asserts the importance of developing the child's own creativity through music making. While creativity in music was proposed in the 1971 curriculum, as the previous chapter discussed, it never became a reality. In the 1999 curriculum, however, the *Composing* strand is afforded equal status with the other strands of *Listening and Responding*, and *Performing*. The active words, e.g. '*Composing*' rather than '*Composition*', were deliberately utilised in the writing of the curriculum, to stress the emphasis on process and activity (DES, Primary Curriculum: Music, 1999: 6-10).

9.8 In-service Education for the Revised Curriculum

A dedicated body was set up by the In-Career Development Unit of the Department of Education and Science (DES) to design, organise and manage the in-service education necessary to enable the teaching profession to implement the Revised Curriculum. This

body is known as the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP), and is organised by a core team of primary school teachers with expertise in in-service education, who are seconded from their schools to carry out this work. The National Co-ordinator manages this unit, and she is assisted by a varying number of Assistant National Co-ordinators.

This curriculum is currently being implemented on a phased basis. An ambitious plan of in-service activity was unveiled in 1999, and large sums of money, assisted by EU funding, were made available for its dissemination. At the outset, it was pledged that this in-service education would be sustained, and that the unfortunate events that led to the discontinuation of the in-service programme following the 1971 curriculum would not be repeated. Capital grants were also provided to schools, to enable them to access resources necessary for the successful implementation of the Revised Curriculum.

In the academic year 1999 - 2000, a total of 6 days in-service education was provided for all teachers, consisting of 2 days on an overall consideration of the Revised Curriculum, and 2 days on Language (English in English speaking schools, and Irish in Irish speaking schools). The remaining 2 days were allocated to in-school planning for the Revised Curriculum. The following table illustrates the timetable proposed at the outset:

Fig. 9.1 : Proposed Programme of In-service Education

1999 – 2000	Revised Curriculum Overview	Language *English* or *Irish*	
2000 – 2001	Language *English* or *Irish*	Visual Arts	
2001 – 2002	Language *English* or *Irish*	Maths	Social, Personal and Health Education
2002 – 2003	Language *English* or *Irish*	Science	Social, Personal and Health Education
2003 –2004	History & Geography	Physical Education	Music
2004 – 2005	History & Geography	Physical Education	Drama

(Source : PCSP Newsletter, June 2001)

Significant sums of money were initially spent on the in-service training. The Irish economy was booming at the end of the millennium, so much so that was was dubbed 'The Celtic Tiger' by the media. The appointment of trainers to supply the in-service training in the various curricular areas mirrored the appointment of Organisers following the 1900 curriculum. However, this time, there were significant differences. Firstly, in contrast to earlier initiatives, the positions of trainers were allocated on open competition, rather than by paternalistic invitation. PCSP advertised the positions, together with a list of requirements, and following applications, interviews were held for the positions. Candidates were required to have good curricular knowledge of the particular subject, experience in curricular design and/or in-service provision, good interpersonal skills and ICT skills. The designated trainers participated in intensive training prior to commencement of the in-service education. The actual training content and digital presentations were carefully planned, so that all teachers in Ireland received the same presentation. The trainers were supplied with the technology necessary to deliver the courses, and they participated in on-going review and development throughout the year of dissemination.

Most curricular subjects were allocated a total of three days teacher education. Two of these days were used for the presentation of seminars held at an external venue, which were facilitated by a trainer. The third day in each curricular area was an in-school planning day, managed by the school staff. All teachers participated in the in-service education, which took place during normal school time, as the pupils were given extra vacation days to facilitate the in-service programme. The facilitated days were usually delivered at local hotels. Lunch was provided, as well as travelling expenses for those who had to travel distances in excess of ten miles from their schools

Following national delivery of in-service in a curricular area, regional *cuiditheoirí* (helpers) were appointed on a temporary basis. The *cuiditheoirí* worked with schools in the catchment area of one or more Education Centres, and offered their services to schools in a variety of ways, including visiting schools to talk to principals and staff,

providing further input on particular areas of curriculum strands, and working closely with Education Centres. The *cuiditheoirí*, therefore, could be considered temporary curriculum advisors.

9.9 Appointment of Music Trainers to deliver music in-service education

Although the delivery of in-service education in music and physical education was not originally scheduled until the academic year 2003-2004, the positions were advertised in March 2002, and the selection process took place in May 2002. It is significant to note that the trainers for these curricular areas were appointed a year in advance of the proposed in-service delivery. This was to facilitate the designated trainers to try out the new content and methodologies in their own classes prior to delivery of in-service education to their colleagues. Music and physical education were the only curricular areas to be afforded this opportunity to date, and this decision was taken in recognition of the lack of confidence the teaching profession in general has for these curricular areas.

Approximately seventy-five teachers were short-listed for interview for the posts of music trainers. Candidates were invited to Dublin to be interviewed by two selection committees, and were required to make a five-minute presentation to one of the selection panels, which would demonstrate their suitability to be a music trainer (PCSP, letter dated 12/4/2002, personal archive). Surprisingly, a sight singing test and aural interval test was also given to the candidates, by one of the interviewers who had actually participated in the Maynooth courses of the 1970s, which demonstrates that some of the older concepts of music in education were still in evidence in educational circles. These unexpected tests created some pique among the interviewees, as the candidates had not had prior notification of their inclusion.

Following the interviews, a total of twenty-four teachers were appointed as music trainers, with a back up panel of six substitutes, to assist in the dissemination of the 1999

Music Curriculum. I am one of the PCSP Music Trainers, and thus have first-hand experience of the training received by the music trainers. Because of my involvement in the music curriculum design, I have also been involved in giving some of this training to the designated music trainers. It is interesting to note that three of the twenty-two participants who completed the 1994 - 1996 Training of Trainers are among the ranks of the newly appointed trainers. I am one of those three. Three more of the 1994-1995 trainers were also involved in the training of the PCSP trainers, as one has since become an inspector, while two have since become music lecturers in Colleges of Education.

The designated trainers attended a week-long residential course in Maynooth, Co. Kildare in June 2002 – this time staying in a hotel rather than the seminary - and another in Salthill, Co. Galway in August 2002, after which they were expected to implement the revised music curriculum in their own classes for the academic year 2002 - 2003. A two-day review was held at the end of November, and further training and meetings were to be provided during the remainder of the academic year.

This time, in contrast to the 1994 - 1995 initiative, the quality of the training of trainers was rated very positively by the participants. An overview of the revised music curriculum was provided, as well as detailed information regarding its rationale and formulation. Intensive in-service education was given in the three strands of *Listening and Responding*, *Performing*, and *Composing*. Special attention was given to *Composing*, as it was the 'new' strand on the curriculum. Two presenters, Brendan Beales and John Browne, who are highly experienced in teacher in-service work, were invited from the UK to give composition workshops. In-service providers from all over Ireland, and from the Colleges of Education, were invited to give inputs, and the team members themselves also shared their expertise with their colleagues.

9.10 The Celtic Tiger stops roaring!
The planned in-service activity did not proceed as originally planned, however. A downturn in the economy in 2002 and 2003 meant government cuts in expenditure in the

2003 budget, and this included a six million euro cut in the in-service education budget. Rumours of changes to the planned activities permeated the Music Trainers' Review in November 2002, but the National Co-ordinator, other than confirming that there were severe budgetary cuts, did not have any information on how this would impact on the proposed activity. PCSP was required to offer various options for operation within limited budgets, but no indication was given whether the cuts would impact on primary or post-primary in-service education.

To further compound the issue, the primary school principals, under the aegis of their professional development organisation, Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) also called for a 'moratorium' of the national in-service education programme, as schools were struggling to come to terms with the revised subjects that had already been introduced, and to devise school policies in these areas. Many teachers, also, were inundated with the quantum of change, and the INTO also called for more time to assimilate the curriculum changes. The National Parents' Council (NPC) was also critical of the number of teaching days lost to pupils due to the in-service programme. While it welcomed the Revised Curriculum, and the in-service training, it deplored the loss of teaching days and suggested that teacher training be offered outside school hours (Irish Times Supplement, 22/20/2000, p.16).

A planned review for the designated music trainers in Spring 2003 was cancelled due to budgetary constraints. The recruitment of trainers for history and geography, also originally scheduled for 2003-2004, did not go ahead. There was a period of uncertainty and speculation for some months, until finally, at the INTO annual conference in April 2003, the Minister for Education and Science, Noel Dempsey, announced that he was allowing the educational system an additional year in which to implement the Revised Curriculum, whereby the following academic year would be reserved for 'consolidation 'of the curricular areas already introduced, and 'embedding in the system' (Minster Dempsey, speaking at INTO Congress, April 2003). Those present generally welcomed this announcement, and there was no mention whatsoever of budgetary cuts in in-service

education, though the issue of expenditure cuts in the school building programme dominated the agenda.

PCSP, now operating with a very limited budget, decided to proceed with the training of music and physical education trainers, in an effort to keep the team together and to sustain the preparation for the curriculum dissemination. A week-long course took place in Dublin in the last week of August, 2003. Most of the designated trainers were present, though a total of three of the original thirty had now relinquished their positions for various reasons. Those present were generally pleased with the training provided, and were in agreement that it helped to restore morale among the trainers. Not surprisingly, many had been rather disillusioned by the postponement of the music in-service education. It was evident that vast sums of money had been spent in the earlier years of curricular dissemination; now there was no guarantee that the remaining subjects would be resourced to the same standard.

The designated trainers – in the absence of national dissemination of the revised music curriculum – remained in their schools for the academic year 2003-2004. They were required, however, to continue to implement the revised curriculum within their own schools, and they were also urged to provide as much professional development as they could to their fellow teachers, both at school level, and at local level through the Education Centres. The National Co-ordinator confirmed that she had no indications as to whether the music and physical education programmes would actually go ahead in the following year, or in what format. She confirmed that PCSP was operating under severe financial restraints (Address to designated music trainers, August 2003).

It was actually mid May in 2004 when the Minister for Education confirmed to the National Director of PCSP that the music programme could proceed in the following academic year, with a panel of twenty-seven trainers, and that the physical education programme could proceed over a two year cycle, with a panel of seventeen trainers. The service of the *Cuideoitheoirí* (Helpers) could continue, but on a very restricted scale. A two-day meeting took place in Maynooth on June, and the actual planning for the

dissemination of the music in-service education got under way. It was confirmed to all schools that they would have two non-consecutive days of music in-service education in the following year, facilitated by a music trainer, with a further day of in-school planning, which would be managed by the school staff (DES, Circular 2004/35). In addition, schools would have one day of in-service education in physical education, plus a further day for in-school planning for physical education, as well as a single day of School Development Planning. These six days would be facilitated by allocation of extra holidays for pupils. It was confirmed to the music trainers that they would be assembled for a total of three weeks at the beginning of September 2004 in Maynooth, where they would complete the planning for the music curriculum dissemination, and when they would be allocated technological resources such as laptop computers and data projectors, and trained in their use. There would be regular two-day reviews during the year of dissemination, 2004 – 2005.

9.11 The Status Quo

While the national programme of in-service education for the 1999 Curriculum, as mediated and provided by the PCSP, is offered on a mandatory basis, elective in-service education at local level continues. The Education Centres, operating on reduced budgets, continue to offer courses to teachers in their catchment areas. As noted in Chapter Two, this in-service continues to be 'provider driven', in that if the Education Centre has a local trainer with music expertise, then that subject may be offered. Similarly, the summer courses continue, and their popularity persists. A new stipulation from the DES rules that it will only sanction courses which reflect the Primary Curriculum of 1999, so as a result, while the national PCSP music in-service training has not yet been offered, many teachers have attended music in-service education which focused on the Revised Curriculum of 1999, and are in fact already implementing aspects of it in their schools. Similarly, the recent graduates from the Colleges of Education have been trained for delivery of the 1999 Curriculum, so it is fair to assume that they are also implementing this curriculum in their teaching. Also, the PCSP Trainers have been encouraged to offer music in-service education at local level, under the aegis of the local Education Centres, and many have done this. A recent report issued by the DES inspectorate notes:

> So far, teachers have not received formal support in the implementation of the music curriculum. The teaching of music generally tends to be organised in accordance with the 1971 curriculum, although evidence from inspectors' reports suggests that some schools are employing elements of the new programme.......there is some evidence of teachers engaging in the newer element of composing music.
> (DES Inspectorate, 2002: 22)

9.12 Discussion

Bennett points out that there has been an involvement of a large number of reference groups, including all the partners in education, in the formulation of this most recent curriculum (2000: 29). The INTO also contends that this is the first curriculum in the history of Irish education which is evolutionary rather than revolutionary (1998: 24). The consultative nature of the process of curriculum revision entailed a time-scale longer than was envisaged at the outset. However, retrospectively viewed, this was not a disadvantage. Rather, it ensured that many different viewpoints and concerns were considered, and the thinking of the curriculum committees evolved in a developmental manner. At the launch of the curriculum, it certainly was the best resourced, with substantial sums of money being made available for in-service and for education resources. While it was pledged at the outset that the in-service programme would not fade out as that of the 1971 Curriculum had done, events late in 2002 and in 2003 led to apprehensions that this indeed might be the case.

The music curriculum, with its three inter-related strands of listening and responding, performing and composing is in tune with modern concepts of music education. This time, creativity is firmly enshrined in the curriculum, and its status is equal to that of listening and responding to music, and to performing music (DES, Music Curriculum, 1999: 6). There is a positive intention to ensure that creativity in music is firmly embedded in Irish education, and in the preparation of the PCSP trainers, much time and attention was given to developing this aspect. These trainers also worked on composing activities in their own classrooms for two years, so that they will approach this aspect from a very positive position in their in-service education work.

In line with the recommendations of the Report of the Review Body on Primary Curriculum (1990: 62) it was decided to simplify the objectives relating to music literacy. However, it may be that the general teaching population will still find these a little difficult, as the curriculum advocates that the child in the final year of primary school should be able to 'read, sing and play simple tunes from sight in C doh, G doh or F doh' (Music Curriculum, 1999: 75).

The appointment of the music trainers in advance of the curriculum dissemination, to allow them at least a year to fully implement the revised music curriculum in their own classes, was taken in recognition of the general lack of confidence in this area, and this was a very welcome move. However, the subsequent delay of the proposed in-service training has caused some concern. On one hand, it was generally welcomed by teachers, who needed time to assimilate and mediate the subjects already implemented. Advocates believe that the teaching profession will, after a year's break, be all the more keen to participate in the music courses in 2004-2005. On the other hand, however, critics of this decision argue that it may cause music to become even more marginalised on the curriculum. They fear that the subjects already disseminated – English, Irish, Mathematics, Science, Social Personal and Health Education, and Visual Arts - will be seen as the 'core' subjects by teachers, and the later subjects will be seen as 'additions' or 'frills.'

As of now, there is no official commitment that the same level of expenditure will be offered to support the remaining subjects –music, physical education, drama, history and geography. The present indications are that there are significant financial restraints in the Department of Education and Science.

As discussed in Chapter Three, there is no dedicated time in the school year in Ireland for in-service education. To date, the 1999 curriculum in-service programme has been facilitated by allocation of extra holidays to pupils – approximately six per year. This situation has been unpopular with many parties. As part of the most recent national

wage agreement 'Sustaining Progress', the DES, the teacher unions and the educational management interests agreed to enter negotiation with a view to 'agreeing new arrangements for delivery of in-service training, which will lessen the impact of in-service training on the operation of schools' (Government of Ireland, 2003: 116). It is possible that the outcomes of these talks will also impact on the delivery of the remainder of the primary curriculum training, though it will not impact on the delivery of the music curriculum as the time for that has already been allocated. The DES has also commissioned a team in Trinity College Dublin to conduct a formal evaluation of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme to date (INTO, 2003: 4), and while this evaluation has not yet been concluded, it is likely that the outcomes will also influence the remainder of the PCSP in-service training.

The Training of Music Trainers initiative in 1994-1995 demonstrated an official goodwill toward music in primary education, and any intervention to improve the in-service provision to the teaching profession is to be welcomed. An opportunity was lost, however, to offer real improvement to the system. Because there was no organised opportunities for subsequent delivery of in-service education, such as allocation of time and administrative support, this happened in an 'ad-hoc' and uncoordinated fashion, if it happened at all, and was dependant on the personal and professional commitments of the individuals involved. Furthermore, as this occurred at a time when the content of the revised music curriculum could not be revealed, the potential impact of the initiative was lessened.

9.13 Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I examined the formulation of the most recent primary curriculum in Ireland, which was published in 1999, and considered in detail the revised music curriculum. I described the appointment and training of the music trainers to disseminate this music curriculum, and I outlined the events that led to the postponement of the curriculum dissemination as originally planned. In this chapter, I also discussed some important aspects in the development of music education in Ireland during this era, which may be summarised as follows:

- In 1994-1995, a Training of Music Trainers initiative took place, which mirrored the Maynooth Training of Trainers in the early 1970s. Participants were not chosen by open competition, but were 'invited' to attend on the nomination of their local inspectors, just as happened in the 1970s. Following this Training of Trainers initiative there was no subsequent planned use of the new trainers, or no evaluation of the initiative

- A large number of the partners in education were involved in the formulation of the 1999 curriculum, unlike its predecessors, which were formulated by the DES inspectorate

- Music in the 1999 Curriculum embraces the three equal inter-related strands of *Listening and Responding, Performing* and *Composing.* There is a move away from the over dominance of singing and technical aspects, though it may be that the literacy requirements are still somewhat high, and thus it is possible that the potential for failure is built into the curriculum requirements

- The appointment of the PCSP trainers to deliver the in-service education for the 1999 Primary Curriculum is in direct contrast to earlier Training of Trainer initiatives. Trainers were selected by open competition, and the trainers responded very positively to the professional development provided. Technological aids such as laptop computers, data projectors and mobile phones are provided. On-going review and support is provided

- The in-service education to introduce the latest curriculum began in an impressive manner, as indeed it did following the 1900 curriculum and the 1971 curriculum. However, despite pledges to the contrary, this time the in-service education began to suffer even before music was introduced. There are currently budgetary restrictions as there were in the 1970s

- The recent budgetary cuts, and the postponement of professional development in Music and Physical Education could have negative or positive implications, as discussed earlier in this chapter. What is of paramount importance is that, after last year's 'moratorium', PCSP will once again be resourced to the levels that already existed, so that the programme can continue as planned

- The call for the appointment of music advisors continues (Review Body on Primary Education, 1990; Heneghan 2001). To date '*cuiditheoiri*' (helpers) have been appointed on short term contracts to help mediate the 1999 Curriculum in the areas of English, Irish, Mathematics, Science and SPHE, but there is no commitment that they will be allowed continue in this role once the original dissemination phase is over. Also, there is at present no commitment to appoint '*cuiditheoiri*' in music or physical education.

This chapter concludes the historical investigation, in that it brings the history of music education and music in-service education right to the present, that is, to June 2004. The educational system in Ireland is currently undergoing a period of substantial change. As well as the curriculum changes, there are also other educational innovations and issues which are causing concern to schools, for example, the integration of children with special educational needs in the mainstream primary schools; the introduction of Resource Teachers and Special Needs Assistants to help with their integration; the unprecedented influx of asylum seekers to the country, with the subsequent pressures at primary school level; the official requirement that schools now publish their policies in many areas; and changes regarding inspection of schools. Schools struggle to cope with these new pressures, as well as seeking to incorporate the revised content and methodologies of the 1999 curriculum into their practice.

As my historical investigation has revealed, once a major review of curriculum has been undertaken in Ireland, the initial enthusiasm tends to rapidly wane. It is imperative that this does not happen once again. The next part of this thesis will examine the perspectives of contemporary teachers and music trainers, in an effort to determine their viewpoints and needs, so that these may inform the future provision of music in-service education.

Part Three:
The Situation at the Start of the 21st Century

Chapter Ten: The Survey Research Methodology

10.1 Introduction

The key aims of my research are to investigate what can be learned from the study of historical and contemporary aspects of primary music in-service education in Ireland, and to consider how this knowledge might be used to inform future policy and practice. In Part Two of this study, I fulfilled the first objective, by presenting the results of the investigation of primary music in-service education in Ireland, from 1900 to 2004. It is now time to address the next four objectives of the study as outlined in Chapter One, which are:

- To investigate a sample of present-day teachers' perspectives on music in-service education

- To establish if participating teachers require further support beyond existing provision

- To investigate why some primary school teachers do not participate in music in-service education and to establish what features, if any, would encourage them to do so

- To research music trainers' views on the key issues raised by teachers regarding music in-service education

This research on present day teachers and trainers was a developmental, evolutionary process, spanning three years. Through the provision of a detailed account of each stage of the process, I endeavour to make the research process transparent and replicable, thereby underpinning its validity and reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1985: 4) argue that an 'audit trail' should be constructed and mapped out for the reader – allowing him or her to follow the path and key decisions taken by the researcher from conception of the research through to the findings and conclusions derived from the research. In this chapter, I endeavour to construct such an audit trail, before I present the findings in the following chapters.

10.2 The survey

In this contemporary part of the study, where I sought the views of teachers and providers of music in-service education, I used a survey, or descriptive, approach. Denscombe (1998: 6) points out that 'survey' means to 'view comprehensively and in detail'. He stresses that the survey approach is a research strategy, not a research method, and points out that many methods can be incorporated in the use of a survey. What is distinctive about the survey approach, he argues, is its 'combination of a commitment to a breadth of study, a focus on the snapshot at a given point in time, and a dependence on empirical data' (op. cit.: 7).

Best (1959: 102) argues that it may be preferable to use the term 'descriptive research' rather than 'survey research', so that people don't confuse the survey approach with the tools of survey. He asserts that descriptive research is 'concerned with conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of view, or attitudes that are held; processes that are going on; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing'. He goes on to argue that in descriptive research, the focus is on 'prevailing conditions, or on how a person, group, or thing behaves or functions in the present' (op.cit.: 102). Best's definition appeals to me – the focus of this part of my study is indeed on prevailing conditions in music in-service education, the points of view of the participants and providers, and the trends that prevail at the present time.

10.3 Role of the Practitioner-Researcher

As a contemporary teacher and provider of music in-service training in Ireland throughout the period of this research, it is necessary to consider my role as practitioner-researcher. Denscombe (1998: 61) argues that conventionally, research is the province of the expert; the outside professional, who initiates the process, sets the agenda and designs the collection and analysis of data. The outsider, he argues, may be 'better placed to see the kind of thing which, to the insider is too mundane, too obvious, to register as an important factor' (op. cit.: 63).

A practitioner-researcher, however, is 'someone who holds down a job in some particular area and is, at the same time, involved in carrying out systematic enquiry which is of relevance to the job' (Robson, 2002: 534). Robson goes on to highlight four main disadvantages of the practitioner-researcher role, which are: lack of time; lack of expertise; lack of confidence; and the possibility of 'insider' problems, such as 'hierarchy' difficulties, and 'prophet in own country' syndrome. Conversely, Robson points to the advantages of the practitioner researcher role, which he recognises as 'insider opportunities' 'practitioner opportunities' and 'practitioner-researcher synergy' (op. cit.: 534). I contend that my role as practitioner-researcher was actually beneficial to this study. The 'insider opportunities' and 'practitioner opportunities' as identified by Robson meant that I had a pre-existing knowledge and experience base about the situation and the people involved. Denscombe (1998: 63) argues that such insider knowledge can be advantageous to the research, as it can allow access and interviews that otherwise may not have been possible, and this was an aspect which was important for my study. Furthermore, the 'practitioner-researcher synergy' as identified by Robson meant that my own insights and role helped in the design, implementation and analysis of the research. As Denscombe (1998: 209) points out, there are those who argue that their 'self' gives them a privileged insight into social issues, so that the researcher's self should not be regarded as a limitation to the research but as a 'crucial resource'.

The biggest disadvantage that I anticipated was the potential of some bias in the form of what could be termed 'social distortion'. Because of my involvement with music education in Ireland, there was a real possibility that people would say what they perhaps thought I wanted to hear, especially in the interviews. While interviews can yield rich insights into peoples' experiences, opinion, aspiration, attitudes and feeling, there is the ever-present danger of distortion or bias. May (1993: 116) argues that 'Interviews are social encounters and not simply passive means of gaining information'. He goes on to warn that the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee may affect data. At worst, this can mean that people simply lie, denying holding attitudes or ideas which they believe will be judged as unacceptable, or claiming to agree with socially acceptable attitudes when really they don't agree at all. However, in my opinion, the opposite can also be true, in that the interviewees, knowing the researcher, may talk more openly and frankly than they normally would,

because of their shared background and understanding. In the case of my research, it is my view that the individuals I interviewed did indeed talk frankly and honestly, most, if not all, of the time.

10.4 The research tools

10.4.1 The questionnaire

The key tool that I used to obtain data from teachers was the self-completion questionnaire, as the sample was large. The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, capable of being administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comparatively straightforward to analyse (Wilson and McLean, 1994). To qualify as a research questionnaire, it should be designed to:

- Collect information which can be used subsequently as data for analysis

- Consist of a written list of questions

- Gather information by asking people directly about the points concerned with the research

(Denscombe, 1998: 88 - 89)

The information from questionnaires tends to fall into two broad categories – facts and opinions, and the questions may be open or closed. Closed questions structure the answers by allowing 'only answers which fit into categories that have been established in advance by the research. The researcher...instructs the respondent to answer by selecting from a range of two or more options supplied on the questionnaire' (Denscombe, 1998: 101). Closed questions are useful in that they can generate frequencies of response amenable to statistical treatment and analysis (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 247). They also enable comparisons to be made across groups in the sample (Oppenheim, 1992: 115).

In questionnaires, attitude scales can also play an important part. Best (1959: 155) points out that what an individual feels, or what he believes, is his attitude. But he argues, it is difficult, if not impossible, to describe and measure attitude, and the researcher must depend upon what the individual says as to his beliefs and feelings. Similarly, Robson (2002: 292-293) argues that the term 'attitude' is 'somewhat

slippery', as it 'falls in the same kind of sphere as opinion, belief or value'. It is not possible to assess something like this by a single question or statement, he argues, therefore answers to a range of statements can help in teasing out such issues. In an effort to measure attitudes, I made use of the Likert scale, where the statements are 'devised to measure a particular aspect in which the researcher is interested; and the respondent is then invited to agree or disagree with the statement' (May, 1993: 96). The most common response categorisation system is to have five fixed-alternative expressions. The actual scaling technique assigns each position a scale value, usually from five to one, depending on the respondents' favourableness toward the given item (Best, 1959: 159).

Hayes (2000: 93) argues that Likert scales have the advantage that they can cope with different strengths of opinion. However, it is important to recognise the limitations of this type of opinion measurement As Best (1959: 160) argues, it is somewhat inexact, as it fails to measure opinion with the precision one would desire. Furthermore, the researcher cannot assume that the five degrees of attitude, as measured by the scale, are interpreted in the same way by different people. In spite of these limitations, however, the process of opinion measurement has merit and 'until more precise measure of attitude are developed, this technique may serve a useful purpose in social research.' (Best, 1959: 160).

Open questions are those 'that leave the respondent to decide the wording of the answer, the length of the answer, and the kind of matters to be raised in the answer. The questions tend to be short and the answers tend to be long.' (Denscombe, 1998: 101). Only the open question can catch the 'authenticity, richness, and depth of response, honesty and candour which are the hallmarks of some of the better qualitative data' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 255). The open questions can also allow unusual responses to be derived (Bryman, 2001: 143), as replies are possible that the researcher may not have contemplated, and may not therefore have included as a possible fixed-choice answer. Also, while fixed-choice answers may suggest certain kinds of answers to the respondents, open questions allow for greater input and candour from the respondent. Hayes (2000: 81) suggests that open questions have a higher ecological validity, as they are generally more representative of the respondent's true opinions, less open to the researcher's own biases or

perceptions, and connected to the interviewee's lived experiences. Miles and Huberman (1984: 15), too, point out that words have a 'vivid meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader – another researcher, a policy maker, a practitioner – than pages of numbers'. However, the writers go on to point out that words can be 'slippery, ambiguous symbols' and warn that the possibility of researcher bias looms quite large. They caution that researchers must take every precaution to exercise objectivity when analysing such data, and must be concerned with the replicability of such qualitative analysis (op. cit.: 16). However, the belief that such qualitative data could be very useful in supplementing and illustrating the findings derived from the survey convinced me of the merits of including open questions.

10.4.2 Use of focus groups to assist in questionnaire design

To assist in the design of the questionnaire, and to ensure that the pertinent questions were included, I decided to make use of focus group interviews, where the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher (Morgan, 1988: 9). Focus group interviews have also been termed qualitative group interviews, group depth interviews, intensive interviews, focused discussion group, and focused group interviews (Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, 2003: 20). This US committee defines qualitative group interviewing as 'open informal discussions of selected topics by participants chosen from the population of interest, or a subset of that population, led by someone who is knowledgeable about group interviewing techniques and the purpose of the survey' (op.cit.:2003: 21). Morgan (1988: 9) points out that the contrived nature of focus group interviews is both their strength and their weakness; they are unnatural settings yet they are very focused on a particular issue and, therefore, will yield insights that might not otherwise have been available in a straightforward interview.

Focus groups are also considered useful for developing themes, topics and schedules for subsequent interviews and/or questionnaires (Morgan, 1988: 10). They may help to generate questions which otherwise may be overlooked, and in addition, the use of focus groups can assist in providing a comprehensive range of fixed alternative responses to the survey questions. Also, as the participants react to each other, rather than with the researcher, I considered the use of focus group interviews useful in the

formulation of the questionnaires as a possible safeguard against some elements of bias, because I was personally involved in some of the music in-service education courses that were being surveyed.

10.4.3 Layout of the questionnaires

Much thought and consideration were given to the design and layout of the questionnaires, as well as to the sequencing of the actual questions. The format proposed by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 257) was adopted, therefore the questionnaires commenced with unthreatening factual questions seeking nominal data regarding gender, length of teaching experience, geographic location of school, class taught and number of summer courses undertaken.

The next section moved to closed questions requiring rating scales or multiple choices about given statements or questions, thereby eliciting responses that require opinion, attitudes and views. This is referred to as 'funnelling' by Hayes (2000: 79) and he defines it as a technique of moving from general questions to more specific ones. In this section, I made use of Likert scales to measure the participants' intensity of agreement with certain issues. To do this, I assembled a pool of relevant items which emerged from the focus group interviews, and respondents were asked to rate each on a set of five fixed-alternative expressions, labelled 'a great deal of relevance', 'a lot of relevance', 'some relevance', 'very little relevance' or 'no relevance at all' depending on how the particular statement referred to the respondents' motives and/or attitudes. Weights of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, were assigned to these alternatives, with the direction of weighting dependent on whether the statement applied positively or negatively to the respondent, as recommended by Robson (2002: 294). Finally, the last part of the questionnaire moved to more open-ended questions that sought responses on opinions, attitudes, perceptions and views, together with reasons for the responses given.

10.4.4 Semi-structured interviews

To complete the picture, and to ensure triangulation, I also sought the input of providers of music in-service education – the music trainers, and the tool I used to obtain this data was the semi-structured interview. The purposes of the interviews were three-fold. First, I wished to use the interview to gather information from the

other key actors in music in-service education, namely the trainers. Second, I wished to follow up the results gained from the questionnaires to teachers. Finally, I hoped that this exercise would offer some new perspectives on music in-service education.

The research interview has been described as 'a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focuses on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation' (Cannell and Kahn, 1968: 527). The interview allows for greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 269). Robson (2002: 272) points out that the interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out. He contends that face-to-face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that self-administered questionnaires cannot. Bryman, (2001: 313) argues that in qualitative interviewing, the interviewers can depart significantly from any schedule or guide, to follow up interviewee's replies, and to ask new questions. This was a possibility that I considered beneficial to the research. If any of the music trainers being interviewed showed new insights or offered new data, I had the freedom to follow this up, and explore it in depth.

10.5 The research process

10.5.1 Time span of the research

The research on present day teachers and trainers was a methodical, sequential process, spanning three years, quite a lot of which took place concurrently with the historical research and the general background reading. The focus group interviews were carried out in the summer of 2000, and informed the questionnaire design. This was then followed by a rigorous piloting of the questionnaires in summer 2001, before the main survey was undertaken in 2002. This survey focused both on teachers who attended music courses, as well as on teachers who had never attended music courses, to gather as many perspectives as possible on the issue. Finally, when the analysis of this stage was complete, I progressed to the interviewing of the music trainers in summer 2003, to gain yet another perception on the subject, and also to further develop some of the key outcomes of the questionnaires. The diagram below

illustrates graphically the process I followed, and I also outline each of the stages in detail in the next sections.

Figure 10a: Time Line of the Research Process

> *Summer 2000*
>
> **Focus Group Interviews to generate questionnaire items**
>
> ⬇
>
> *Summer 2001*
>
> **Piloting of questionnaires**
>
> ⬇
>
> *Summer 2002*
>
> **Administration of questionnaires to teachers who attended music courses, and teachers who never attended music courses**
>
> ⬇
>
> *Summer 2003*
>
> **Semi-structured interviews with trainers regarding the finding of the questionnaires**
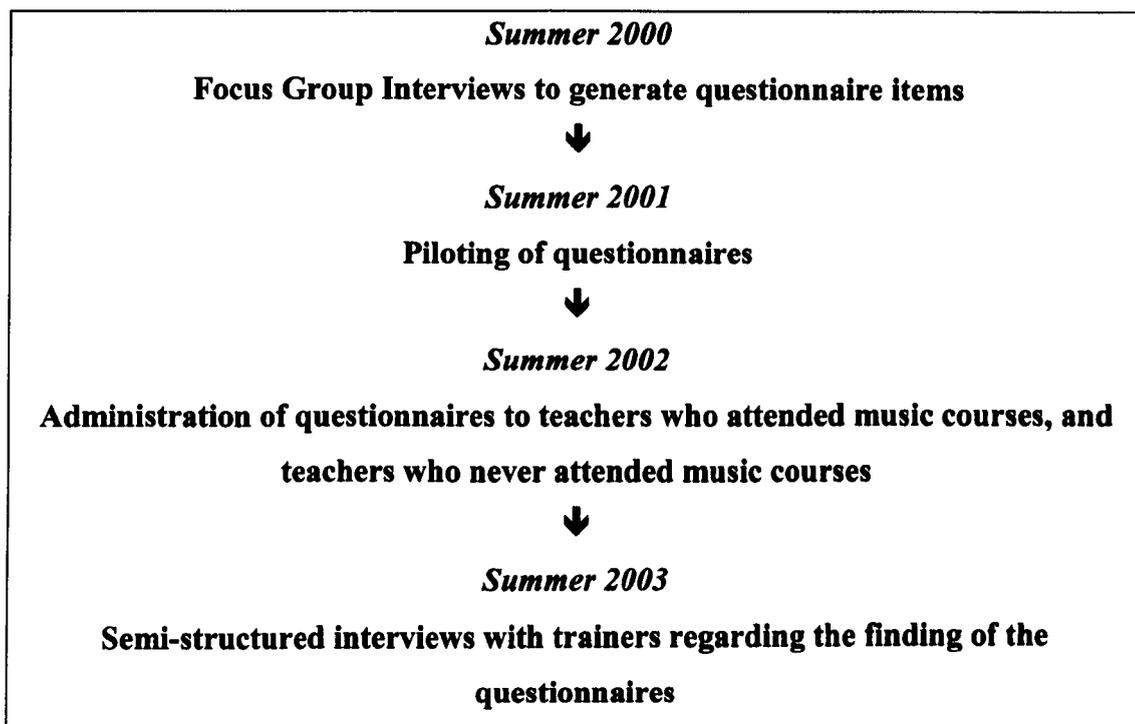
10.5.2 Focus group interview with teachers who attended a music course

I administered a total of four focus groups interviews on the final days of summer music courses in 2000. As the participants were teachers who had undertaken a music course, each of the teachers was a member of the population of potential respondents to the planned survey. As far as I could ascertain, none of these individuals participated subsequently in the main survey. Each group interview was allocated forty minutes, and I chaired each group. At the outset, the aim of the group interview was explained to the participants, and confidentiality was assured. Participants were also given the option of opting out if they so wished. A key question was written on a flip chart, namely 'In your opinion, what constitutes effective music in-service education?' and the group were invited to talk frankly on the subject. The participants quickly began to address this issue, and soon expanded into other issues surrounding music in-service education, among them, their reasons for participating in music courses, their personal experiences of music courses, and the pressures they encountered when attending in-service education. This tendency

to digress somewhat from the main topic may be viewed as strength, rather than a weakness of focus groups, as it is from this interaction that the most valuable data emerges.

The group interviews were tape-recorded, and later transcribed, to permit detailed study of the contents. Several key issues emerged concerning the participants' perspectives on music in-service education generally, and these were used to construct a first draft of the questionnaire which was aimed at attendees of music courses, and which will henceforth be known as **Questionnaire A (music attendees).**

10.5.3 Focus groups interviews with teachers who never attended a music course

I also used two focus group interviews to assist in the formulation of the questions for the questionnaire aimed at teachers who never participated in music course. The first focus group consisted of a group of local teachers that I invited to participate in a group interview, and asked to discuss frankly why they never attended music courses. The second focus group consisted of teachers who attended an information and technology (ICT) course in Galway. The purpose of the research was outlined, and eligible volunteers were invited to have a scheduled coffee break with the researcher, during which time they would speak about their reasons for never attending summer music courses. Of the twenty participants present, a total of six had never taken a music course, and all agreed to participate.

Both focus group interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. The issues that emerged were used to formulate a draft questionnaire, hereafter called **Questionnaire B (non-music attendees).**

10.5.4 Piloting of Questionnaires

Both questionnaires were piloted during the summer of 2001. To allow for a sample that included participants from other parts of Ireland, I decided to administer Questionnaire A (music attendees) in a total of five locations, namely Cork, Dublin, Kerry, Mayo and Donegal, thus targeting the north, south, east and west of Ireland. I phoned the course organisers in advance to brief them on the research, and to request

their help with the distribution and collection of questionnaires. Twenty-five questionnaires and covering letters were sent to the organisers of music courses in each of the above-mentioned areas, as twenty-five is the maximum number of participants recommended on a course. The questionnaires were administered on the final day of the weeklong course, and thirty minutes were allowed for completion.

Altogether, 106 questionnaires were returned. Two were discarded as being incomplete. From the 104 remaining, I picked 20 at random to be analysed for piloting purposes, and for detailed discussion with my supervisors. The strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire became evident in the analysis of the selected pilot documents, and modifications were made following this analysis. The open questions, which invited respondents to write anything they wished about certain issues, yielded a substantial amount of rich data, so I decided to retain these in the questionnaire, even though it was apparent that the subsequent analysis would be time-consuming.

Questionnaire B (non-music attendees) was similar in a lot of aspects to Questionnaire A (music attendees). For example, the general questions such as those relating to gender, geographic location, length of teaching experience, and participation on in-service courses were identical. The main difference in focus was that this questionnaire asked teachers why they had never participated in a music course, and it also asked them to identify features that would encourage them to participate on a music course. Therefore, I considered it unnecessary to subject this questionnaire to a large-scale pilot. Accordingly, I piloted it on a small group of teachers who had participated on the focus group interviews. Following feedback from them, I made some minor adjustments to the layout, and to the wording of one question.

10.5.5 Questionnaire A: The Sample

I decided that the target group for Questionnaire A (music attendees) would be every participant on every summer music course in the Republic of Ireland in summer 2002, i.e. the entire possible population. While this required a significant expense, I felt that the use of a comprehensive sample would do most to eliminate any possible bias, as I was personally involved on music courses in two locations. Also, I

considered that it would be more effective to secure the views of participants in geographically diverse areas.

The Department of Education and Science publishes annually a book listing all the approved summer in-service courses for primary teachers. In 2002, a total of 923 courses were listed, with thirty-seven of them being devoted to music. (DES, 2002). Twenty-nine music courses actually went ahead. I spoke to all the organisers in advance, and requested their assistance with distribution and administration of the questionnaires. Generally, they were most obliging, and promised assistance. The questionnaires and covering letters were posted to the organisers. This was followed up by a phone call to each organiser in the week leading up to the course. The course participants were invited to complete the questionnaires on the last day of the course. The course organisers outlined the purpose of the research to the teachers present, and their input through completion of the questionnaires was invited, while their right and freedom to opt out was affirmed. Confidentiality was assured, and the participants were allocated thirty minutes for completion of the questionnaires. The course organisers then collected the completed questionnaires, and posted them back to me.

The response rate to Questionnaire A (music attendees) was satisfactory. A total of seventeen courses, or 59% returned questionnaires, with the number of questionnaires ranging from six to twenty-one. I scrutinised and coded all questionnaires on their return, and a total of fourteen that were incomplete were discarded. The total number of completed questionnaires was 237. The findings of this survey are reported in detail in the next chapter.

10.5.6 Questionnaire B (non-music attendees): The Research

The sample for Questionnaire B (non-music attendees) required careful consideration. I decided that the sample would also target teachers who attended summer courses in summer 2002. However, I decided to target double the number of non-music courses as music courses, to obtain an adequate number of responses, as many teachers on non-music courses would have attended a music course at some stage of their careers. The non-music courses were randomly selected, with 50% being dispatched to the same geographic regions as the music course, while the other

50% were chosen at random throughout the Republic. A total of fifty-eight non-music courses were targeted. I spoke to all the organisers in advance, and requested their assistance with distribution and administration of the questionnaires. Again, twenty-five questionnaires and covering letters were posted to each organiser. This was followed up by a phone call to each organiser in the week leading up to the course.

The response rate to this questionnaire was lower than that of Questionnaire A (music attendees). This may be due to two main factors – namely, a possible lack of interest in music, and also the prospect that some of the courses may have not have had participants who had never undertaken a music course. In all, twenty courses out of the fifty-eight returned completed questionnaires – 34 % of those courses targeted – with the actual number of completed questionnaires per course varying from four to eighteen. All questionnaires were carefully scrutinised and coded when they were returned to me. Once again, any incomplete questionnaires were omitted from the research. In all 173 completed copies of Questionnaire B were received. The findings of this survey are reported in detail in the next chapter.

10.5.7 Semi-structured interviews – the process

The next stage of the research process was to interview a sample of music trainers. The findings of the research on teachers generated the items for discussion at the interviews. The interviews were designed with a clear sequence in mind, so that 'lines of enquiry can be pursued and checked, rather than simply using more than one method simultaneously to investigate the same thing.' (Denscombe, 1998: 85). Accordingly, I delayed this part of the research until analysis of the questionnaires was complete, so that the salient findings of the questionnaires could be fully explored with the music trainers through the use of the semi-structured interviews.

The first task in preparation for the interviews was to create an interview schedule. Having identified the key issues which I wished to explore, I used these to set a number of key questions, the sorts of questions that have been described by Kvale (1996: 133-135) as process questions. Each process question had to be accompanied by a series of possible prompts or probes. Prompts enable the interviewer to clarify topics or questions, while probes enable the interviewer to ask respondents to extend,

elaborate, add to, provide detail for, or clarify their responses, thereby accessing the richness, depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that are some of the hallmarks of successful interviewing. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 278)

The draft schedule of questions and accompanying prompts and probes was piloted on a music trainer who was part of the population, but who would not form part of the sample. Following her pilot interview, and subsequent discussion with her, I prepared, at her suggestion a one-page summary that could be given to interviewees prior to the interview, which outlined the purposes of the interview, and which guaranteed confidentiality. The interviews were then administered in August 2003.

10.5.8 Semi-structured interviews: the sample

The sample of music trainers for this part of the research could be termed a 'convenience sample'. Aldridge and Levine (2001: 78) define a convenience sample as a sample based on a 'selection of cases that are easily accessible to the researcher for the expenditure of relatively little effort'. The authors go on to argue that the element of deliberate selection by the researcher and the fact of his or her association with the chosen cases can compromise the research. While I would ideally have liked to apply a much more objective procedure in the selection of subjects, the reality is that the available pool of music trainers in Ireland is not large. For example, a total of thirty music trainers were originally appointed to the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) panel, and I am one of these, as I discussed in detail in Chapter Nine. Furthermore, many of these newly appointed trainers had not previously been involved in the delivery of music in-service education. Because the questions I wished to ask referred to the interviewee's past experience in delivery of music in-service, those without prior experience of music in-service education were not eligible for this study. In August 2003, when the music trainers were assembled in Dublin for a week's professional development, I requested volunteers for my research. A total of ten trainers volunteered, and from this list, I picked six names at random to participate in the interviews.

10. 6 Analysis of the data

10.6.1 Purpose of analysis

When the data in a study is assembled, it has next to be analysed and interpreted. Analysis, Robson (2002: 387) argues, is necessary because data in their raw form do not speak for themselves, but the 'messages stay hidden and need careful teasing out.' The purpose of analysing the data is to find meaning in the data, and this is done by systematically arranging and presenting the information. It has to be organised 'so that comparisons, contrast and insights can be made and demonstrated' (Burns, 2000: 430). In this section, I present a detailed account of how I analysed the data gathered by the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

10.6.2 Analysis of the questionnaires – Use of SPSS

I decided to make use of the software *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) for storage, retrieval and analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires. As Robson (2002: 392) points out, the field of quantitative data analysis is complex and specialised, and it is unreasonable to expect everyone carrying out enquiry to be a statistical specialist. However, questionnaires by their very nature generate a large amount of quantitative data, and the use of SPSS, even in a limited fashion, greatly accelerated and enhanced the processing and manipulation of this data. Kelle (1995: 4) suggests that computers are particularly effective at coping with the often-encountered problem of data overload and retrieval in qualitative research. They may be particularly effective in allowing quantitative operations to be performed on the data.

I entered the data from the questionnaires into the analysis software. Robson (2002: 398) recommends that the best way to 'clean' or proof-read the data for errors is for the data to be entered twice, independently, by two different people, and to then resolve any discrepancies. However, this is obviously very time consuming, and in my particular case it was not possible. I carried out 'cleaning' or proof reading of the data by applying the other method as proposed by Robson (2002: 398), i.e. by making use of all the categorical variables to display the data where feasible. This clearly highlighted any invalid entries or possible errors. In addition, I made use of

frequency analyses on each of the variables, which again immediately pinpointed any discrepancies. The software was then used to produce the findings of the research, and to generate frequency tables and graphs to help in the analysis of the data.

10.6.3 Analysis of the opinion questions

For the analysis of the opinion questions, I considered whether to use the statements that the respondents ranked highest as an indicator of their opinions, or whether to use the summated rating, as outlined by Best (1959, 157-160), Oppenheim (1966: 133-142) and Hayes (2000: 94). In the summated rating, each point on the attitude scales is assigned a score value, usually ranging from five for an extreme positive response, four for a less positive response, and so on – so that the person's responses can be collected to give a general answer, as proposed by Hayes (2000: 94). Having scored each item from five to one, the item scores are added to obtain a total score for the item in question. By adding the respondents' scores, a 'summated' score is derived, which is the scaled position for each statement. However, experimentation with such summated scores led me to conclude that the ordering of the opinion items either did not change at all, or there were such minor changes that it did not affect the final findings. Therefore I decided that I would base my analysis of the opinion questions on the items that the respondents rated as having the greatest relevance for them, i.e. scoring 5 on the Likert Scale.

10.6.4 Analysis of the qualitative data in the open-ended questions

Analysis of the answers to the open questions was more complex. Respondents wrote in their own words, expressing individual views and perceptions. The data concerned was expressed in words rather than in numbers. In respect of these open questions, I employed the technique as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984). First, the open questions were transcribed in raw sequential narrative form, and cross-coded. Then the data was carefully scrutinised for patterns or themes. This process has been referred to as 'factoring' by Miles and Huberman (1984: 223-224) and is in fact an extended form of content analysis. For each open question, it entails reading through answers, deriving themes that can be employed to form the basis for codes, and then going through the answers again so that the answers can be coded and grouped accordingly.

Miles and Huberman (1984: 223) point out that analysis of qualitative data consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the raw data. This is a core part of the analysis. The researcher carefully considers the data, and identifies themes. The writers point out that these are all analytic choices. Data reduction is therefore a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and organises data is such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified.

The second major phase is data display, which Miles and Huberman define as 'an organised assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking' (1994.: 21-22). They argue that the narrative text of qualitative data tends to be extremely bulky, and therefore can overload humans' information-processing capabilities and preys on their tendencies to find simplifying patterns. They argue that a data display assembles organised information in an immediately accessible compact form, so that the researcher can see what is happening. They assert that this is not something separate from analysis; it is in fact part of the analytic activity. The use of SPSS accelerated and facilitated the displays that are included in the following chapters.

The third major phase of analysis activity, according to Miles and Huberman, is conclusion drawing and verification. From the beginning of the data collection, the researcher is 'beginning to decide what things mean, is noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions ' (1994.: 22). However, the competent researcher maintains openness and scepticism, and avoids drawing conclusions until the data collection is complete.

In the analysis of the open questions in the questionnaires, I endeavoured as far as possible to adhere to the three stages of analysis as proposed by Miles and Huberman, as the next chapter will demonstrate. As Robson (1993: 257) points out, such a content analysis inevitably involves some loss of information. However, no analysis of the data can take place until the data is reduced to a series of themes that can be manipulated by the researcher.

10.6.5 Analysis of the Interviews

Where the open-ended questions on the questionnaires generated much data as described in the last section, the six semi-structured interviews generated a far greater amount of raw data – a total of 26,000 words on transcription alone. The method employed to analyse this was similar to that used to analyse the data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaires. First, the answers were coded. Miles and Huberman (1994) describes codes as 'tags or labels for assigning units of meaning.' In their view, coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact, is the essence of analysis. Codes are usually attached to 'chunks' of varying sizes – words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting. (Miles and Huberman (1994: 56).

The methodical content analysis as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984) of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification was then employed. I also made use of 'salient quotes' to further illustrate the findings. Hayes describes this simply as 'quotations that are relevant to the topic being discussed.' (Hayes, 2000: 375) A detailed description of the findings of the semi-structured interviews can be found in Chapter Twelve.

10.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research

Reliability is essentially a 'synonym for consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 117). For research to be reliable, it must demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar context, similar results would be obtained. I have attempted to present a detailed account of how I designed the instruments and analysed the data, in an effort to enable replicability of the research and results. As Bryman (2001: 30) argues, 'if a researcher does not spell out his or her procedures in great detail, replication is impossible'.

Cohen and Manion also suggest that a central issue in considering the reliability and validity of questionnaire surveys is that of sampling. If the sample is unrepresentative, or skewed, too large or too small, it can easily distort the data, and

indeed, in the case of very small samples, prohibit statistical analysis (2000: 129). In my research, I consider that I targeted an appropriate sample, and I obtained a satisfactory number of responses, which helps ensure the reliability and validity of the research.

Validity is an important key to effective research, because if a piece of research is invalid, it is worthless (Cohen, Manion and Morrison: 2000: 105). In fact, Bryman (2001: 30) argues that it is the most important criterion of research. Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research. In qualitative data, validity is addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the objectivity of the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 105). At all stages of the research and subsequent analysis, I have endeavoured to present honest and objective accounts. The use of the self-completion questionnaire as a research instrument also gave the participants the scope and opportunity to write anonymously and honestly. The rigorous process of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing that I employed also contribute to the validity and authenticity of the research, as it demonstrates that every precaution was taken to ensure thorough and precise analysis of the qualitative data, and to eliminate bias and inaccuracies.

10.8 Limitations of the research

A characteristic feature of survey or descriptive research is that it presents a snapshot of a particular moment. This could also be considered a limitation of the study. While the analysis of the questionnaires presents a synthesis of teachers' views as expressed in the summer of 2002, and the analysis of the interviews presents a synthesis of trainers' views as expressed in the summer of 2003, there are no guarantees that these same views and opinions would be those expressed at any other moment in time. As Birley and Moreland (1998: 58) argue, it cannot be assumed that the findings will automatically apply to whole populations or through time. However, on the basis of probability, and in the absence of any major changes in the educational setting, it is reasonably safe to assume that these views and opinions are fairly representative of Irish teachers at the start of the 21st Century.

My own role as a participant-researcher could potentially bias the research, but I was careful at all stages of the process to be as objective as possible. For example, the use of focus groups to set the questions and lists of pre-determined answers helped to ensure that the questionnaires were free as possible of my personal bias. Also, the decision to send the questionnaires to every music course in Ireland during the summer of 2002 safeguarded the integrity of the research process, as I was personally involved in courses in the Cork region.

Aldridge and Levine (2001: 92) argue that a reliance on intermediaries to distribute questionnaires can be potentially dangerous for the research, as they will not have the commitment to the research that the actual researcher does, and this could be considered another limitation of my research. However, because of the geographic spread of my sample, and because of the fact that the summer courses only take place on certain weeks in Ireland, the use of the course organisers to administer the questionnaires in my research was essential. However, as the questionnaires were completed on the final day, I was therefore unable to follow up non-respondents. However, I do consider that I got a good quota of responses from a sizeable cross section of the population. Punch (2003: 42) points out that response rates in the 30-40% range or less are not uncommon when mail distribution is the chosen data collection strategy, and in the case of this piece of research, the response rate from the music courses was 59%, while the response rate from the non-music courses was 34%, and, taking into account that I used intermediaries to distribute and collect the questionnaires, I have accepted this response rate as satisfactory.

10.9 Summary and Conclusion

Burns (2000: 3) contends that research is 'a systematic investigation to find answers to a problem.' In this chapter I outlined the systematic investigation I employed to research the contemporary provision of music in-service education in Ireland, and to propose some answers to its current problems. I attempted to rationalise my choice of methodology by underpinning it with some theoretical considerations. As with the historical research methodology, I presented the research methodology I utilised in this part of the study in detail, and outlined meticulously the procedures I followed. I

described in detail the process employed in the design and piloting of the questionnaires, and furthermore demonstrated that appropriate rigour was employed in the generation of the questions and pre-set answer choices for the questionnaires, through the use of the Focus Group interviews. A systematic pilot phase was carried out. The sample was carefully considered, and indeed in the case of Questionnaire A (music attendees) the sample consisted of the entire population of music course attendees in summer 2002. Construction of such an 'audit trail' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 4) enables the consumer of the findings to evaluate how rigorously the research was conducted, and it also ensures that replication of the study to re-examine the findings is possible at any time in the future.

Therefore I consider that I have employed a satisfactory and appropriate research methodology to address the objectives of my research. Furthermore, I argue that the rigour and transparency of the process of construction, piloting and analysis of my research tools means that that they are more likely to produce robust and credible findings.

In the next two chapters, I present the findings of each of the elements of the survey. In Chapter Eleven, I present the findings of the questionnaires to teachers, and in Chapter Twelve I present the findings of the semi-structured interviews to trainers. The evaluation of all my research, and its implications for music in-service education will then be discussed in detail in the final part of this study.

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Chapter Eleven: Teachers' Attitudes and Responses

11.1 Introduction

The survey of teachers' perspectives on music in-service education was carried out in summer 2002. I decided to target teachers who were participating on summer courses, because summer courses are a popular mode of continuing professional development in Ireland, and are more widespread than term time courses. In this chapter, I present the findings of the research on teachers, both those who do attend music in-service education (music attendees), and those who have never attended music in-service education (non-music attendees). The research tool used to elicit teachers' opinions was a semi-structured questionnaire, and the design, piloting and administration of the questionnaires have been considered in detail in the previous chapter. This chapter will focus in particular on the outcomes that I have identified as being salient to this research. I will present these findings in four main groupings, which are as follows:

- The findings that pertain to both groups of respondents
- The findings that are specific to music course attendees
- The findings that are specific to the group of respondents that have never attended a summer music course
- The findings of the open-ended question to both groups of respondents

11.2 Overview of the respondents

The respondents to both questionnaires came from all over the Republic of Ireland, and from a mixture of urban and rural locations. The geographic distribution of the participating music courses is shown on the following tables.

Figure 11a: Location of Participating Music Courses

Location of Course (by county)	Number of completed questionnaires
Cork 1	7
Cork 2	20
Clare	12
Donegal	17
Dublin 1	15
Dublin 2	10
Dublin 3	9
Dublin 4	14 .
Galway	12
Kerry	16
Kilkenny	18
Laois	19
Leitrim 1	8
Leitrim 2	6
Limerick	23
Kildare	21
Wexford	10
Total : 17 courses	**Total: 237 completed questionnaires**

Similarly, the respondents to Questionnaire B (Non-music attendees) were drawn from areas all over Ireland, and from a mixture of urban and rural locations, as Figure 11b demonstrates. The participants were also attending courses on a wide range of curricular topics.

Figure 11b: Location of Non-Music Courses

Venue of Course (by county)	Number of completed questionnaires
Cork 1	13
Cork 2	6
Cork 3	10
Cork 4	9
Clare	9
Dublin 1	4
Dublin 2	9
Dublin 3	6
Dublin 4	8
Galway	10
Kildare	8
Kilkenny	10
Leitrim	5
Louth	11
Monaghan	12
Sligo	7
Waterford	18
Westmeath	10
Wexford	8
Total : 19 courses	**Total: 173 completed questionnaires**

The respondents to both questionnaires had a wide variety of lengths of teaching service, as illustrated on the following tables:

Fig. 11c Length of Service of Respondents to Questionnaire A (music attendees)

Length of service	0-5 years	6 –10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	+ 30 years	Total
Total number of respondents	41	21	28	49	37	35	26	237

Fig. 11d Length of Service of Respondents to Questionnaire B (non attendees)

Length of service	0-5 years	6 –10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	+ 30 years	Total
Total number of respondents	46	21	22	21	33	18	12	173

This information reveals that the survey respondents came from all over the Irish Republic, and varied from newly qualified teachers to very experienced teachers. These two factors help to assure that the respondents are generally representative of the teaching population in Ireland. Denscombe (1998: 27) argues that if the survey coverage is suitably wide and inclusive it gives credibility to generalised statements made on the basis of the research, and I am satisfied that this applies in the case of this piece of research.

11.3 Findings of the research that are relevant to both groups of respondents

Some of the findings of this part of the research apply to both sets of respondents, i.e. the music attendees, and the non-music attendees. These are the findings regarding: gender and participation in a music course, levels of confidence in music teaching ability, participation on term time music courses, and the provision of incentives for participation on term time courses.

11.3.1 Gender and participation on music courses

While the teaching profession in Ireland, as elsewhere, tends to be female dominated, the latest figures show that males make up over twenty per cent of the primary teaching force (Irish Times supplement *Working in Education*, April 4th 2003, p. 1). Therefore, it would be reasonable to expect that the number of male respondents to the questionnaires would be in the region of twenty per cent. However, the proportion of male respondents to Questionnaire A (music attendees) was only 8% of the total number of participants. Furthermore, in direct contrast, the proportion of male respondents to Questionnaire B (non-music attendees) was 19% of the total, a figure that much more closely represents the gender balance in primary schools. This leads me to conclude that male teachers are less likely to participate in summer music courses than are female teachers. The low participation rate of male teachers on music in-service education has been discussed anecdotally in recent years, but to my knowledge, however, this is the first piece of research in Ireland that indicates clearly that this is the case.

11.3.2 Levels of confidence in music teaching ability and participation on music courses

In Chapter Four, I discussed in detail the issue of primary teachers' general lack of confidence in teaching music, and discussed some reasons for this widespread lack of confidence. I included a question designed to research this issue in both questionnaires, as I was keen to find out if this influenced participation on music courses. The question asked participants to rate their confidence in teaching music, using a five-point scale, and the following two graphs show the results.

Figure 11e: Respondents' confidence in teaching music

Questionnaire A (music attendees)

Legend:
- I am very confident teaching music
- I am confident teaching music
- I am not very confident teaching music but do teach it
- I am not at all confident teaching music but do teach it
- I don't teach music due to lack of confidence

Values: 8%, 2%, 11%, 33%, 46%
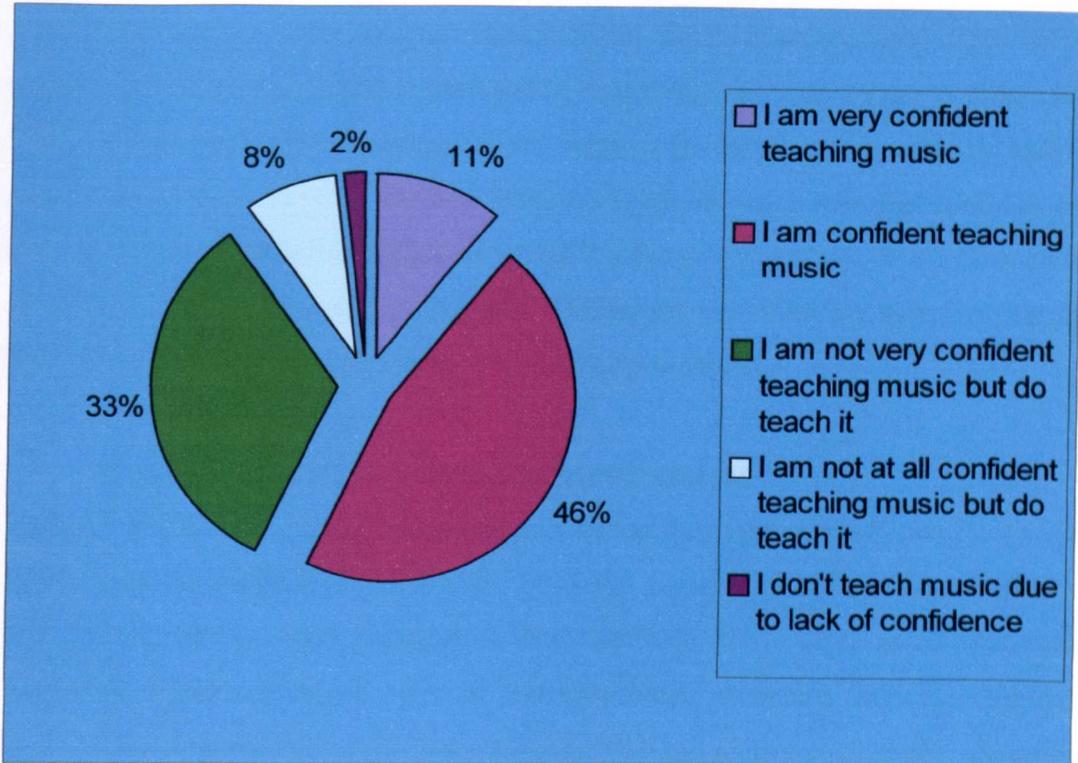
Figure 11f: Teachers' confidence in teaching music

Questionnaire B (non-music attendees)

Legend:
- I am very confident teaching music
- I am confident teaching music
- I am not very confident teaching music but do teach it
- I am not at all confident teaching music, but do teach it
- I don't teach music due to lack of confidence

Values: 12%, 9%, 18%, 21%, 40%
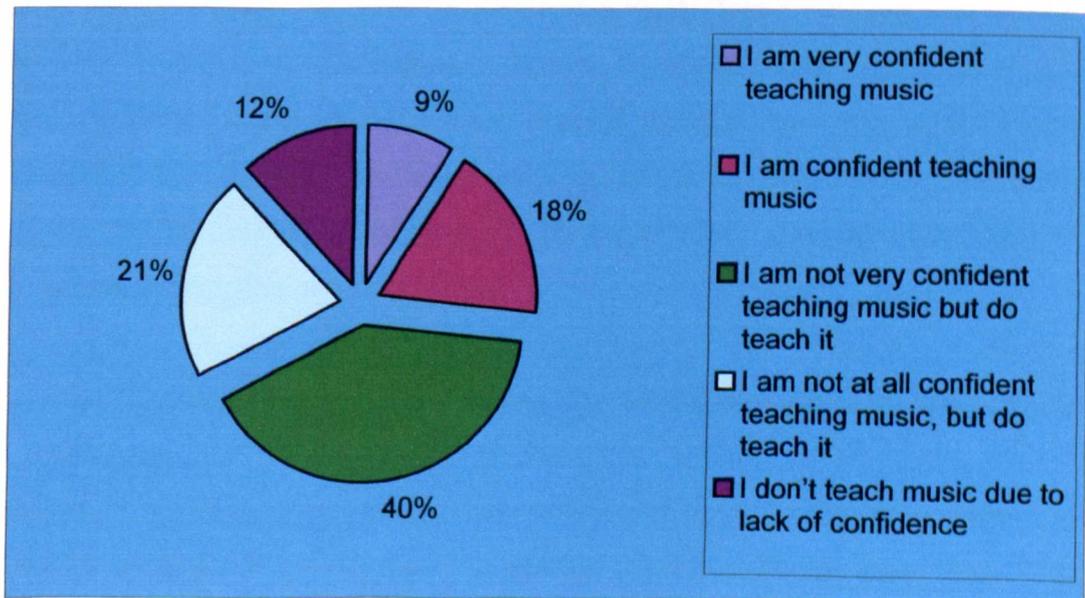
On examination, it emerges that 57% of the respondents from the music courses state that they were either very confident or confident teaching music, while 43% lack confidence to some degree. However, in direct contrast, only 27% of the respondents to Questionnaire B (non-music attendees) rate themselves as either very confident, or confident in teaching music, while 73% of this group admit to lacking confidence to some extent. This evidence leads to the conclusion that teachers who actually have confidence in their own music teaching ability are more likely to attend music courses. Those teachers who lack confidence, and who are therefore most in need of music in-service education, are less likely to attend.

11.3.3. Participation in term time music courses

Respondents to both questionnaires were asked if they had ever attended term time music in-service education, as distinct from the summer music courses. A total of 14% of the music course attendees had attended term time music in-service education, while a total of 13% of the non-music attendees had attended such courses. These proportions are very similar. The term time experiences described varied from a one-evening seminar on Christmas music, to a six-session course on the use of percussion instruments in the classroom. It must be highlighted that non-attendance on music courses may not necessarily be the teacher's choice, as music courses may not be available in many localities, especially in rural areas. In the open questions on both questionnaires, many teachers commented on this lack. For example, Respondent B.100, wrote: 'Music courses seem to be more readily available in or near the cities. I would gladly travel for up to an hour to attend a music course, if there was such available in County Louth.' Respondent A.147, wrote that: 'Music in-service education is more beneficial during term time, as you have opportunities to try out the different musical strategies with your pupils. I wish there were music courses available to me during term time – unfortunately, this is not the case.' In my research, participants in the larger urban areas are more likely to have attended term time courses.

11.3.4 Should there be incentives for attendance on term time music courses

Both sets of teachers were asked if they considered there should be incentives to encourage teachers to attend music in-service education during term time. This

question was an opinion question, and the respondents were required to tick a box corresponding to their answer. The following tables demonstrate their replies:

Fig. 11g: Should there be incentives for participation on term-time music courses

Questionnaire A (music attendees)

Yes	82%
No	18%

Fig.11h:Should there be incentives for participation on term-time music courses

Questionnaire B (non –music attendees)

Yes	78%
No	22%

The vast majority of respondents in both categories believe that there should be incentives for participation on term time music courses. However, it is worth noting that a few respondents noted that teachers are professionals, and as such they have a duty to participate in professional development and stay up to date in professional knowledge, and that this should not be dependent on external incentives.

The participants were also allocated space to suggest what the possible incentives could be. A total of 141 music attendees – 60% - made suggestions, while 133 non-music attendees - 76% - offered suggestions. Some respondents suggested several possible incentives. A detailed content analysis was made of the written responses. There was a very high level of consistency between both groups, in that they both suggested the same set of incentives, with extra-personal vacation (EPV) leave being highest on the agenda for both groups. There were only minor differences in the ordering of other incentives; therefore I have decided to combine the suggestions, to offer a synthesis of what teachers in general would consider to be incentives for attendance on term-time music courses.

Fig. 11i: Incentives for participation on term time courses
proposed by both groups of respondents

Incentive Proposed	Number of times overall that this incentive was proposed
EPV leave/time in lieu	116
Resources or grants for resources on completion	76
Free courses or reimbursement of fees Travelling/subsistence/costs reimbursed	68
Held during school time with full substitution	38
Certification	31
Comfortable convenient location	31
Back up after course/help in writing plan/scheme of work	14

As this was an open question, this was not a prompted response, therefore the high occurrence of EPV leave in both questionnaires would indicate that teachers would consider it as valuable incentive for participation in term time music courses. Some of the respondents wrote that the Department of Education and Science (DES) had recently allocated two EPV days for teachers who attended a nine session term time course on substance misuse prevention entitled 'Walk Tall', and stated that music and other curricular areas should be afforded the same incentive. Nine of the respondents in my research who suggested EPV leave as an incentive also added that the EPV leave should have full substitute cover.

A very interesting finding in my research was that teachers nominated the provision of resources or grants to buy resources as an incentive to participation. This potential incentive got a total of 76 unprompted suggestions. It is a proposal worth serious consideration by the policy makers, because such an arrangement could also contribute to enhance the teaching of music, and would be far less disruptive to school routine than would EPV leave.

The third most frequent incentive suggested was that of free courses, or reimbursement of course fees and course expenses, so it is clear that this would also be an incentive which would encourage teachers to participate.

11.4 Findings of the research specific to music course attendees

Some questionnaire items were not relevant to teachers who never attended music in-service courses, so they were featured on Questionnaire A (music attendees) only, therefore I will summarise these findings separately. The pertinent findings in this category concern:

- Respondents' perceptions concerning teachers as presenters of music courses
- The features that contribute to effective music courses
- On-going support on completion of music course

11.4.1 Primary teachers as deliverers of music courses

Music course attendees were asked how important it was for them that the presenter of music in-service education was a primary school teacher.

Figure 11j : Respondents' preferences that course presenters are primary teachers
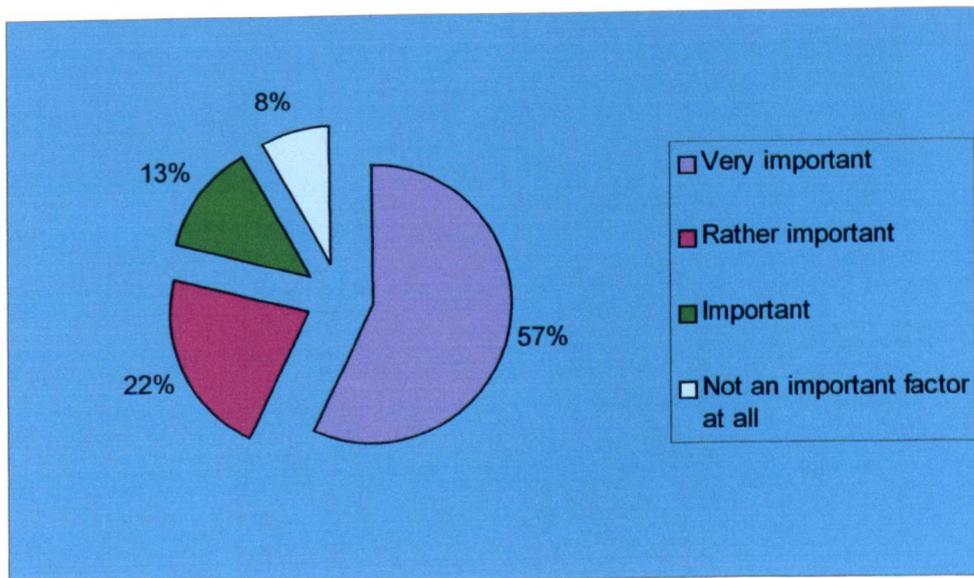
An overwhelming majority –92% - responded that it was very important, rather important, or important. Only 8% of respondents considered it unimportant. This

data demonstrates that the vast majority of teachers consider that the best people to deliver music in-service education to them are primary teachers. This confirms the findings of the 1993 Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) survey on in-career development of primary school teachers where the highest approval rating for curricular professional development was found to be for practicing teachers with expertise specially seconded for the purpose (INTO, 1993: 96).

11.4.2 Music attendees' views on the features that contribute to an effective music course

The music course attendees were presented with a total of six features that contribute to make a music course effective. These pre-set answers had been generated at the Focus Group interviews, as described in detail in Chapter Ten. The respondents were required to rank each statement on a five-point scale, depending on how relevant each aspect was for them. From the results of this item, I constructed the following graph, which represents the number of times that each aspect was rated as having 'a great deal of relevance' for the participants.

Figure 11k: Features that contribute to an effective music course
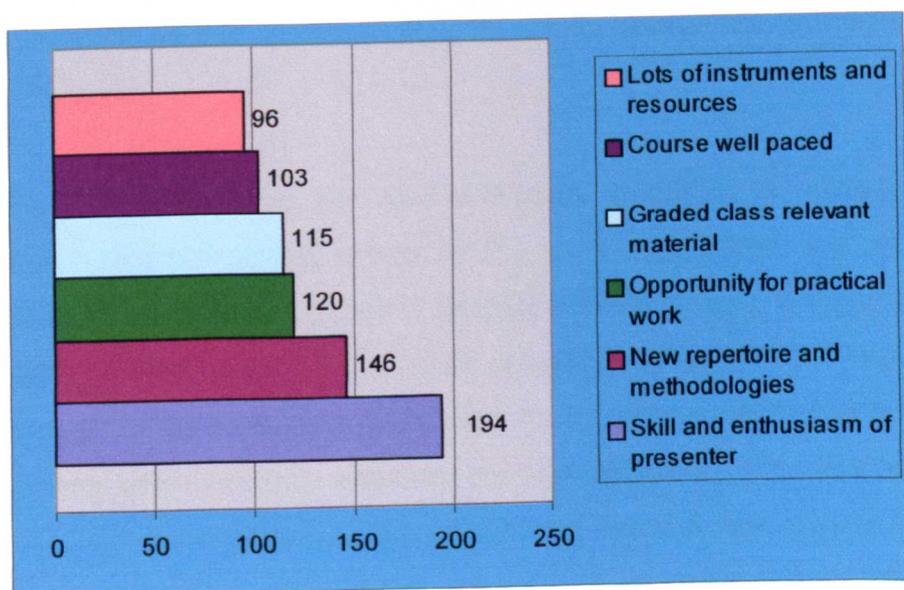
As the respondents were required to rank each item on the five-point scale, they had an opportunity to record their attitude to each aspect. The majority of respondents

rated the 'skill and enthusiasm of the presenter' as the feature having the greatest influence in contributing to an effective music course. This is an interesting finding, as in Chapter Two, where I discussed effective in-service education; the 'skill and enthusiasm of the presenter' did not emerge as a central theme in the recent literature. However, it is interesting to note that in the historical investigation, the development of Tonic Sol-fa in Ireland was attributed to the personality and popularity of the first music inspector, Peter Goodman (Sleith, 1915: 1346). The other features, in order of relevance, were: new repertoire and methodologies, opportunity for practical work, graded class relevant material, course well paced, and lots of instruments and resources. These features are generally in accordance with the literature review on andragogy, or the study of adult learning, as examined in Chapter Two.

11.4.3 Ongoing support from the music trainer when the course is finished

The participants were asked if they considered there was a need for on-going support from the music trainer when a course was finished. An overwhelming 81% answered in the affirmative, while 19% answered in the negative, which reveals that there is a substantial need for such a feature. As of now such follow-up support does not exist in Ireland.

The respondents were provided with space to outline the on-going support they would recommend, and a total of 153 wrote suggestions, with some respondents making multiple suggestions. A detailed content analysis was carried out on these, and the results indicate that teachers would like to receive follow-up and/or ongoing support in the form of regular visits by the trainer, individual help and problem solving, help in locating resources, the organisation of follow-up in-service activities and help with school plans. Interestingly, the teachers also noted that they would like to see the trainers working with children, which was something that Goodman and his team of organisers did following the introduction of music in 1900. The following graph illustrates the suggestions made by the respondents.
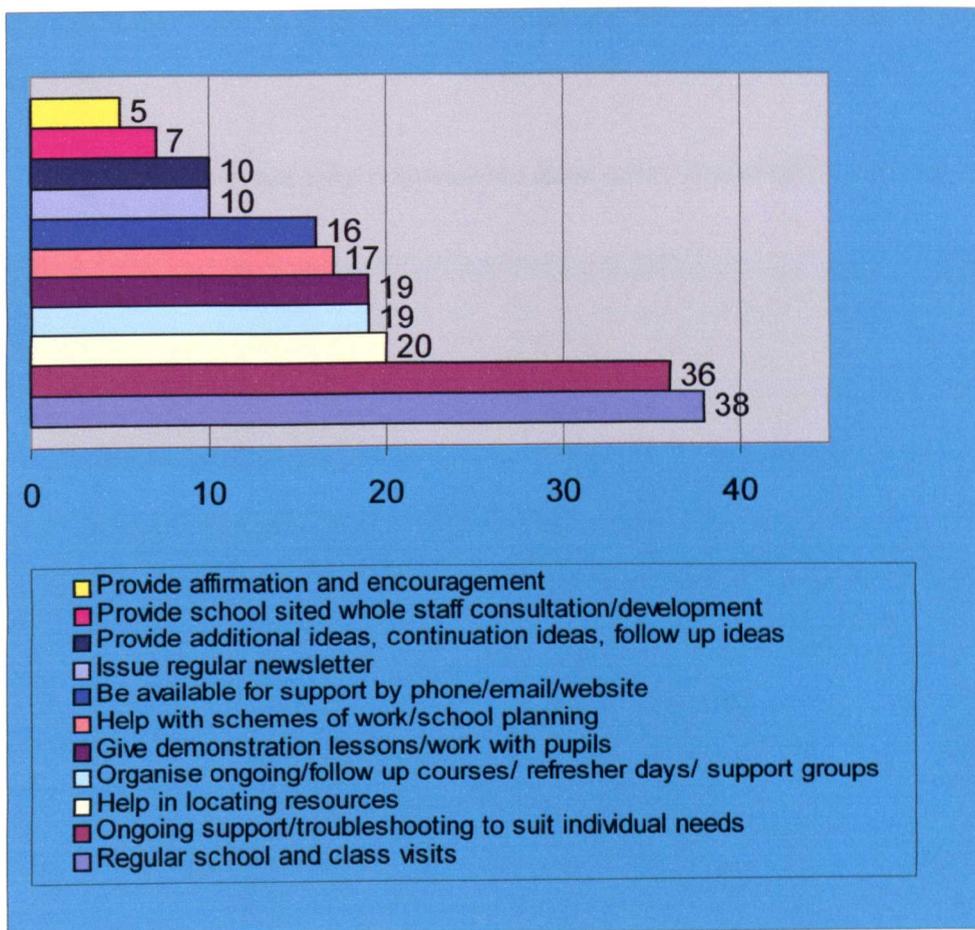
Figure 11m: ongoing support required on completion of a music course

11.5 Findings of the research specific to respondents who never attended a music course

Two specific questions featured on the questionnaires to teachers who had never undertaken a music course, which were not relevant to teachers who attended music courses. These two items asked the respondents why they had never undertaken a music course, and also asked what features, if any, would encourage these teachers to participate in a music course.

11.5.1.Reasons why respondents have never taken a summer music course

In this item, participants were asked why they had never taken a summer music course. A total of eight pre-set answers were presented, which had been generated at the focus group interviews, and participants were required to rate each item on a scale from one to five, from which I have extracted the following graph which

represents the number of times that each feature was rated as having 'a great deal of relevance'.

Fig. 11n: Reasons why respondents have never undertaken a music course
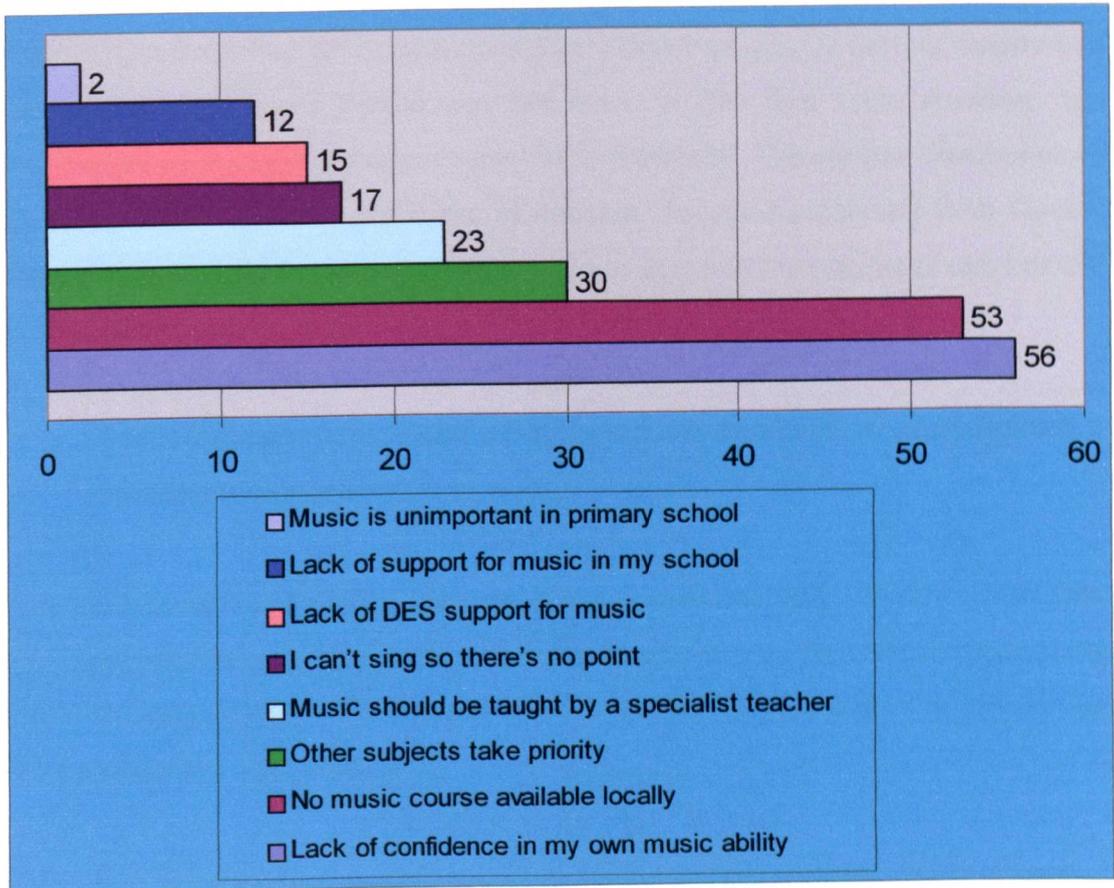
From these responses we can see that there are two main reasons why some teachers do not participate in summer music courses, which are: the lack of confidence in their own music ability, and the non-availability of music courses locally. It is also noteworthy that seventeen of these respondents listed their lack of singing ability as having a great deal of relevance in their decision not to participate in a music course. As this reason is so closely linked to a lack of confidence in their music ability, it leads me to deduce that teachers' lack of confidence in their own musical ability may be the greatest barrier to participation in music in-service education. Many of the respondents elaborated on this in the final open-ended questions. In this, a total of 20 respondents commented on their own lack of confidence in music, or their lack of singing ability. Respondent B.31 wrote 'I have absolutely no ear for music or no

singing voice, so I would be totally out of depth at a music course'. Respondent B.132 was 'kicked out of singing class in primary school' and still has absolutely no confidence in music.

The non-availability of music courses in their locality was another prime reason why many respondents had never participated in a music course. A total of twenty-two respondents also wrote further on this issue in the final open question, and commented on the lack of music courses in their locality. The unequal distribution of music courses nationally is a cause of concern. As one participants from County Monaghan wrote 'If there were a basic music course within ten miles of me, I would gladly attend.'

11.5.2 Features that would encourage the respondents to participate in a summer music course

Respondents were asked what features, if any, would encourage them to participate in a summer music course. A total of four features were presented, which participants rated on a Likert Scale. The features listed as having 'a great deal of relevance' for the respondents are as follows:

Fig. 11o:Features that would encourage non-attendees to attend music courses
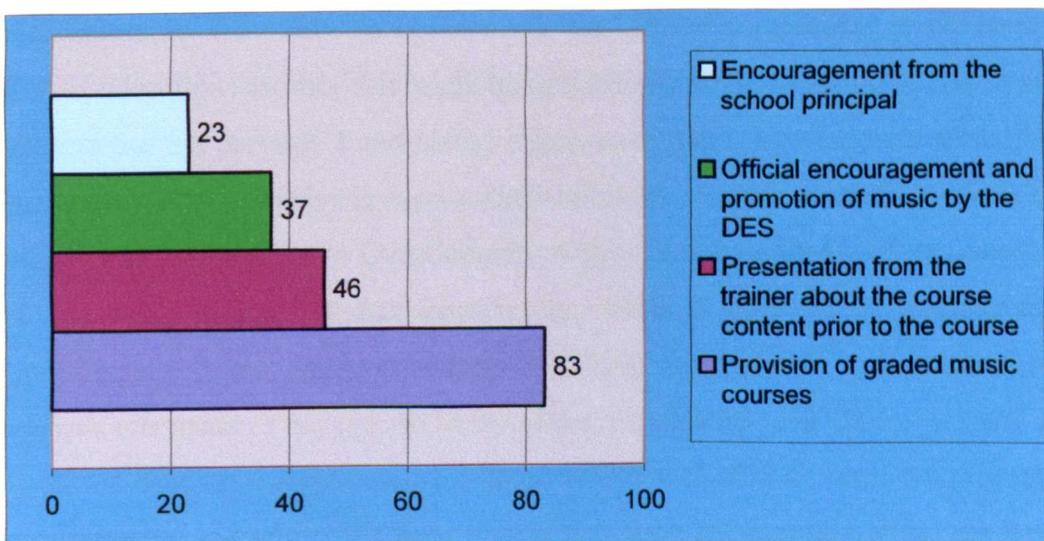
The above evidence points to the conclusion that the availability of graded courses would encourage these respondents to participate in music courses. In the final open question, many of the respondents wrote further on this suggestion. Nineteen respondents wrote that they would like to participate in a music course for beginners. Respondent B.71 from County Monaghan wrote, 'If there were a music course for beginners in my area, I would jump at the opportunity. Respondent B.162 wrote: 'I would love to attend a music course for <u>absolute beginners</u> if such a thing was offered.' This was echoed by respondent B.79 who wrote 'I would be willing to attend a music course if there were a course for non-singing musically clueless people'.

The possibility of a presentation from the trainer about the course content prior to the course also found favour with the respondents. At the Focus Group interviews that generated these fixed choice answers, participants indicated that a presentation before the course would reassure teachers about their lack of prior musical experience, and confirm for them whether a course presumed prior music skills such as music literacy. The data gained from the questionnaires indicates that such presentations could indeed encourage reluctant teachers to participate in music in-service education.

11.6 Final open question

The final question on both research instruments was an open question, which invited respondents to write any further observations and/or suggestions about music in-service education that they felt might be of relevance to the research. A full page was allowed for this purpose. I considered it important that the participants were given a voice, and the opportunity to express their opinions on music in-service education. A total of 135 respondents to Questionnaire A (music course attendees) or almost 57% of the total, availed of this opportunity, while a total of 92 respondents to Questionnaire B (non-music attendees) or 53% of the total did so. A detailed content analysis was made of the replies. Many of the respondents took the opportunity to re-iterate or develop a statement or opinion which had already been featured on the questionnaire, and while this may signify that they felt strongly about the issue, it does not add anything new to the research. However, some such responses have

already been given in this chapter, where they may have helped to illuminate various findings. A number of the respondents commented specifically on the course they had just completed, mainly positively, but some negatively, but this is outside the remit of this research. The next section focuses on the new issues which arose in the final open-ended question.

11.6.1 Themes derived from analysis of the open question on Questionnaire A (music course attendees)

The following are the new issues that emerged in the open question on Questionnaire A (music course attendees)

Figure 11p: new issues that emerged on analysis of open question on Questionnaire A

Theme	Number of times theme proposed
Role of confidence building – courses should build teachers' confidence and convince them that all can teach music, irrespective of singing ability	30
Musically proficient teachers should be seconded to act as Music Advisors/ Music Co-ordinators	27
Courses should be graded, or there should be grading within courses	21
Would like more term time music courses to be available locally	15
Would like to see Music Trainer working with children	6

The role of confidence building in courses was a theme that recurred the most in the responses to the open questions. As Respondent A.66 stated: 'Teachers should be encouraged and assured at all times that they can teach music effectively even if they cannot play an instrument.'

The next most frequent theme was the call for the provision of a music advisory service. In the words of Respondents A.99: 'I taught for a year in Australia – there was a vibrant pro-active music advisory service that served a certain geographic area. It provided a variety of courses, monthly newsletter, and had a bank of instruments, books, tapes and CDs which schools could borrow. It would be great if the Education Centres could provide such a service.' Similarly, Respondent A.64 wrote: 'There should be someone in a seconded post to organise music in-service education in an area, and to improve the status of music generally. The inspectors are often happy to hear a song. Music is often seen as a 'frill'.'

The third most frequent theme was the call for the suggestion that graded music courses should be provided, or that there should be differentiation within the music courses. It is interesting that this group of respondents made such suggestions. The suggestion of graded courses was an item on the questionnaire to non-music attendees, but it was not featured on the questionnaire to music course attendees, so it was an unprompted suggestion from this group of respondents. Respondent A.5 wrote: 'Could it be possible to divide music in-service courses into courses for beginners, advanced etc. There should be basic courses for those who need very basic training.' Respondent A.175 wrote: 'Courses should be aimed at beginners or advanced. It must be frustrating for experienced teachers to be with beginners. For non-musicians like me, keep the approach simple, and the repertoire workable. Use small sample graded steps.' The theme emerged again when Respondent A.202 wrote: 'Maybe there should be a variety of courses. For example, Course 1 could be for those who have never attended music courses, and Course 2 could be for those who have attended. This would ensure that those who are more competent would not swamp the less confident. Perhaps it would be desirable that it should be stated on the Flyers/adverts *exactly* who the course is aimed at, and course organisers should *stick* to this enrolment policy.' This would indicate that that fear of being out of one's depth might be a major deterrent to some teachers, an issue which is in keeping with the literature on adult learning, as considered in Chapter Two.

The third most frequent theme was the call for increased provision of term time music courses. The research demonstrated that there was a low participation rate in term time music courses, as outlined in section 11.3.3. However, the evidence gained

from the open questions would seem to suggest that a significant reason for this low participation rate might be the non-availability of term time music courses in certain areas. In the words of Respondent A.247: 'Music in-service education is more beneficial during term time as you have opportunities to try out different music routines with your pupils. The first week of July is a much more difficult time to motivate teachers. However, there are no term time music courses in my area.'

Finally, six of the respondents wrote that they would like to see the music trainer working with pupils. It is interesting to note that this was a feature of the music in-service education provided by Goodman and his team of music organisers at the beginning of the twentieth century, though it is not usually a feature of music courses nowadays.

11.6.2 Themes which emerged on analysis of the open question on Questionnaire B (non-music attendees)

A total of 92 respondents, or 53%, took the opportunity to write a response to the open-ended question. It is interesting to note that a total of twenty respondents, or 22% of those who responded to the open question commented on their own lack of music confidence or music competence. However, this was an issue that was already covered in the questionnaire. The following are the new themes that emerged in the analysis of this open question. Themes that were proposed less than three times are omitted from this table.

Figure 11q: New themes which emerged on analysis of open question Questionnaire B

Issue	Number of times theme proposed
Teachers with expertise in music should be seconded to act as Music Advisors	12
Music should be taught by specialist teachers	10
Complaints about inadequacy of music in teacher training courses	5

Twelve respondents expressed the view that musically competent teachers should be appointed to support music education among their peers. Many of these respondents suggested that this could be implemented via the Education Centre network. This echoes the view expressed by the music course attendees.

Another major theme that was proposed on a number of occasions by this particular group of respondents was the suggestion that music should be taught by a specialist teacher. Respondent B.80 elaborated: 'We can't be expected to be masters of all subjects – I have my strengths, as do other teachers. It's ridiculous to expect us to be experts in all curricular areas.' Respondent B.44 argued that 'Primary teachers are expected to be *Jacks of all Trades*. It's time that specialist teachers were appointed for subjects such as Music and PE. If the Department of Education was really committed to the improvement of music education, that is what they would do.' Respondent B.92 wrote that 'Music should be taught by specialist teachers – clueless people like me do more harm than good.' It is interesting to note that the view that music should be taught by specialist teachers was expressed far more frequently by those teachers who have never attended music courses, than it was by teachers who have attended music courses. This leads me to conclude that it teachers who lack confidence in their own music teaching ability are more likely to express this sentiment.

11.7 Summary of the findings

The main findings of the research on teachers may be summarised as follows:

- There is a low participation rate of male teachers on summer music courses
- Teachers' lack of confidence in their own music teaching ability is also a barrier to participation, with those most in need of music in-service education being those least likely to attend
- Nationally, there is a low participation rate in term time music courses, and one of the significant reasons for this is the uneven availability of music courses in the country
- Teachers believe that there should be incentives for participation on term-time music courses, and they suggest incentives such as EPV Leave, provision of resources, provision of free courses or reimbursement of course

fees and expenses, release of teachers to attend courses during school time, certification, and back up support after the courses

- A substantial proportion of music course attendees would prefer that the presenter of music in-service education be a primary school teacher, with 92% of this group rated it as 'very important', 'rather important', or 'important'

- A total of 81% of music course attendees believe that there should be ongoing support from the music trainer when the music course is finished, and they believe that this ongoing support should include school visits by the music trainer, provision of on-going support, organising follow-up courses, and teaching demonstration lessons to pupils

- In the opinion of music course attendees, the single most important factor that contributes to an effective music course is the 'skill and enthusiasm' of the presenter

- Teachers who have never attended a music course report that the most noteworthy feature that prevents them from attending is the lack of confidence in their own music ability, followed by the non-availability of a music course locally

- Non-attendees of music courses report that the factors that would encourage them to participate in music in-service, in order of preference, are: availability of graded courses, presentation from the trainer prior to the course, official support of music by the DES, and encouragement from the school principal

- The new issues raised by the music course attendees in the final open question were: the role of music courses in confidence building, the suggestion that musically proficient teachers should be seconded to act as music advisors, the provision of graded courses, the availability of more term time music courses, and the issue of the music trainer working with pupils

- The new issues raised by non-music attendees in the final open question were: the suggestion that musically proficient teachers should be seconded to act as music advisors, the suggestion that music should be taught by specialist teachers rather than by the class teacher, and complaints about the music education they received in the Colleges of Education

11.8 Conclusion

It is clear from the evidence in this chapter that the music in-service education as it currently exists in Ireland is not as effective as it could be. There is a substantial number of teachers in the country who have never attended music professional development of any description, and this is cause for concern, because it ultimately means that such teachers are probably not providing an effective music education for their pupils. My research has revealed that there are two major reasons for this lack of participation. The first reason is that many teachers are lacking confidence in their own music ability, and the research has indicated that this lack of confidence is a major barrier to participation in music in-service education. This is a real problem, because as long as participation in music in-service education remains voluntary, it is going to be difficult to motivate such teachers to attend. The second barrier to participation is the unequal provision of music courses nationally. This barrier may be easier to overcome, but in order to address it, increased investment is necessary to ensure that music courses - both term time and summer - are available in all Education Centre catchment areas. Respondents have also indicated that they would welcome the provision of incentives to encourage teachers to attend term time courses, and this is an issue that needs to be explored by the policy makers.

Another cause for concern is the low participation rate of male teachers on music courses. Research on behalf of the Arts Council in 1985 asserted that 'boys are receiving much less music education than girls' (Herron, 1985: vii). This lack of pre-service music education may have impacted on the male teachers' lack of music confidence, and subsequently may have contributed to the current gender imbalance in music courses. However, as long as male teachers are reluctant to engage in music in-service education, a substantial number of pupils will not receive the music education that they are entitled to, nor will they experience strong role models of men teaching music. This is another issue which needs to be addressed by the policy makers, in an effort to improve music education in primary education.

Some changes in the current models of music in-service education are also necessary. The research has demonstrated that both groups of respondents favour the provision

of graded music courses, and indeed, in the case of those who are reluctant to participate in music courses, this is the feature that is most likely to encourage them to attend. The provision of graded courses is therefore worthy of serious consideration. The provision of a music advisory service is another innovation which could prove vital in providing an effective system of music professional development to support and encourage generalist primary school teachers.

In this chapter, I have presented the main findings of the survey on teachers, those who attended music courses, and those who have never attended music courses. Following the analysis of the findings, I identified some key issues, which were worthy of detailed exploration in the interviews with the music trainers. The next chapter presents the findings of these interviews with a sample of music trainers.

Chapter Twelve: Music Trainers' Perspectives

12.1 Introduction

Following analysis of the data obtained from the research on teachers, I conducted semi-structured interviews with a sample of six music trainers, to obtain their perspectives on the key findings of the teachers' surveys. These interviews were held during August 2003. All the interviews were tape recorded, and later transcribed for a detailed content analysis. This chapter contains the key findings of this part of the research. In the presentation of findings in this chapter, I use a substantial amount of direct quotation from the trainers, in accordance with the advice of Garraghan (1946: 407) and Heller and Wilson (1992: 107). These writers argue that presenting a summary of research findings it not the only task of the researcher, as he/she also has a duty to create images and sensations that bring that information to life. While the writers were commenting specifically on historical research, their counsel, in my view, equally applies to descriptive studies in music education, and therefore I use the words and voices of interviewees where appropriate, to lend immediacy and a flavour of the enthusiasm with which the trainers expressed their views.

12.2 Profile of the participants

Five of the participants were female, and one was male. The following table portrays their gender and geographic location, as well their lengths of teaching experience, and the number of years they were involved in delivery of music in-service education at the time of the interviews.

Figure 12.1: Profile of Music Trainers interviewed

Respondent Number	Gender	Location	Years teaching	Years delivering music in-service courses
1	Female	Dublin	17	9
2	Female	Kildare	20	5
3	Female	Dublin	30+	30
4	Male	Cork	19	9
5	Female	Galway	21	10
6	Female	Kerry	30+ (Now retired)	30 (Still delivers music in-service courses)

As the table illustrates, the music trainers came from geographically diverse areas. Only one was male, as most of the current music trainers tend to be female. The number of years they have been involved in delivery of music in-service education varied from five years to thirty years. In fact, one trainer was retired from active teaching, but was still engaged in music in-service education. The fact that the trainers were drawn from a wide geographical background, and had varied lengths of service helps to ensure the reliability and validity of my research and its findings.

12.3 Levels of confidence in music teaching ability as a barrier to participation on music courses

12.3.1 Trainers' perspectives

I outlined to the trainers that my research indicated that teachers who were lacking confidence in their music teaching ability were less likely to participate in music courses, and asked for their reactions to this. Trainer 1 commented that this was due to peoples' understanding of 'what music is, or what being musical is'. In her opinion, if teachers weren't good singers they felt reluctant to participate in music courses. Four of the other trainers also expressed this view. Trainer 6 stated: 'When a lot of people think of music, they think of singing, and they may have had a bad singing experience in the

past. They may have been thrown out of music class during their own school days for example. End of music!' However, Trainer 2 felt that the lack of confidence could be due to teachers' lack of ability to read music. 'I think that when some teachers say they can't teach music, what they actually mean is they cannot read music themselves – music literacy is their problem, not music *per se*. They feel that to teach music they have to be able to read music or even play an instrument.' All six trainers were in agreement that, in their experience, teachers' lack of confidence in their own musical ability was indeed the main barrier to participation in music courses.

12.3.2 What could be done to encourage teachers lacking confidence in their own musical ability to attend music courses

I also asked the trainers what could be done, in their opinions, to encourage teachers lacking in confidence in their own musical ability to attend music courses. All six trainers believed that actually getting such teachers to attend music in-service courses would be a key factor in improving music education in the country generally. They were in agreement that it was necessary to dispel teachers' preconceived ideas about what constituted music teaching. Trainer 6 summed it up by stating: 'You have to take away this myth that you have to be able to sing! We need to come at it from a different angle.' Trainer 1 suggested that the pre-course advertising could help this. Trainer 3 suggested that the trainers could visit Education Centres courses, and other places where teachers were assembled, such as Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) meetings, to give a pre-course talk, and then 'slip in a little fun musical activity – sort of a course taster.' Trainers 4 and 5 suggested holding courses for absolute beginners, and then insisting that only those who had never attended a music course in the past should be allowed to attend. Trainer 6 further added that 'when such teachers actually do participate they go away with a totally different concept of what music education actually is.'

To summarise, all six trainers were in agreement that, in their experience, teachers' lack of confidence in their own music teaching ability was a barrier to participation in music courses. In their opinions, this lack of confidence stemmed from teachers' perceptions

of what constitutes music teaching ability. Most of the trainers agreed that lack of confidence in their own singing ability was the feature which caused lack of confidence among teachers, though one trainer also believed that lack of ability to read music contributed to this lack of confidence. All trainers believed that encouraging such teachers to attend music courses was vital for improvement of music education generally. They suggested the provision of beginner courses, pre-course advertising, and pre-course talks to encourage such teachers to attend.

12.3 Trainers' perspectives on the provision of graded music courses

12.4.1 The provision of graded courses desirable

All six participants were in agreement that the provision of graded music in-service courses would be highly desirable. Three of them mentioned that they had discussed this idea in the past with colleagues, and that they too thought it would be a good idea. All six argued that the provision of graded courses would encourage those lacking in confidence to attend music courses, because they would be assured that all participants would be at a similar level. Three Trainers also thought that it would make the work of the Music Trainer easier. In the words of Trainer 6:

> When I give a course, I'm always very conscious of the fact that I've got some complete beginners and some experts. For example, this summer I gave a course and I had two principals who had no note whatsoever, or no idea of a note, yet there were people there who were as good as myself, and I was always conscious of the fact that I was going too fast for the beginners and too slow for the others. Yes, graded courses are the answer of course.

Trainer 2 cautioned that she had been involved in a course in the past which was aimed at complete beginners, but several teachers attended who were clearly not beginners in music education, and they quickly established the pace of the course. It would be necessary, she thought, to predetermine the course content, and rate of progress, and then to adhere strictly to this. Two trainers raised the question as to who should set the content for each of the various course levels. They felt that the Department of Education and Science (DES) should prescribe the content, as it 'is their curriculum' but that music

trainers nationally should be consulted in this. All trainers felt that generalist teachers who had not taken any extra pre-service or in-service education in music would need to participate in a Level One course and a Level Two course, each of twenty hours duration, to equip them to deliver the music curriculum adequately. However, those who had some prior music expertise might decide to go straight to Level Two. The participating teachers, having consulted the description of what each module contains, would make this decision. This is the situation that currently applies in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) courses.

12.4.2 Content of Level One

All six trainers were in agreement that Level One should be a very basic course, and should start, in the words of Trainer 1, 'completely from scratch'. They were also unanimous that Level 1 should contain some of each of the three strands of the 1999 Curriculum, namely some Listening and Responding, some Performing, and some Composing. Five of the six trainers thought that it should contain some basic literacy, in order to demystify this for participants. Generally, they were of the view that Level One should aim to 'empower and give confidence', and demonstrate what a non-musician can do in the classroom. Trainer 5 added that Level One should give participants some 'basic fire in their bellies' for music education.

12.4.3 Content of Level Two

All six trainers were in agreement that Level Two should be a direct development of Level One, and that it should cover all the strands of music again, but in a developmental way. As Trainer 2 said 'It should be like a spiral. It should develop all the strands, but on higher level'. All were in agreement that basic literacy should be included in a Level Two course. Respondents 1 and 5 also suggested that Level Two course should also work on participants' own musical development.

12.4.4 Desirability of a Level Three course

All six trainers felt that while other music courses besides Level Once and Level Two should be offered, they shouldn't necessarily be viewed as being essential for all teachers. In the words of Trainer 5 'I have a low boredom threshold myself – I wouldn't like to have to do more than two music courses unless I really wanted to.'

All trainers suggested that any other music courses should be 'parallel' courses, and should not have a prescribed content, but rather should be for those who wished to specialise in some area of the music curriculum, for example, teaching choirs, part singing, playing recorder or tin whistle, school bands or orchestras, or music technology. Trainer 1 suggested that such courses could 'be where trainers themselves could go to improve their practice, or to gain proficiency in some area of music education'. However, such parallel courses would stipulate in the pre-course advertising that participants should have achieved a basic level of musical competence such as would be gained from attendance on Level One and/or Level Two, thereby ensuring a common starting ground among the participants.

12.5 Gender and participation on music in-service courses

12.5.1 Low participation of male teachers

Five of the six trainers were in agreement that the participation rate of male teachers on music in-service courses was generally low or very low. Trainer 1 had never considered the gender of the participants, so was not in a position to comment on this. Trainer 2 summed up the general consensus when she declared: 'We are absolutely not having the correct ratio of men on music courses...If you went to the ICT courses, you would find it's the other way round!' All trainers pointed out however, that in their experience, the male teachers who did come to music courses were generally very dedicated teachers and very committed to the inclusion of music in the curriculum.

12.5.2 Reasons for low participation rate of male teachers

The trainers gave their opinions as to why the participation rate of male teachers on music courses was low. Three of them felt that the main reason was that there was little music done in boys' schools, therefore the male entrants to teacher training college began at a disadvantage. Three trainers pointed out that the male teachers tend to be busy with school sports and games, therefore had little time to dedicate to music. Trainer 5 also noted that music was not perceived as 'macho' and that men generally did not attend music in-service courses for that reason. Trainer 4 - the male trainer - had an interesting perspective. He spoke of the 'visibility' of the male teacher on music courses - because they were so few, they were highly visible, and thus it was intimidating for them. 'They are afraid to let the guard down, and make fools of themselves,' he explained.

12.5.3 Suggestions for improving participation rate of male teachers

I asked the trainers for their suggestions on what could be done to improve the participation rate of male teachers on music courses. Three of the trainers felt that the introduction of initiatives that would encourage people who were lacking in confidence generally to participate would also boost male participation. They suggested that the provision of graded courses would help to address this. Two of the trainers pointed out that most of the music trainers in Ireland were women, and that more male models were needed. Trainer 2 expanded on this, commenting that of the newly appointed Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) trainers, only four of the thirty originally appointed were male, approximately thirteen per cent. This was a fair enough ratio, she added, considering the low number of male teachers generally involved in music, but her basic concern was that these might be just 'token males!' None of them had been involved in design or delivery of music in-service education in the past - in fact they were all principal teachers - whereas many of the female trainers had very active track records in the design and delivery of music courses. She also pointed out that there were higher ratios of male to female trainers on the PCSP physical education and science teams of trainers.

Two trainers also stated that there should be some sort of national policy on continuing professional development (CPD). They suggested that if teachers had to keep records of the in-service training they had attended, and if this were a relevant feature in recruitment and promotion processes, then 'gaps would show'. Trainer 4 also suggested that such CPD portfolios could be introduced through some sort of benchmarking procedures at times of salary negotiation.

12.6 Term time music courses or summer courses

I asked the trainers for their opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of term time courses vis-à-vis summer courses. All six believed that both models had a part to play in the overall professional development of teachers, and that as different teachers had different preferences regarding timing of professional development courses, the continued provision of both types of courses was vital. As Trainer 5 said: 'You can't compel people to do one or the other - they're two different models, and both are needed.'

The major advantage of term time courses as reported by all six of the trainers was that there is a measured time span between presentations, and participants have time to assimilate the content, and try it out in their classrooms. As Trainer 3 remarked: 'They can go into school next day and try it out, therefore they refine it for their own practice and remember it for ever.' Trainer 6 remarked that the subsequent course discussion on how things worked in the participants' own classroom was also a powerful development opportunity. Trainer 5 believed that short-term time courses were a 'great energiser' for teachers generally.

The disadvantage of term time courses as described by the trainers was that of teacher exhaustion at the end of the day, which was the key disadvantage as discussed in Chapter Three. Trainer 4 pointed out that some teachers, because of the caring roles they had to fulfill in their domestic lives, could not absent themselves from the home place at

night time to attend in-service education. Three trainers also pointed out that teachers were becoming less enthusiastic to attend night-time courses because of their ever increasing work loads, and also pointed to the fact that teachers were being 'saturated' in in-service education, because of the national in-service to introduce the revised curriculum of 1999.

All six trainers believed that the single greatest advantage of the summer course was what Trainer 1 dubbed the 'total immersion factor.' Teachers were free from the daily school concerns, and were not exhausted, therefore they were better able to participate in and benefit from the in-service education. Because the course lasted a week, participants had 'time and space to develop their skill and expertise over an extended period' (Trainer 6). Trainer 2 pointed out that the Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days allocated for attendance on summer courses were a great incentive; and 'if people weren't to get those three days, we'd see the numbers dropping right away.' It must be acknowledged that, while teachers don't always use the EPV days, they are generally highly valued in case of unexpected events such as family illness.

Five of the six trainers elaborated on their reservations regarding the timing of the summer courses. Trainer 2 stated that 'I think a lot of people put the notes they get at the start of the summer holiday into a box, and they're forgotten about them by September.' Trainer 3 summed it up:

> Summer courses – you're full of enthusiasm when you finish, then you go home, the file is put away, you have a great summer, and by the time you go back to school in September, it's all forgotten. It would be better from a professional point of view if the courses were held in the last week of summer, but the teachers don't want to give up their last week. Listening to teachers, they're very loath to give up the last week of August. The summer has gone, and they want to make the most of the last week. More and more I'm hearing teachers say that they don't want to do a course in the last week of August.

Trainer 4 echoed this opinion:

> I have one great issue with the summer courses. At the moment, most teachers prefer to take their courses at the start of July, for the simple reason they want to get them over and done with. They may be tired facing into them, but they usually leave enthused and bursting with ideas. Then what happens? They go home, start their real holiday, relax, go away, clean the house-do all the things they've been putting on the long finger all year. The notes are filed away somewhere, and along with them all the good intentions. When school starts eight weeks later most of the course content is forgotten, and the usual beginning of term things assume priority. Not good. In my opinion, a far better time to do the course is at the end of the holidays –the last or even second last week of August.

Trainer 5 pointed out that while summer courses 'during the last week are more effective in terms of impact, however, in terms of teachers preference, the first week of July wins hands down – and you have to make an effort to meet the needs of the people who need the courses.'

Two of the trainers – Trainer 4 and Trainer 6 - suggested that there could be more incentives for courses held at the end of the holiday, in an effort to change teachers' patterns of attendance. Trainer 6 suggested:

> I think the DES should look seriously at this, and could also facilitate it, by giving, say three EPV days for a course at the end of the summer, but only two days for a course in July. It would create mayhem the first year, but people would soon get used to it, like the new productivity deal, where we have to hold staff meetings half in school time and half in our own time. Perhaps it could even be part of a productivity deal.

12.7 Incentives for attendance on term time music courses

12.7.1 Incentives suggested by music trainers

I asked the trainers if they believed that there should be incentives for attendance on term time music courses, and all six were in agreement that there should be some sort of incentives to encourage teachers to attend. Five of the trainers thought that the ideal situation would be that teachers would be released from school with full substitute cover

to attend professional development courses. However, Trainer 4 thought that there would have to be some sort of overall policy governing teachers' school time participation on courses, otherwise, 'it could mean that certain teachers could be absent all year on courses.' He suggested that teachers should be allowed, for example, a five-week block every two years, but the courses attended should to be in an area in which they had not undertaken in-service education already. 'That would bring real improvement to education' he stated. Generally, the trainers did not believe that the option of release from teaching to attend courses was going to become a reality for music education in the near future, though Trainer 5 pointed out that since the appointment of Resource Teachers for children with special learning needs in the recent past, many daytime courses have been provided for them. She pointed out that the generalist classroom teacher 'is the one who is stuck in the classroom every day of the year without any form of release – I really do think this is an issue which has to be addressed. Other things come into play in peoples' personal lives, and depending on what's going on, it's not always possible for people to go on courses at night. They may be carers, parents, etc. I do think it would be great if such an option were introduced.'

All the trainers were in agreement that teachers should not have to pay for participation on music courses. Three of the six suggested that if graded courses were provided, Level Once and Level Two should be totally funded by the DES, and the participants should not incur course fees. They pointed out that this was the case with the ICT courses. Two trainers elaborated that many Boards of Management were now making money available for the teachers in their schools to attend professional development courses, and they argued for a national extension of this scheme. Ultimately, the money would have to originate with the DES, but the Boards of Management or principals could administer it locally. Trainer 5 suggested that an overall policy on teacher participation on CPD generally needed to be drawn up, and that it should include consideration of all relevant issues, such as funding, time for participation, and strategies to ensure teacher engagement in CPD in all curricular areas.

Four trainers suggested meaningful certification as a possible incentive for participation on music courses. As Trainer 1 stated, 'The certification has to count for something, not be merely a pretty scrap of paper'. Trainer 5 suggested 'some sort of certification which can accumulate into a qualification, which in turn can mean a pay enhancement – which is the great motivator that most people are looking for at the end of the day'.

Other suggestions made by the music trainers included EPV/time in lieu, and the provision of resources, which in fact were separate items on the interview schedule.

12.7.2 Time in lieu and/or EPV days as an incentive

I asked the trainers if they thought that teachers should be offered time in lieu for attendance on term time music courses. Only Trainer 2 thought that this was not a good idea, as it would cause too much disruption to the pupils. The other five trainers were in accordance that it was a good idea, but all of them argued that the issue of substitute covers for EPV leave would have to be addressed first. The fact that the Department of Education and Science (DES) had in fact recently allocated a number of EPV days for attendance on courses on substance misuse and European languages was referred to, and the trainers felt that the provision of EPV leave should be applicable to all term time courses on an equal basis. However, given the current climate and the official drive to protect the integrity of the school year (Government of Ireland, 2003), the trainers did not see this as a viable option in the near future.

12.7.3 Provision of resources as a possible incentive

I outlined to the trainers that the respondents had indicated that they considered the provision of resources a desirable incentive to encourage participation in music in-service education. It is interesting to note that three trainers had also suggested this issue unprompted. All trainers considered that the provision of resources as an incentive was an excellent proposal. Trainer 2 told how she recently attended a certain ICT course, where all those who completed were given a copy of Microsoft Office Suite, which she stated was a real incentive for all participants. Trainer 3 added that 'I feel if they get

resources which will actually help them to implement the course, they will participate – they love to see a carrot!' Trainer 5 stressed that 'it's like any resource – it has to come with the training so it doesn't sit on a shelf for evermore.' Only Trainer 6 thought that the provision of resources shouldn't be necessary as an incentive, as she claimed that 'All teachers and all schools should have the resources they need to teach music, for God's sake. Teachers need their basic teaching tools. They shouldn't have to be begging for them, or jumping through hoops. It shouldn't be necessary to provide them as an incentive – they should be there from Day One.'

I asked the trainers what resources would they recommend as an incentive for attendance on music in-service courses. Four of them suggested that a quality set of chime bars would be a very useful incentive, as in the words of Trainer 3, 'many schools already have an assortment of rhythmic percussion instruments floating around. A set of good chime bars could help in giving starting notes for songs, performing little melodies, and melodic compositions'. Other suggestions given by the trainers were music education books, CDs, and a basic set of classroom instruments. Trainer 4 elaborated that 'Teachers are hoarders. They all like to have their own basic equipment.' Trainer 3 though that on completion of Level One, all teachers should be given a set of high quality chime bars, and on completion of Level Two, they should be given a voucher for the nearest music supplier, with a list of the items that could be redeemed by this voucher. In her opinion, the resources listed should all have been used on the course, but the individual teacher should be free to choose what to obtain with the voucher, to suit the needs of the individual teacher and class.

Five of the trainers stated that the DES should fund such resources, as it is 'their curriculum'. Trainer 2 stated that the DES should 'be funding this instead of wasting money on silly things like glossy brochures to tell us how to open our pay slips!' Trainer 3 also suggested that course expenses could be minimized – 'think of all the free meals that are given out on courses. If the courses were held at night, in the local Education Centre, with just tea/coffee supplied, then the in-service overheads would be

much lower, and the in-service budget could perhaps stretch to resources. Trainer 2 suggested that perhaps sponsorship could be obtained from the music industry, but added that it should not have to be the trainer's duty to source such sponsorship.

12.8 Features that contribute to an effective music course

12.8.1 Features proposed by music trainers

I asked the trainers what features, in their opinions, contributed to an effective music course. Several features were proposed, which were, in order of occurrence:

- Emphasis on active learning
- Relevance to classroom practice
- A wide variety of activities
- Pacing of the course
- Provision of notes
- The importance of the opening session

Each of the six trainers proposed the concept of active learning. Trainer 3 summed it up by saying: 'You can be sitting there forever listening, but if you get up and do it, you'll remember it. And you'll enjoy it, because participation leads to enjoyment.' Trainer 1 warned of the importance of not forcing people to take part. 'There must be room for teachers not to take part if they so wish, but still to observe, to reflect and to assimilate. If they don't feel threatened by being forced to take part, they always take part anyway!' Trainers 2 and 4 also spoke of the 'enjoyment of participation'.

Five trainers spoke of the relevance of the content to the participants' practice. As Trainer 4 stated: 'Relevance to the teachers' practice – it must give them approaches and ideas and materials they can try out.' Trainer 6 said: 'I want them to do something that they will be enthusiastic to go and try it out in the classroom next day, otherwise it's a waste. The ideas and methods must be possible for implementation in the participants' own classrooms on a wet Monday morning.'

Four of the trainers proposed that there should be a wide variety of presentations and activities. Trainers 3 and 5 warned that it was necessary to pace the course to suit the participants. Trainer 3 said: 'You mustn't cram in too much – a little done well, so that they understand it better. Don't overwhelm them by bombarding them. As it goes on they can look for more and you can give them more, but not too much in the beginning'. Trainer 5 stated:

> Pacing is very important. The zealot can kill a course – I've seen it so many times. Teachers' levels of energy are different at different times of the day, and its important to be aware of those factors. You can't drive people too hard. Sometimes, if they've been working very hard, it's important to let them relax for a bit. When I give a course, and if I notice they're getting tired, I might put on a piece of music – I may not necessarily have planned for it, but they can fan their faces, go to sleep, do whatever they wanted, before we start the next activity. Sitting down all day and listening to a presenter isn't good for you.

Trainer 5 spoke of the importance of the opening presentation.

> The first two hours are the most important on the course. You've either lost them or got them in the palm of your hands by the end of the first session. Building a group dynamic is important. I've seen courses where someone came in and gave a keynote address, basically a summary of stuff they could read themselves, and it bored the participants witless.

Trainer 2 pointed out that participants always look for lots of notes, but she warned that 'People do need notes, but you can't spoon-fed them too much. They should actually work through the exercises on the course, which will help them to internalise it for their own practice.'

12.8.2 Skill and enthusiasm of the presenter

When the trainers had discussed the features that contributed to an effective music course in their opinions, I informed them that the feature that was rated highest by the

participants on my research on teachers who attended music courses was 'the skill and enthusiasm of the presenter.' Interestingly, none of the trainers had suggested that aspect. However, they all agreed it was very important. As Trainer 6 stated: 'For God's sake, if the presenter isn't enthusiastic, how can you expect the teachers to be enthusiastic going back into school.' Trainer 1 stated: 'I agree that the messenger can kill the message'.

Trainers 1, 2, 3 and 5 emphasised that this aspect creates a substantial responsibility for the trainers. As Trainer 3 said 'It puts a huge pressure on trainers, it means that the future of music education depends on us. We either sell it or kill it. It's frightening and daunting, but it's up to us.' Trainer 2 also pointed out the pressure this puts on the trainer, and added: 'They expect us to be all –singing, all-dancing presenter-ettes!' But she went on to elaborate that this was in fact the case in all in-service courses, and spoke of her recent experience of mathematics in-service course.

> We sat through the maths presentation and looked at what she wore, and the smile on her face, and the way she coped when the PowerPoint presentation collapsed, and we spoke about it later. That's human nature'. She went on to stress how important the enthusiasm of the presenter was: 'But there's no doubt that if you have someone that exudes dynamism – like N. on our recent training- she was so enthusiastic that she made you want to get up and do it. If you could bottle half of what she had and market it, it would be great. It means we always have to be on our toes, when we're working on the Primary Curriculum Support Programme, on our best behaviour, not going in with a hangover, or feeling tired after a long drive to the venue. And we're always going to have to do it consistently, do it this week the same as we did it last week, because, while the material is the same, the people are different, and they all deserve your best. If you're in your class, you can have off days and let things lag, give the children something to keep them occupied till you feel livelier, but not on in-service courses.

However, Trainer 4 cautioned: 'well of course the presenter is important, but she or he must be presenting high quality relevant stuff too. What good is a marvellous presenter, who is presenting absolute shite!' And Trainer 1 suggested 'If it's going to be one person giving a course, they carry a huge responsibility for the course being good or bad. It's probably best to have a mixture of presenters on courses if possible.'

12.9 On-going support from music trainer as an integral component of music in-service

All six trainers believed that there should be ongoing support from the music trainer on completion of a music course. They suggested that a trainer could be assigned to a network of schools, or to an Education Centre, to supply ongoing support. They suggested phone support, internet support, and face-to-face support. Trainer 3 suggested a monthly 'clinic' at the local education centre. She also suggested a review or follow up session to courses, about a month later, 'where they can come along and tell you what worked and what didn't. It would also be very useful for the trainer to see what was working in the schools. Trainer 4 noted: 'All Education Centres have now got ICT Advisors – why not Music Advisors?'

Two of the trainers, who belong to a music support network in Dublin, reported how they sometimes invited the presenters and participants from a summer course to meet up for an evening in the autumn term, where wine is served, and a social aspect prevails. However, some useful post-training feedback is obtained, and the participants also have an opportunity to ask further questions, and benefit from the expertise of the trainers.

Trainer 6 described how she provides ongoing support in an informal manner herself. 'I give participants my phone number, and they are welcome to phone me up and discuss how things went in the class, and ask for more advice etc. Maybe even just chat about how they're getting on. But don't forget that they are ringing me in my free time at home, and I'm not paid or re-imbursed for this. It's relying on my enthusiasm and good will. It would be great if this could be set up on an official level.' All trainers pointed out that a permanent system of on-going support could never be supplied to music course attendees while the music trainers also taught full time in the classroom.

12.10 Provision of a Music Advisory Service

I outlined to the trainers that the respondents to the questionnaires had suggested that teachers with special expertise in music should be seconded to work as music advisors in the local education centres. All six trainers agreed that it would be very beneficial. Trainer 4 argued that, while Ireland generally does not have subject advisors, a special case could be made for music, 'because it was a subject which was failing at the moment.' Trainer 5 pointed out that the DES has appointed ICT Advisrs in this manner, in the recent drive to implement ICT in the schools, and argued that if 'the DES wanted to match policy with practice, this is what they should do with music.' Four trainers pointed out that the provision of on-going support as an integral feature of music in-service courses could not become a reality while the trainers also had to manage full time teaching positions. Trainer 6 also made the point that a meaningful expansion of term time music courses could not occur unless a number of trainers were released from their schools for a period of time.

12.11 Final Open Question

At the end of the semi-structured interview, the trainers were given some time to elaborate on anything else they wished to about music in-service education generally. All six of the trainers took the opportunity to speak on some aspect/s which were of particular interest to them. A detailed content analysis reveals that the six trainers addressed a total of five issues, which are as follows, in order of occurrence:

- Trainers' pay and conditions
- Establishment of a music advisory service
- Timing of the summer courses
- Suggestion that trainers provide demonstration classes with 'real' children
- Suggestion that trainers hold regular 'music clinics' at the Education Centres

The single issue that was raised on the most occasions was that of trainers' pay and conditions, with four trainers expounding on this issue. Trainer 3 complained that:

> I think it's terrible that we Trainers have to buy everything ourselves, all the books and CDs. We have to keep abreast of all the latest developments at our own expense. Then, when we get paid for delivering a course, there is no recognition for the time we put into preparing for it. Recently I gave a presentation in N. Education Centre. It was just a two-hour presentation, but I spend hours preparing, and I bought a lot of new resources to show the participants. Then I got my cheque – after tax, it came to fifty-eight euro! After the hours I put in and the fortune I spent!.....While you might get paid for the actual presentation, there is no recognition for the hours you spend at home searching your resources and preparing your presentation. I know we do it because we love music and we want the children at the end of the line to have a good music experience in school, but at the end of the day, people are relying on the goodwill of the individual trainers. There should be greater remuneration for the trainers, to re-imburse them for their preparation time and expenditure on resources.

Trainer 2 and Trainer 5 echoed this view. Trainer 5 stated:

> A lot of people have put in enormous work for music education, which largely goes unacknowledged. There has to be a return for people who are putting in that level of involvement. People have to be rewarded for what they are doing. And at the end of the day, that reward should be financial – we can't be carrying the music education torch for the country just out of our own enthusiasm.

Trainer 1 also noted what she described as 'the paucity of trainer pay.'

> At first glance, the fees on paper don't look too bad – I have to admit that – it's currently around forty five euro per hour. However, for every hour you spend presenting, you have to spend at least an hour preparing, and there is no recompense for that. And then, in order to stay up to date, we have to buy all the latest books, CDs, etcetera out of our own pockets. And there is no tax allowance to compensate. And then we have to pay highest rate tax on the fees. So when you look at it like that, the fees are totally inadequate. The DES just can't expect us to keep subsidising their work for evermore.

The second most commonly raised issue was the establishment of a music advisory service. Three trainers used this opportunity to expand their belief that such a service should be developed nationally. As Trainer 6 said: 'This would also help to address the issue of trainer conditions and pay. The music advisors would be paid a set rate, and for this they would provide a certain service. The situation that exists at the moment is ridiculous – it's almost like an 'overtime' situation'.

Two trainers also took the opportunity to reiterate their views that summer courses should be held at the end of the summer, just before teachers returned to school, as this would be much more beneficial for teachers' practice. They advocated that the DES should try to encourage this.

One trainer also suggested that it would be beneficial if trainers could hold demonstration lessons for teachers, but added that this could realistically not be done unless trainers were released to work as music advisors. Another trainer also suggested the provision of a music clinic at the local Education Centre, where teachers could drop in to meet the trainer, and ask for individual advice and help in a teacher-friendly environment.

12.12 Summary of the research on music trainers

The following is a summary of the findings of the research on music trainers:

- Trainers all agreed that some teachers' lack of confidence in their own music ability is a major barrier to participation on music courses
- The trainers believed that this lack of confidence stems from teachers' lack of confidence in singing ability, and to a lesser extent, their lack of ability to read music
- Trainers suggested that this issue might be addressed by the provision of beginner music courses, by pre-course talks, and by pre-course advertising

- Five of the six trainers confirmed a very low level of male participation on music courses

- The trainers suggested that the following may contribute to the low level of male participation: lack of music in the male's own education, involvement in other areas such as sport and games, and the fact that music may not be viewed as a 'macho' subject

- The trainers suggested that more male teachers could be encouraged to participate in music in-service education by the provision of beginner courses, and the provision of more role models in the form of more male music trainers, as well as a national policy on CPD, where gaps in in-service courses would show

- All trainers thought that the provision of graded courses would be very desirable, and would also encourage those lacking in music confidence, including male teachers, to attend

- The trainers thought that two courses of approximately twenty hours each, would give teachers a basis from which they could develop themselves to deliver the music curriculum.

- The trainers believed that Level One should consist of some of each of the three strands, which are; Listening and Responding to music, Performing music and Composing music. It should feature just a little bit of music literacy, so as to demystify this for participants

- The trainers suggested that Level Two should build on the content of Level One in a developmental fashion

- The trainers believed that other parallel courses should continue to be provided, for example in areas such as recorder playing or choral techniques, and these courses could specify on the pre-course advertising if they required participants to have completed Level One and/or Level Two

- All trainers believe that both summer courses and term time courses have a role to play in teachers' professional development in music. However, more than half

of the trainers proposed unprompted that the summer courses should take place at the end of the summer, not at the beginning, in order to impact more on classroom practice

- All trainers believed that there should be incentives for participation in term time courses, and the incentives they listed include meaningful certification, EPV leave and provision of resources. All trainers believed that teachers should not personally have to pay for attendance on music courses

- Five of the six trainers believed that the provision of resources for attendance at courses was an excellent idea, and that the DES should fund this

- The trainers listed the following as the features that contribute to an effective music course, in order of occurrence: active learning, relevance to classroom practice, a wide variety of activities, pacing of the course, provision of notes, and the importance of the opening session

- While none of the trainers mentioned the 'skill and enthusiasm of the presenter' as a aspect that contributed to an effective music course, when I outlined to them that the research on teachers revealed it to be the most pertinent feature, all six agreed that it was extremely important, and further added that such knowledge creates a great responsibility for music trainers

- All six trainers believed that there should be follow-up support as an integral component of music courses

- All six trainers believed that the provision of a music advisory service was desirable

- In the final open question, the themes which dominated the discussion were: the issue of pay and conditions for trainers, the establishment of a music advisory service, and the timing of the summer courses

12.13 Conclusion

The trainers were responsive and forthcoming in the interviews, and shared their views with me frankly and openly. I consider that my own role as practitioner-researcher

actually enhanced this part of the research, in that the trainers were all willing to give me their time, and to speak candidly and at length, because of our shared background and understanding.

It was very useful to obtain the trainers' views on the findings of the research on teachers, as these helped to illuminate and extend these findings, and furthermore helped in the formulation of the recommendations presented in Chapter Fourteen. As well as obtaining new perspectives on the findings of the research on teachers, two new issues emerged in the research on trainers, which were (i) the issue of trainers' pay and conditions and (ii) the timing of the summer courses.

In the final part of this thesis, I will present an evaluation of the current state of music in-service education in Ireland, which has been informed by the outcomes of the research on both teachers and trainers, as well as by the historical investigation.

Part Four:
The Way Forward

Chapter Thirteen:
Common Issues in the Historical and Contemporary Research

13.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus in particular on some issues in music in-service education that have arisen in both the historical investigation and the research on the contemporary situation. These issues are:

- The status of music in the curriculum
- The content of the curriculum
- The lack of confidence of many generalist teachers in teaching music
- Gender and music in schools
- The provision of an advisory service in music
- The provision of graded music in-service courses

This chapter and the next chapter fulfil the final objective of this thesis, which is to consider how the knowledge gained from my research may be used to inform the future provision of music in-service education in Ireland.

13.2 The Status of music in the curriculum

Perhaps the most significant issue that needs to be addressed if the teaching of music is to be improved is the status of music in education. Music is a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum, and all pupils are entitled to an adequate education in music. However, as both the historical investigation and the research on the current situation have demonstrated, not all pupils in Ireland are receiving an effective music education, nor has the teaching and learning of music ever been widely regarded as satisfactory.

As the Arts Council noted in 1979, educational systems are closely interlocked with wider political, social and moral elements of the society at large, and at certain stages of development school systems can only achieve limited goals, and

the place occupied by artistic subjects in the scale of priority may not be high (1979: 21). Thus it was that when the national school system was established in Ireland in the nineteenth century, the political agenda was the development of literacy in the English language, and the attainment of a certain level of numeracy. In 1900, a radically different programme was introduced, and music became an obligatory subject in the national school. Many factors, however, impeded the full implementation of this programme, as I discussed in Chapter Six. The most significant factor was the political situation, and the increasing pressure on schools to provide an education in accordance with Irish culture and ideals. With the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, a radical change occurred again, which resulted in a narrowing of the curriculum. The main concern of curricular policy was now the restoration of the Irish language, and the emphasis was on the school's role in bringing this about. Music was also viewed as a suitable vehicle for transmission of Catholic values and culture (McCarthy, 1999: 287). This narrow view of music in education continued until the 'new' curriculum of 1971, as I discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight. The 1971 music curriculum was progressive and ambitious for its time, but unfortunately it was not successfully implemented in schools generally, as I considered in Chapter Eight. The reasons for this included the content of the curriculum, the restrictions on teacher in-service education due to economic cutbacks, and the continued dominance of textbook methodologies.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the promotion of ICT appeared to dominate the Irish educational agenda. This is understandable, as Ireland is a small island, on the edge of the EU, and such skills were – and are - deemed necessary for the economic viability of our commercial enterprises. Furthermore, many of the newly established businesses in Ireland are technology based, and the government needs to ensure that the next generation of school leavers are highly computer literate. Also, public concern regarding social issues such as substance abuse and teenage pregnancy forced the government and ultimately the DES to initiate and support programmes such as Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and substance misuse prevention programmes such as 'Walk Tall.' However, these emphases in education may have inadvertently contributed to the failure to support music and the other arts adequately. While the intrinsic value of

curricular areas such as ICT and Walk Tall is unquestionable, the current emphasis and drive to embed them in the educational system further deflects the spotlight from music, and in my research, many respondents commented on this. For example, Respondent A.54 (a music course attendee) wrote: 'ICT seems to dominate the scene nowadays – everyone feels a NEED to become computer literate, but they think they can muddle along any old way in music. We need strong direction from the policy makers.' Similarly, B.89 (who never attended a music course) wrote: 'I think there is a general disinterest [*sic*] in music in my school which doesn't inspire me to upgrade. The DES appears to be totally disinterested [*sic*] - it supports ICT and Walk Tall, but not music. That does give out certain vibes. When the inspector visited my school, he explored ICT in detail, but he didn't mention music.' Similarly, B.139 stated: 'My principal encouraged me to attend this ICT course. If she wanted me to do music, I'm sure that's where I would be.'

It must be recognised, however, that the history of educational reform shows that policy makers can only focus on certain targets at any one time. Without such focus, effectiveness would be diminished. However, such concentration of attention should not mean that other areas of the curriculum are neglected. While the official policy in Ireland is that music is part of a broad and balanced curriculum in primary schools, this policy is not translated into practice in all primary schools. Stronger direction is needed from the DES regarding the necessity to ensure that all curricular areas are delivered effectively in primary schools. Ideally, the education and preparation of individuals who are promoted to the rank of inspectors should include a thorough education in music, and they should be encouraged to support and monitor music in their schools.

Parents, also, may need to be convinced of the importance of music in a balanced primary school curriculum. In 1979, the Arts Council recommended an active campaign to convince policy makers and the general public that the arts had a serious and unique contribution to make to education (1979: 23). In 1985, the Curriculum and Examinations Board again recommended such action (1985: 22). These recommendations were never carried out. In my research on present-day teachers, the issue of parental support also arose. For example, Respondent A.141

commented that: 'The parents in our school are very keen on computers. They have provided a lot of funding for ICT, so we have to be seen to devote a lot of time and energy to that. Not one of them mentions music. When they come to parent teacher meetings, no parent asks me how his/her child is doing in music.' If the status of music and the other arts in the curriculum is to be elevated, then parents have a significant role to play. The long recommended campaign to convince parents, educationalists and the general public of the importance of the arts in education could quite easily be implemented in conjunction with the introduction of the revised music curriculum, which is scheduled for September 2004, so this would seem to be an opportune time to finally initiate such a campaign.

13.3 The content of the music curriculum

The actual content of the music curriculum may also militate against its successful implementation in primary schools in Ireland. As my historical investigation has revealed, since music was first introduced into the primary curriculum, the prescribed programmes have tended to be those which generalist class teachers have found difficult to implement. The 1900 curriculum was based on the Tonic Sol-fa method, and was heavily dependant on song-singing, sight-reading, and technical aspects, which meant that teachers had to devote a substantial amount of learning and practice to master these skills. Under Home Rule, which commenced in 1922, the change in educational emphasis meant that songs in the Irish language and hymn singing became the focus of the music class, but the technical aspects of the Tonic Sol-fa method remained. The 1971 curriculum broadened the philosophy, approach and content of the music programme, but in this curriculum also, technical aspects of sight-singing, vocal training and interval training dominated. The requirements regarding the teaching of music literacy, in particular, must have inhibited many teachers, as it was recommended that pupils should be able to read music in keys of up to four sharps and four flats in their final year of primary school (Department of Education, 1971: 264). Pupils were also expected to be able to write short phrases, both melody and rhythm, from sung or played dictation (op. cit.: 260). As these specialised skills take a substantial amount of time to master, and are best learnt by very regular practice,

even for those individuals who study music privately, it is little wonder that such requirements may have further alienated the generalist class teacher and contributed to his/her sense of inadequacy in music. In my research, many of the respondents reported that their lack of confidence regarding music stemmed from their inability to read music. The over dominance of singing also meant that those individuals who lacked confidence in their singing ability may have felt inadequate in teaching music.

With the formulation of the most recent music curriculum, which is scheduled for introduction in September 2004, there is a move away from the previous over emphasis on singing, and the three strands of *Listening and Responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* are now equally weighted. In the formulation of this curriculum, a deliberate decision was taken to make the literacy targets more attainable. However, it may be that the literacy objectives included are still beyond the capabilities of the generalist teacher. The child in final year of primary school is expected to 'read, sing and play simple tunes from sight with C doh, G doh or F doh' (Music Curriculum, 1999: 75). Even though I was part of the team which formulated this curriculum, with the benefit of hindsight, I have to admit that the literacy objectives may still be too exacting. It would be most unfortunate if the latest music curriculum were to be rejected by teachers simply because of the music literacy requirements; therefore, it may be helpful to reconsider this issue. In my view, all the other curriculum objectives are achievable by the non-specialist teacher, so it may be beneficial for the promotion of music in education if the teaching of music literacy became optional, even though it is likely that this suggestion may cause resistance among many music educators.

13.4 Lack of confidence of many generalist teachers in teaching music

The evidence from my research on teachers indicated clearly that those who have confidence in their own music teaching ability are more likely to attend music in-service courses, while those who are most in need of music in-service courses are less likely to attend (See Chapter Eleven, Section 11.5.1). Therefore, the teacher's confidence – or lack of confidence – is a key issue in determining whether he/she

participates in music in-service education. In the research on teachers who do not attend music courses, this emerged as the single factor that had the greatest impact on each individual's decision not to attend. On consideration of the historical investigation, some reasons for this lack of confidence in many teachers may be attributed to conditions and circumstances that are deeply rooted in the past. For example, following completion of the music in-service course offered at the beginning of the twentieth century, teachers had to undergo a singing exam, and my research reveals that on average, 50% of teachers who had participated in an intensive six-week programme of in-service education in music failed this exam (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1905: 192 - 193). Furthermore, at this time, and also in the decades that followed, the concept of the 'non-singer' was prevalent, and the idea remains potent. The findings of the research on these periods indicate that the practice of labelling some children 'non-singers' and thereby excluding them from music lessons was widespread. In fact, O'Braoin, the Head Organising Inspector for Music, wrote of such children as being 'permanently defective' in 1939 (Department of Education, 1939: 4). This practice seemed to have persisted well into the post-war period, as in the research on present day teachers, a substantial number of participants reported that they too were labelled 'non-singers' and thereby excluded from the music class. For example, Respondent A.139 wrote 'I was kicked out of singing class in school, but I do love music and singing. I do teach music, but am very nervous about it because of my past experience.' And B.87 wrote 'When I was at school, my teacher told me that I was a non-singer, so there was no point in me studying music. I always regret the fact that I didn't get to learn music, but I would be too inhibited now.'

Music courses, therefore, have a vital role to play in building teachers' confidence. Indeed, in the open-ended question, a total of thirty of the respondents to Questionnaire A (music course attendees) commented on this issue. Furthermore, a number of respondents to this questionnaire also wrote that they lacked confidence in their music teaching ability in the past, but that since attending a course, their understanding of what music education entailed had changed, and they now had gained in confidence in their own ability to teach music. This is a difficult issue, because unless teachers will actually engage in music courses, such in-service

education cannot impact on their confidence levels. However, an opportunity to address this issue will shortly arise. The provision of nationwide, mandatory music in-service education to introduce the 1999 music curriculum is scheduled to commence in September 2004, under the aegis of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP), and for many teachers, this will be the first music in-service education they have undertaken since they commenced their teaching careers. It is important that every effort should be made by the PCSP team to ensure that this in-service education should not merely be about imparting information, but should also be geared towards building the participants' confidence. This will mean that teachers will be more likely to participate in further elective professional development in music, and actively engage in an effort to improve their music teaching skills.

13.5 Gender and music in education

My research on teachers demonstrated that male teachers are less likely to participate on summer music courses than are female teachers. The research on music trainers confirmed that this is a very real problem in present day music in-service education, and that there is a low participation rate of male teachers on term-time as well as summer courses. The historical review revealed that male pupils generally received a poorer music education in their schools than did female pupils. In the singing competitions introduced by Goodman at the end of the nineteenth century before music was a compulsory curriculum subject, the competitions for boys' choirs and girls' choirs took place on different days on different venues, because, in Goodman's words, 'as things musical are at present in the Dublin schools, the boys would have no chance in competition with the girls' (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1893: 334). When music was introduced to the curriculum as a compulsory subject in 1900, inspectors subsequently frequently criticised the inferior standard attained by boys' classes. For example, writing in 1912, Inspector Hollins commented that the greater proportion of pupils in country schools in the Omagh district, especially the boys 'can't sing'. (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1912: 42).

The view that boys received a poorer music education than did girls persisted well into the era of Home Rule. In 1924, Irish composer John Larchet protested that:

> Music is usually pushed into the darkest corner of the curriculum. As a result, the children are lucky if the time given to it is not filched from their recreation; their musical talent is stultified, and, in the case of boys, successfully crushed.
> (INTO, 1924: 509).

Head Organising Inspector Donnchadha O'Braoin, in his Notes for Teachers issued in 1939, stated that:

> In many country schools there is an abnormally large percentage of supposed 'non-singers' among the boys, but it may be taken for granted that in senior boys' classes, this is a result of continuous neglect through the school life – accentuated, no doubt, by the home circumstances where to the girls naturally fall all the tasks that require or suggest singing. Any teacher of infants who makes such discrimination between boys and girls is taking the surest means to prevent the boys from ever learning to sing.
> (Department of Education, 1939: 31).

Writing in 1971, Professor Fleischmann argued that in some boys' schools, the 'attitude is still that of Victorian England, namely, that music-making is a trivial, effeminate activity' (1971: 71), a situation that Fleischmann attributed to one of the effects of having been part of a colonial empire for centuries. Nineteenth-century England was known as 'the land without music' and the typical English public schoolboy scorned music, argued Fleischmann, and that value persists in the remoter parts of the former empire (op. cit.: 71). Whether blame should be attributed to the effects of post-colonialism or not, it is still clear from my historical investigation that boys' schools did not generally provide the same music education as did girls' schools. In 1976, Richards, in his review of the arts in Irish education stated that 'More needs to be done to persuade boys' schools to provide music courses; their neglect of music is an affront to education standards.' In 1979, the Arts Council noted stereotyping of the arts in many Irish schools, where ' The arts are seen as more suitable for girls than for boys, and for the less intelligent rather than for the more intelligent pupils' (1979: 22). Writing in 1986, Maguire (1986: 63) commented that a music promotional campaign aimed at the teaching profession should be undertaken, but noted that it would require 'the wisdom and weight of a Solomon if it is to penetrate the bastions of male

education in this country. The great majority of boys' schools deny music any place in the curriculum.' The Joint Committee on Education and Science also expressed its concern at the small number of male music teachers (2000: 2). Given such neglect of music in many boys' schools, it is not surprising that many male teachers are lacking in music confidence, and therefore avoid participating in music professional development, thus perpetuating the cycle of curricular deprivation for their pupils.

To some extent, the impending nationwide PCSP music training may help to boost male teachers' confidence, and to encourage them to participate in further music courses. However, some other strategies may need to be devised and implemented if we wish to encourage all teachers, including male teachers, to improve their music teaching skills. More role models in the form of male music trainers are needed, and it may even be necessary to ensure a degree of 'positive discrimination' in favour of male trainers, to ensure this. It may also be worth investigating the possibility of providing some all-male music courses. After all, male teachers do have a particular issue to overcome in the teaching of music, which is the modelling of singing to their pupils. In fact, in my historical investigation, during an interview with one of the retired inspectors who was involved in the formulation of the 1971 music curriculum, Inspector A., spoke at length of this particular problem which male teachers face:

> The male teachers have an added difficulty, you know, as their voices are an octave lower than the children. So it's doubly difficult for them to teach small children, unless they're proficient at an instrument, and very few of them are. Unless they're very good singers and can pitch their own voice to a falsetto, which I do sometimes when I'm working with young children in my choir – I can sing the high notes as good as any soprano or alto when I have to! It's one of the reasons why the singing is so bad in many boys' schools – they all sing down in their boots because of the male teachers. So that has to be looked into as well when you're preparing people to teach the curriculum. The male teachers need special attention in that way.

Similarly, in my research on current day trainers, Trainer 5 commented:

> The male teachers that do come on courses are afraid to sing – they are easily heard underneath all the female voices. I recently gave a five-session music

course. There was one man, and twenty-one women. I played a grand CD, and they all joined in and sang along. The man opened his mouth to join in too, but when he heard his voice, the poor thing nearly had a heart attack. You should have seen the look on his face! He never came again after the first night.

While the proposal of an all-male course may seem on first consideration to be a retrograde step, it must be recognised that conventionally male teachers have a different vocal range to female teachers, and to children. Male teachers need to be taught how to deal with this, which is not feasible on a course that is numerically dominated by women. Therefore, it may be worth piloting some all-male music courses in various parts of the country, in an effort to attract and support male teachers' professional development in music. Thornton (2001: 485) in her research on the participation of male teachers in professional development, also wrote of the 'high visibility' and 'prestige penalties' endured by men on in-service courses. She also recommended that the provision of male mentors and networks should be considered, as she asserted that their concerns about 'standing out/visibility are not likely to go away unless specifically addressed and overcome' (op. cit.: 488). Thornton asserts that 'In the context of primary teaching men are a small and diminishing minority who warrant improved understanding if more are to be recruited and included....and for children to benefit from exposure to a range of non-stereotypical and positive teacher role models' (op. cit.: 479). In my view, this sentiment is especially apt when considered in the context of male participation in music in-service courses.

13.6 Follow-up / ongoing support through the establishment of a music advisory service

A common theme in the literature on effective in-service education indicates that without follow-up support on completion of an in-service course, transfer of the new content and methodology to the classroom is less likely. Beauchamp (1997:210), reporting on his research on music education in the UK, found that the most effective method of increasing teacher confidence in music teaching was to support teachers in the classroom, and his research demonstrated significant support for the use of advisory staff/visiting consultants as a form of teacher training. However, since music first became a compulsory subject in the primary curriculum, educators have called for the establishment of an advisory service. To

assist teachers in implementing the revised music programme in 1900, Inspector Goodman advocated the provision of musical advisors or specialists; such as he had seen in the larger English cities of Leeds, Bradford and Birmingham (Board of Commissioners 1898: 271). He argued that 'school teachers themselves in the first instance need assistance and guidance.' (op.cit.: 271), and he believed that the best way to provide this assistance was through the establishment of a music advisory service. He was also concerned that when teachers were finished with the initial in-service education, they lost confidence without the ongoing support of the music organisers. Writing in 1901, he lamented 'But what happens when the organiser is gone? Does the interest of the teacher in the subject continue, or does it collapse? And even if it is still maintained – are the teachers really able to teach it now they are left unaided?' (Board of Commissioners, 1901: 149). Goodman's words are as true today as they were in 1901. This lack of an advisory service for music education has been repeatedly commented on throughout the twentieth century, and calls have been made for the provision of such a service to improve the teaching of music in schools (e.g. O'Braoin, 1952; Teachers' Study Group, 1969; Arts Council, 1979 and 1985; Curriculum and Examinations Board, 1985; Review Body on the Primary Curriculum, 1990; Heneghan, 2001; Ryng, 2002a; Beausang, 2002). However, despite over a century of requests for such a service, it has not to date been provided. There has been an obvious failure to convince the policy makers of the benefits of such a provision, and it may be a little naive to assume that yet another recommendation will be heeded. However, given that the revised Music Curriculum is scheduled for introduction in September 2004, it may be an opportune time to reiterate that such a service be provided. Unless such a service is provided, it may well be that the national investment in music in-service education will not be as fruitful as it could be.

It is clear from the analysis of my research that teachers have very definite ideas about what they would require from the music advisor. A detailed content analysis of the questionnaires to participants on music in-service courses reveals that teachers consider that the music advisor should be pro-active in the promotion and co-ordination of music in-service education in his/her area, and his/her duties could include some or all of the following:

- Provision of music courses in the area served by the Education Centre

- Carrying out a needs analysis in music in-service education in his/her area

- Establishing and facilitating study groups in music education

- School and classroom visits

- Teaching demonstration lessons in schools

- Provision of regular newsletter to schools and/or a website, which would advertise music courses, and would update teachers on recent developments in music education

- Provision of support and professional development in music to DES inspectors

- Assistance to schools in writing music plans and policies

The establishment and maintenance of such an advisory service would mean that the DES would need to commit significant funding to support music education. However, if it is intent on promoting music in education, and in supporting the generalist teacher in the teaching of music, then it would be a worth-while investment. As the DES has already provided an ICT Advisory service, whereby one ICT Advisor is attached to each Education Centre, then a blueprint for such an advisory service already exists.

13.7 The provision of graded music in-service courses

My research on teachers who have never attended music courses has revealed that the single most significant factor that would encourage them to participate in music in-service education would be the establishment of graded music courses. The historical investigation revealed that the Review Body on Primary Education proposed such graded courses in music in 1990, to address the varying levels of music proficiency among the teaching population (Report of the Review Body on Primary Education, 1990: 75). However, this recommendation was not carried out, and graded courses in any area were not provided in Ireland until the launch of *IT 2000* in 1998. This was a much publicized, highly funded drive by the Irish Government to introduce Information and Communication Technology into all schools before the year 2000. Substantial funding was made available for

hardware, software and teacher skills training. The basic training courses were entitled Phase One and Phase Two. Phase One taught skills as fundamental as switching on the computer and opening a programme. Phase Two was for participants who completed Phase One, or who already had technology proficiency. Other courses - such as Web Design, Technical Applications, ICT in the Curriculum - specify whether participants should have already completed Phase One and/or Phase Two.

While graded or phased courses have not to date been introduced in other curricular areas, the suggestion was made at the focus group interviews that they should be introduced for music, as it is a curricular area where teachers have such a wide range of expertise and confidence. The findings of my research on present day teachers indicate that such a provision would be very popular, and would encourage more teachers to participate in music professional development. My research on music trainers demonstrates unequivocally that trainers, too, consider that the provision of graded music courses would be very beneficial, and would furthermore contribute to making their work more effective. The research on trainers demonstrated that the provision of two courses of approximately twenty hours duration each – the length of a typical summer course – should be adequate to prepare most teachers to deliver the music curriculum effectively. The trainers were in general agreement that Level One should be an introductory course, and should assume no prior knowledge of music on the part of the participants. They believed that it should contain some of each of the three strands of the 1999 music curriculum, namely some *Listening and Responding*, some *Performing*, and some *Composing*. The trainers also believe that Level One should contain some basic music literacy training. In their opinions, the overall aim of Level One should be to build confidence among teachers, and to demonstrate how they could use the teaching skills they already possess to teach music. The trainers indicated that Level Two should be a direct development of Level One, and should cover all the strands of music again, but in a developmental way. Literacy attainment should be extended in this level.

The trainers also believed that there should also be parallel music courses on offer, to develop teachers' skills and proficiency in areas of the music such as playing

the recorder or tin-whistle, choral singing or ICT in music education. These parallel courses could stipulate on the pre-course advertising if teachers needed to have completed Level One and/or Level Two. Such a pre-requisite would ensure that participants had a common background, and would also facilitate the trainers' preparation and planning for the course.

The establishment of graded music courses need not incur major expense, apart from the funding necessary for the initial planning process to design the content of each level, and to disseminate it nationally. The music trainers I interviewed were very enthusiastic about such an innovation, and indicated that such an initiative would be positively received and implemented by them.

13.8 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed some pertinent issues which arose in both my historical investigation and my research on contemporary practice. I have also offered some suggestions on how these matters might be addressed, because unless something is finally done to solve the problems discussed, it is likely that the unsatisfactory situation of the past will prevail.

It is now just over a century since music was first formally introduced to the primary school curriculum in 1900, and since Peter Goodman, Ireland's first music inspector, wrote enthusiastically in his annual report, when concluding his review of the year 1900:

> Although established but 70 years ago, within the memory of yet living men, what incalculable good has not been effected by the Irish national schools. When another 100 years shall have passed and the story of the 20th century comes to be traced in these reports, let us hope that the record of national education will be one of uninterrupted success and development and that the year of grace 2000 will find our country happy, prosperous, educated and musical. I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant, Peter Goodman.
> (Board of Commissioners of National Education, 1900: 88)

My historical research has revealed that the year 2000 did not find that the state of music education in Ireland as Goodman would have hoped, nor has it ever attained

the standard he would have wished in the years since his demise (e.g. O'Braoin, 1939; Groocock, 1961; Fleischmann, 1971; Arts Council, 1979 and 1985; Curriculum and Examinations Board, 1985; Heneghan, 2001). In fact, writing in 2002, Beausang stated that: 'There have been so many debates and reports over the years diagnosing and prescribing for the ailments of music education in Ireland it is surprising that the patient is alive at all.' Since 1900, successive governments and departments of education in Ireland have advocated the inclusion of music as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. However, as the historical investigation revealed, this policy has never been fully – or even partially – translated into practice in the classroom.

We are now at another milestone in the history of Irish music education, as the most recent music curriculum is to be introduced in the academic year 2004 - 2005. In my view, if the policy makers wish this music curriculum to become a reality, there are two options which may enable it. The first option is to remove the responsibility for teaching music from the generalist class teacher, and to appoint specialist music teachers to ensure that every child is given an adequate music education. Indeed, as my historical investigation has revealed, many critics have called for this option in Ireland during the last century, among them Groocock (1961), Fleischmann (1971) and the Joint Committee on Education and Science (2001). It has been suggested that larger schools could have their own music specialists, while smaller schools could share a music specialist, as is currently the case with learning support teachers and resource teachers. However, other educators argue that the provision of a system in which specialist teachers teach music only will further propagate the view that music is the preserve of a gifted or talented few, as I discussed in Chapter Four. These writers contend that the generalist class teacher should teach music, and that all teachers have skills which they can use to deliver the music curriculum, given adequate preparation and support. This is the viewpoint that has been adopted by Irish policy makers since music first became compulsory in primary curriculum in 1900.

The second option that will ensure that this latest music curriculum is successfully implemented in schools is teacher development. However, my research has revealed that the current provision of music in-service education is far from

satisfactory, and unless some radical improvements are made, the mistakes of the past may be repeated. If we wish to see music effectively taught by the generalist teaching profession, then it is necessary to provide a comprehensive programme of professional development in music, which will enable teachers to deliver the music curriculum effectively to their pupils. Furthermore, it is necessary to develop strategies to ensure that all teachers participate in such in-service education, especially those teachers who are lacking in confidence and competence. In the next – and final - chapter of this thesis, I will offer some recommendations that might help to promote this aspiration.

Chapter Fourteen: Recommendations and Reflections

14.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, I present some recommendations which are based on my research on teachers and trainers, and illuminated by the insights gained from the historical investigation. I also identify some areas that may merit further research. The aims and objectives of my study are re-visited, and I reflect on the extent to which these have been achieved. The importance of considering the impact of history on the current educational situation is reconsidered. Finally, I discuss the contribution of this study to the present debate on music in-service education in Ireland.

14.2 Recommendations arising out of the research

A dominant theme among writers in the field is that pre-service education is only the beginning of a teacher's professional education. Educational commentators worldwide nowadays believe that teachers need to engage in career long professional development. Given that the generalist primary class teacher in Ireland teaches music, and that the research has demonstrated that the pre-service education of most teachers is not sufficient to enable them to deliver the music curriculum effectively, it is therefore especially important that teachers are encouraged to participate in an comprehensive system of music in-service education.

Having completed this long-term study of primary music in-service education in Ireland, I feel I am in a position to make the following recommendations. The recommendations are divided into three groups – those which apply to continuing professional development (CPD) generally, those which are specific to music in-service education, and those which apply to the music curriculum.

14.2.1 Recommendations that apply to CPD generally

The following recommendations, if put into practice, might help to improve the professional development that is currently provided for teachers in Ireland:

- The Department of Education and Science (DES) should formulate and issue a national policy paper on professional development and lifelong learning for teachers as a matter of priority. This paper could address issues such as time for professional development and incentives for participation on in-service education

- The incentive of Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) leave needs to be seriously re-considered. Undoubtedly, EPV leave is very popular with the teaching profession, and has been since it was first introduced in 1908. However, the current provision of EPV leave, whereby teachers are not provided with substitute cover, is unsatisfactory, and many respondents in my survey commented on this. This issue also causes concern among parents' organisations. If the DES decides to maintain EPV leave as an incentive for participation in summer courses, then the issue of substitute cover must be addressed

- If EPV leave is maintained as an incentive for participation in in-service courses, then the DES should consider extending it as an incentive for participation on all term time courses, as the decision to award EPV for certain course only causes resentment among participants and providers of CPD in other curricular areas. Furthermore, it may send out misleading messages about subject status

- It may be worthwhile to consider alternative incentives for participation in in-service education. My research has suggested the provision of meaningful certification, whereby the certification would count towards promotion or financial rewards would be a satisfactory incentive for many teachers, and could add to teachers' developing sense of professionalism

- The DES should work towards requiring teachers to maintain professional development portfolios. Such a portfolio could require teachers to record their participation in CPD in all curricular areas, so that any 'gaps' would show. These portfolios could form a meaningful part of the teacher's curriculum vitae, as evidence of his/her professional development activity

- The DES should consider promoting attendance on summer courses that are held at the end of summer, rather than the beginning. The research indicates that these may have greater benefits in terms of impact on classroom practice

14.2.2 Recommendations that apply specifically to music in-service education

The following recommendations apply specifically to music in-service education:

- The DES should seek to ensure that its official policy that 'Music is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence' (1999: 5) finally becomes the general practice in the classroom, through the provisions of significant funding to improve the situation that currently exists. Unless it does this, the investment which has already been committed to the music curriculum formulation and dissemination will not be as worthwhile as it could be

- A national music advisory service should be established. A music advisor should be appointed to each Education Centre to co-ordinate and develop music in-service education in the area served by the centre, as is the case with ICT Advisors. The music advisors should be seconded from among the teaching profession by open competition, as the research reveals that teachers prefer to receive professional development from other teachers

- The provision of graded music in-service courses should be established on a national basis. The music advisors, following consultation with all interested parties, should be actively involved in drawing up a detailed description of the content of Level One and Level Two courses. Level One should be aimed at the complete beginner, and those who feel their skills are below a minimum level, and should address aspects of each the three strands of the music curriculum, while Level Two should be a direct development of this

- All teachers should be encouraged to develop themselves to a basic level of music competency such as would be provided by participation in Level One and Level Two courses. This encouragement should be meaningful and sustained at the level of both the inspectorate and of the school principals

- Parallel elective courses in music should continue to be provided, for example in aspects such as tin-whistle playing, recorder playing, ICT in

music, choirs, school orchestras. Such courses would stipulate on the pre-course advertisement if participants need to have engaged in prior music professional development and to what level, e.g. participants may need no prior music professional development; or to have completed Level One and/or Level Two, or have attained a similar standard

- Both term time and summer courses in music should be available, and should be accessible to teachers in all geographic areas

- The provision of incentives to encourage participation in term time courses should be actively considered, in line with the incentives offered for participation in term time CPD generally, as proposed in 14.2.1

- The provision of music resources as an incentive for participation on music courses should be considered. Such an incentive would be less expensive and disruptive than EPV leave, and more beneficial to the teaching and learning of music

- Male teachers should be encouraged to participate in music in-service education, and in an effort to promote this, some all-male courses should be piloted

- More male music trainers should be appointed, to act as positive role models for male teachers. It must be recognised that it may be difficult to encourage male teachers to apply for such a position, but if a music advisory service were established, a position with such a service may prove attractive to male as well as to female teachers

14.2.3 Recommendations which apply to the music curriculum

- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) should reconsider the music literacy objectives in the 1999 music curriculum, and either simplify them or make them optional. The historical investigation revealed that a significant reason that previous music curricula were not implemented in schools was their difficulty level, especially in terms of music literacy. It is imperative that this does not happen again

- The DES should launch a campaign to convince parents, policy makers and educationalists regarding the status of the arts in education. This is an appropriate time to launch such a campaign, as the revised music curriculum

is being introduced to the educational system, and the policy makers could contribute to the success of the music curriculum if such a campaign were now initiated.

14.3 Areas for further research

During the course of the enquiry, some very relevant questions arose, which were outside the scope of this project. However, these issues are worthy of further investigation, and such study could complement and extend this piece of work. The areas that I particularly recommend for further research are:

- The link between an individual's musical confidence and his/her singing experience during formal schooling
- The link between a teacher's ability to read music and his/her confidence in teaching music
- A study of gender and music in education with particular reference to Irish primary schools
- An examination of summer courses at the beginning and end of summer, with particular reference to transfer to the classroom
- The implementation of the in-service programme to enable the 1999 Music curriculum, which will take place in the academic year 2004-2005
- Assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the 1999 Music Curriculum

14.4 Research aim and objectives revisited

In the opening chapter, I described the key aims of my research, which were to investigate what can be learned from the study of historical and contemporary aspects of primary music in-service education in Ireland, and to reflect on how this knowledge might be used to inform future policy and practice. I contend that my research of both historical and current aspects of music in-service education has yielded a substantial body of useful and relevant material. Based on the findings, I

made some recommendations which may be useful in the future design and delivery of music in-service education.

The historical research formed a substantial part of the study, and Part Two of this thesis presents the outcomes, tracing the history of music and music in-service education in the Irish primary school curriculum right to the present day, when the educational system is preparing to disseminate the most recent music curriculum. Therefore the first objective of the study, which was to investigate the history of music in-service education in Ireland, has been achieved.

In Part Three of the study, I presented the outcomes of the research on present day teachers and trainers. This part of the project fulfilled four of the specific objectives of the thesis, which were to investigate a sample of present-day primary teachers' perspectives on music in-service education, to establish if teachers require further support beyond existing provision, to investigate why some primary teachers do not participate in music in-service education, and to research music trainers' views on the key issues raised by teachers.

In this final part of the thesis, I endeavoured to satisfy the sixth objective of the research, which is to consider how the knowledge gained might be used to inform the future provision of music in-service education. All the data generated in my research – both the historical research and the research on the present day situation – helped to inform the set of recommendations that are presented in this chapter. However, the presentation of a set of outcomes and recommendations is only a small part of the process of improving the situation that currently exists. The real challenge is to have the recommendations taken on board by the policy makers and by those who control the budgets. My historical investigation revealed that many educationally sound recommendations regarding music education were offered at various times during the last century (e.g. Goodman, 1901; O'Braoin, 1939: Groocock, 1961; Teachers' Study Group, 1969; Fleischmann, 1971; Arts Council, 1979 & 1985; Heneghan, 2001). These recommendations, however, have had limited impact on the actual delivery of the music curriculum in the primary classroom. While I could like to believe that the recommendations of this study might in a limited way contribute to addressing some of the problems that currently exist, I realise that the process of policymaking and

implementation is a complex and difficult one. I hope, however, that this work and its dissemination will make a positive contribution to that process and help to improve the current situation of primary music teaching in Ireland.

14.5 Contribution of the study

Best (1959: 16) argues that 'Research makes its contribution to human welfare by countless small additions to knowledge. The researcher has some of the characteristics of the ant, who brings his single grain of sand to the anthill.' In this piece of research, I feel that I have achieved the aims and objectives of the study. A history of primary music in-service education in Ireland has now been written. Research has been undertaken on teachers and trainers to attempt to understand their perspectives on music in-service education, the outcomes have been carefully considered and a list of recommendations for improving the current provision has been offered. The outcomes of some aspects of the research have been disseminated to a wider audience through publications and presentation of a number of papers. However, this is but one piece of research, and however illuminating I may wish to consider it, I am also mindful of Best's philosophy, and I recognise that it offers but a small addition to the current body of knowledge on music in-service education in Ireland. However, I do hope that it may generate some further debate, and make some positive contribution to the teaching and learning of music in Irish primary schools.

14.6 Limitations of the study

All research has limitations, which may include limitations of time, materials, researcher, methodology or tools. In Chapters Five and Ten, I discussed the limitation of my research tools, and the steps I took to ensure that these were as appropriate as possible. There is another criticism which could be levelled at this study. On first consideration, it may seem that because it examines historical as well as contemporary music in-service education, its scope is too wide, and that it may have been better to concentrate on one aspect or the other. This might be seen as a valid criticism, and certainly one that I have deliberated on at length during the course of this enquiry. Certainly, if I had dedicated five years and fourteen chapters of written content to one area or the other, it would have been possible to explore that

area in greater depth. However, I feel that this study of the past has illuminated my understanding of the present, and therefore strengthens the findings of this piece of research. Brickman (1982: 278) argues that the knowledge of educational history enables 'the scholar, the educator, the teacher and the general public to understand the present practices and problems in relation to the past, since there is nothing in education that develops *de novo*'. Pitts, too, stresses that 'the current debates and challenges of music education make the historical study of previous development a relevant undertaking, as much of the contemporary curriculum is rooted in the ideals of past generations' (2002: 3). These are sentiments with which I totally concur.

14.7 The value of historical research in education

I feel strongly that the value of historical research in education should not be under estimated. It has become in some ways fashionable to argue that the study of history does not help us very much in addressing current issues and problems. While seeing some force in this argument, and realising that there can be no naïve transference of ideas from one historical situation to another, I believe that the study of history can yield valuable insights into our current situation. Such an understanding of the past can also help to establish a reliable basis for future progress and development. I agree with Burns, who states that 'History enables us to understand the past and the present in the light of the past. It is an act of reconstruction, undertaken in a spirit of critical inquiry, and prevents us from re-inventing the wheel' (Burns, 2000: 481 - 482). Also writing in that year, Pitts (2000: 19 – 21) argues that historical studies deserve a more prominent place in teacher education and development, as we need to understand the history of music education in the twentieth century if we are to make any headway in the twenty-first. She advocates 'Looking to the past, not as a golden age, but as a model for evaluating the present and shaping the future' (op. cit.: 21). Cox, Plummeridge and Turner (1997: 17) also argue that 'in this present educational climate of great change in policy and practice, music teaching could be strengthened through a lively engagement with its past.' While Cox et al. were referring to the situation in the UK; this sentiment could equally apply to the circumstances in Ireland. Undoubtedly, we are at a time of major reform in Irish music education. Consideration of what Cox (2002: 132 – 146) terms the 'usable past' can help music educators to comprehend fully how the current situation in music education has

developed as it has, and such insight can inform their attempts to address present issues of concern. Pitts (2002: 25) stresses that 'a clearer understanding of the past can inform our perceptions of contemporary musical education, and shape our ambitions for its future.' Such a philosophy underpins this study.

It is also worth examining the past, not solely in an effort to avoid previous mistakes, but also because it helps us 'in capturing the enthusiasm for music education that radiates from the pages of some of these almost forgotten texts' (Pitts, 2002: 29), as I discussed in Chapter Five. The historical investigation certainly revealed that the Irish music educators of the past had enormous enthusiasm for their subject, and examination of their writings indicate their passion and commitment to their mission. This is important, especially when considered in light of the research on present day teachers' perspectives, which indicates that the most significant contributor to effective music courses is the skill and enthusiasm of the presenter. The zeal and enthusiasm of our predecessors may serve as an inspiration and motivator for present and future music trainers in Ireland. Certainly, I found that this aspect generated much positive debate when I presented papers on some of the outcomes of this research.

14.8 Conclusion

Swanwick (1996: 253) argues that good research in music education has three positive outcomes. The first is that 'the researcher's own teaching and professional practice is illuminated by the activity'. I believe that this is certainly true in my case. My professional practice as a music trainer in Ireland has been illuminated by my investigation of the past. I now have a greater understanding of the music in-service education that was provided in Ireland since music was first formally introduced to the primary curriculum. I am also in a better position to understand the prior music in-service experiences of those teachers who attend my courses. My research has also helped me to ensure that the in-service courses I present are more in keeping with the needs of the participants. Swanwick's second positive outcome is that the 'professional community is strengthened by deeper knowledge and understanding.' I hope that I have in some small way helped to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the professional community of music trainers and other interested

parties in Ireland through publication of some of the outcomes of this research, and through presentations at seminars. Swanwick's third positive outcome is that 'we are better equipped to respond to the challenges of forward planning and accountability.' The recommendations that this study has proposed may in some way help us to respond to the challenges of the future provision of music in-service education in Ireland. It must be acknowledged that the outcomes of the research are already having some impact on the future provision of music in-service education. The design of the in-service programme that is scheduled to commence in September 2004 is already underway, and my personal contribution to the design process has undoubtedly been informed and influenced by the outcomes of this study.

As I conclude this study, we are at a key moment in the history of music in-service education in Ireland. The latest music curriculum will shortly be introduced to the teaching profession, commencing in September 2004. Beausang (2002: 27) wrote that: 'At the beginning of the 21st century Irish music education is at the crossroads, let us hope that it will not end in a cul-de-sac'. The writer also points out that although music has a very high profile in the Irish national consciousness, it has 'been taken for granted in the educational context' (op. cit.: 27). I am hopeful, however, that music education will thrive in our schools in the years ahead, and positive signs can already be seen. All teachers will have three mandatory days of music in-service education in the coming academic year. For many teachers, this will be the first time they will attend music professional development since their pre-service education. It is a unique opportunity to build teachers' confidence, so that they will subsequently participate in elective in-service education in music, in order to continue to develop and support their practice. Ultimately, this is what must happen if the teaching and learning of music in primary classrooms is to be improved.

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