



An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Óige  
Department of Education  
and Youth

# Arts Education Specification

For Primary and  
Special Schools

Prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

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## Preface

The *Arts Education* specification is for all children attending primary and special schools. It is inclusive and holistic in nature, recognising primary and special education as a time of 'being' and 'becoming' – connecting with children's prior learning, celebrating children's current experiences and looking to their futures.

Building on the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, the redeveloped curriculum's specifications work together to provide a strong foundation for every child to thrive and flourish, supporting them in realising their full potential as individuals and as members of communities and society.

The *Arts Education* specification places an important emphasis on child and teacher agency, ensuring children have a meaningful say in their learning and supporting teachers in making informed professional decisions within the parameters of the curriculum.

The *Arts Education* specification is part of the wider redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum. A particular focus has been placed on ensuring coherence across the specifications. As you get to know the specifications, you will notice a consistent structure and use of terminology, chapters and subsections of similar lengths and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication and repetition of Learning Outcomes. You might also recognise many of the positive aspects of current practice that take place in our primary and special schools, as well as enhancements in the learning children will experience through the pedagogical and assessment approaches supported across the curriculum.

This specification emphasises active, sensory and embodied engagement where children 'learn by doing'. Children are encouraged to be reflective, expressive and to make informed creative choices as arts-makers. They explore and make connections to the world around them and to a wide range of arts works from various cultures and contexts. Alongside both discrete and integrated learning experiences in Art, Drama and Music, children have opportunities to engage with other artforms including dance and media arts.



# 1. Introduction

Every child in Ireland has the right to an education based on their strengths, interests and needs. The *Primary Curriculum Framework* aims to provide a strong foundation for every child to thrive and flourish, supporting them in realising their full potential as individuals and as members of communities and society. It recognises primary education as a time of 'being' and 'becoming' – highlighting the importance of enjoyable, interesting, relevant and appropriately challenging experiences for all children that empower them as learners both now and into the future. Importantly, the Primary School Curriculum supports high-quality learning, teaching and assessment for all children attending primary and special schools.

*Arts Education*, encompassing the subjects Art, Drama and Music, occupies a unique and important space in children's primary education. Ireland has a rich, vibrant culture and heritage, and the arts play a key role in Irish life and society. Engagement with traditional and contemporary art, craft, music, song, drama, dance and other artforms helps connect children to this important aspect of national culture. They also learn about the perspectives of others, and arts-making in cultures and communities outside of Ireland. *Arts Education* supports and promotes children's artistic and creative development and wellbeing in an enjoyable way. This curriculum area offers opportunities for children to explore ideas and feelings and to express themselves creatively through a variety of artforms.

From birth, children begin their educational journey through interactions and experiences with the world around them. In primary and special schools, children have playful and engaging learning experiences that build upon the knowledge, skills, concepts, dispositions, attitudes and values they have acquired at home and in preschool settings through *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. As children move through primary or special school, their learning connects with, and is further progressed through, the learning experiences provided in post-primary school. Given the diversity in the contexts in which children learn and the uniqueness of each child's learning journey, the curriculum promotes agency and choice and acknowledges that teachers play a critical role in facilitating equitable, meaningful and holistic learning experiences for all children.

## Principles of learning, teaching and assessment

Eight overarching principles underpin and guide schools in pursuing the vision of the *Primary Curriculum Framework*. These principles convey what is valued in primary and special education and what lies at the heart of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment in the primary curriculum. They are broad in nature to reflect varied school contexts and children's different circumstances, experiences and abilities. As such, they support boards of management, school leaders, teachers and others in their duties to ensure high-quality education is provided for all children in our schools.

Table 1 presents a non-exhaustive set of examples of the principles in action within the *Arts Education* specification.

**Table 1:** Principles of learning, teaching and assessment

Principle of learning, teaching and assessment	Examples within the <i>Arts Education</i> specification
<b>Assessment and progression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children engaging in feedback, reflection, self-assessment and peer-assessment to support learning and progression</li> <li>• Using a diverse range of assessment methods and artefacts including portfolios, recording compositions, videos, photos and <u>arts works</u> to document progress and celebrate the process involved</li> <li>• Observing and questioning as important features of intuitive assessment in <i>Arts Education</i></li> </ul>
<b>Engagement and participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children participating in playful, enjoyable, sensory and <u>embodied</u> arts-based learning experiences</li> <li>• Children collaborating, working in groups, co-creating and valuing each other's unique contributions</li> <li>• Children taking part in and attending arts events, assemblies, exhibitions, shows and concerts, in and out of the school environment</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive education and diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating relational and responsive approaches where all children's cultures, identities and experiences are acknowledged, valued and celebrated</li> <li>• Identifying and challenging stereotypes in artistic expression, and promoting inclusivity, empathy, mutual respect and multi-perspectivity in <u>arts-making</u></li> <li>• Finding connections between and appreciating the diversity of <u>arts works</u>, styles and traditions both locally and from wider contexts</li> </ul>
<b>Learning environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising the classroom and multi-purpose spaces for movement and active <u>arts-making</u> and access to art supplies, musical <u>instruments</u> and drama resources</li> <li>• Observing and using the natural environment to inspire creativity</li> <li>• Creating a safe and aesthetic learning environment by sharing and celebrating children's creations in Art, Drama and Music</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning from and sharing ideas and expertise within the classroom and the wider school</li> <li>• Inviting family and community members to participate, attend or contribute to events, fostering a sense of involvement and shared experience</li> <li>• Collaborating with local artists, museums and organisations to share expertise, resources or workshops</li> </ul>

Principle of learning, teaching and assessment	Examples within the <i>Arts Education</i> specification
<b>Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children engaging as arts-makers, choosing different <u>materials</u>, techniques and ideas and creating in a variety of artforms</li> <li>• Creating opportunities for children to learn and practise skills, perform, present and share their <u>arts-making</u> with others</li> <li>• Utilising a broad range of arts experiences for responding and connecting such as videos, images, recordings of performances and tours of galleries (in-person or virtual)</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building positive and caring relationships in a safe environment, motivating children's engagement and expression in the arts</li> <li>• Encouraging co-operation, communication, trust, empathy, understanding and sharing of skills</li> <li>• Fostering collaboration, partnership and engagement with classmates, the community and other artists to enhance learning in the arts</li> </ul>
<b>Transitions and continuity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities for children to share their previous experiences in the arts to inform future learning experiences</li> <li>• Recognising and sharing children's particular interests or strengths in <i>Arts Education</i> as they transition to and from primary/special school</li> <li>• Encouraging collaboration and communication with home, preschool and post-primary school</li> </ul>

### A broad and balanced approach to *Arts Education*

This specification recognises the value of broad and balanced learning within and across Art, Drama and Music. It also allows for learning in other artforms, as well as in integrated arts experiences across all

stages. Other artforms that can be explored in line with the strands and Learning Outcomes might include, but are not limited to, dance and media arts.







Overview of the Arts Education specification

The opening chapters of the *Arts Education* specification present the Rationale, Aims, Strands and Elements and Learning Outcomes. Chapter 6 provides guidance on the curriculum in practice, while the final chapters present an overview of the online toolkits, the glossary and references.

The *Arts Education* specification is supported by the online Primary Curriculum Toolkit and the *Arts Education* Toolkit. These online toolkits offer a variety of supports in enacting the curriculum, including supports for curriculum planning, inclusion, assessment and pedagogy. You can access the online version of the specification and the toolkits by visiting [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie).

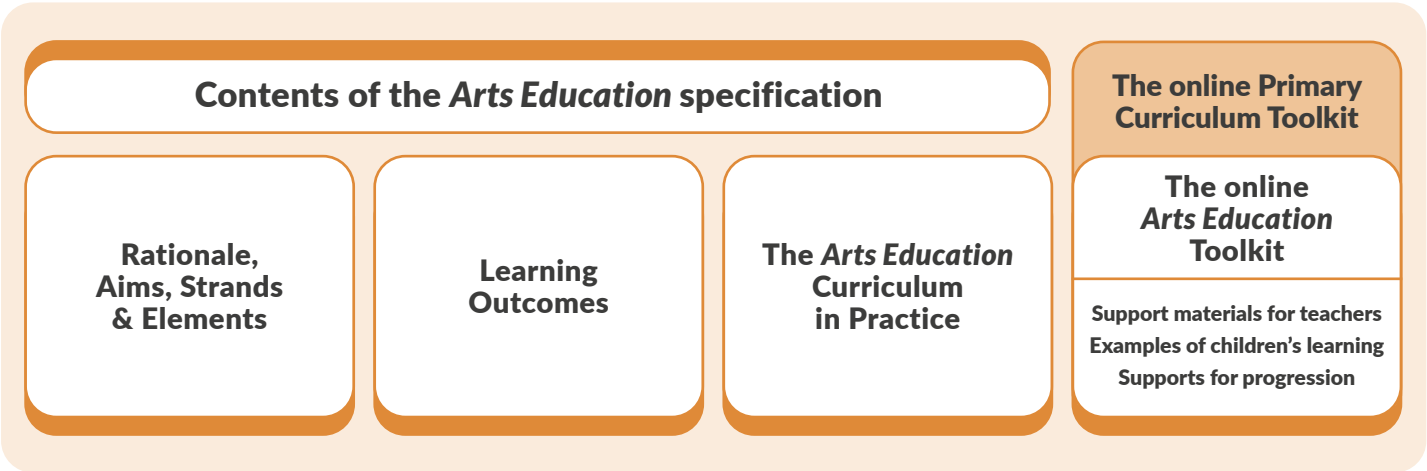


Figure 1: Contents of the Arts Education specification

## 2. Rationale

*Arts Education* provides important opportunities for all children to engage their senses and ignite their imaginations, while experiencing the joy and beauty of the arts as part of a holistic education.

### *Arts Education helps children make sense of the world around them*

In *Arts Education*, children explore and respond to arts works connected to their lives, their local community, Ireland and diverse cultures. They explore multiple interpretations and develop respect and empathy for other points of view. This can inform their own arts-making, develop cultural awareness and contribute to a life-long understanding and appreciation of the arts. Children learn that the arts represent a unique form of communication and expression.

### *Arts Education encourages children to exercise agency in their learning*

Children build skills and knowledge to support informed, meaningful and agentic engagement with the arts. This has the potential to enrich their lives, enhance their wellbeing and self-fulfilment, and foster confidence, identity, community and belonging. As agentic arts-makers, children come to realise how their work can contribute positively to the world around them.

### *Arts Education connects to children's broader learning*

Through a broad and balanced *Arts Education*, children learn to be creative and 'think outside the box'. They develop the dispositions of perseverance, expressiveness, collaboration, reflectiveness, curiosity, openness and playfulness. *Arts Education* supports children's learning and development in Art, Drama and Music. It also allows for and celebrates connectivity between multiple art forms, including dance and media arts, and broader learning across the curriculum.

### *Art within Arts Education*

In Art, children learn to explore and use a variety of media to express their unique ideas, feelings and experiences in a range of 2D, 3D and/or digital art. They observe and explore various styles and genres through historical and contemporary artworks, and further their sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world. Children develop understanding and competence across a range of Art concepts, processes, skills, materials and techniques.

### *Drama within Arts Education*

In Drama, children learn to take on roles, portray characters, communicate feelings and ideas and enact and co-create stories in embodied form. They engage with a range of drama forms and strategies, investigate themes, consider multiple points of view and make meaning from the content of the drama. Children develop their confidence and competence to improvise, make, reflect upon, devise, refine and perform drama using the space around them.

### *Music within Arts Education*

In Music, children learn to combine knowledge, concepts, skills, techniques, feelings and ideas to make music using a variety of sound sources. They experience, explore and respond to a broad repertoire of songs, chants, instrumental and digitally generated music from a range of styles, genres, cultures and traditions. Children develop skills and techniques associated with listening, responding, interpreting, singing, playing instruments, composing, notating and sharing music.

Through appropriately playful and engaging learning opportunities in *Arts Education*, children can experience the power, joy, wonder, excitement, beauty, potential and relevance of the arts.



### 3. Aims

*Arts Education* develops children's confidence, knowledge and understanding to engage as active and agentic arts-makers. The aims of the *Arts Education* specification, shown below, are interwoven and interdependent.

#### The *Arts Education* specification aims for children to:

##### develop a range of skills.

Develop a range of skills, language and techniques for creating and engaging with Art, Drama and Music throughout their lives.

##### explore creativity.

Be imaginative, inquisitive, open-minded and flexible as they persevere, embrace differences, take creative risks and collaborate with others.

##### express themselves.

Express personal and shared ideas, knowledge, feelings and experiences in a range of artforms.

##### engage artistically.

Engage with, participate in, enjoy and critique the arts for personal development, fulfilment and lifelong appreciation.

##### understand and apply artistic concepts.

Develop their understanding and application of the knowledge and concepts that underpin the subjects of Art, Drama, Music and other artforms.

##### use their bodies and senses.

Engage their minds, bodies and senses to explore, create, observe, listen, manipulate, move and respond to arts works and the world around them.

##### appreciate the arts.

Discover striking, emotive and impactful features of arts works and experiences and appreciate the value of the arts for their own sake.

##### develop cultural and contextual awareness.

Experience, explore, respond to and identify characteristics of arts works from local, Irish and diverse cultural and historical contexts.

# 4. Strands and Elements

## Strands

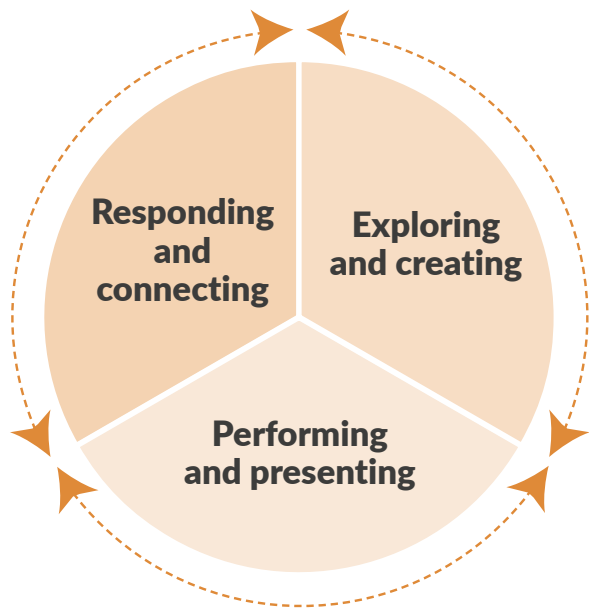
Strands outline the main categories of children’s learning in *Arts Education*. The three strands are:

- Exploring and creating
- Performing and presenting
- Responding and connecting

The strands in *Arts Education* are also the processes children engage in as they learn. The word strands is used exclusively in this curriculum area to refer to strands and elements (as referred to in other curriculum areas).

**Table 2:** Strands in the *Arts Education* specification

Strand	Description
Exploring and creating	Children explore, generate ideas, take creative risks and experiment as arts-makers. They use <u>materials</u> and apply skills and concepts to create, revise and refine personal and collaborative <u>arts works</u> . They engage creatively and imaginatively to <u>improvise</u> , create, design and make in Art, Drama and Music and can apply their skills in dance and <u>other artforms</u> .
Performing and presenting	Children collaborate, communicate and perform through a range of different artforms. They express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through multi-sensory methods that involve sound, visuals, movement and gesture. They present, exhibit, share and discuss their work in Art, Drama, Music and <u>other artforms</u> and appreciate the role of audience in the arts.
Responding and connecting	Children critically reflect, observe, listen to, analyse, respond to and appreciate their own <u>arts works</u> and <u>arts works</u> of other artists connected to the local community, Ireland and the wider world. They experience a range of styles and <u>genres</u> in Art, Drama and Music as well as dance and <u>other artforms</u> . They learn to construct meaning, explore and connect their experiences to their own lives and cultures, broader cultures/contexts and the wider world of the arts.



**Figure 2:** The strands in the Arts Education specification

Although the division of the curriculum into strands provides a convenient format in which to present the Learning Outcomes, it should be noted that they are interdependent and not discrete. Therefore, at a given time, a class may be working towards a number of Learning Outcomes from different strands at the same time.





## 5. Learning Outcomes

Central to nurturing every child's potential is the clear articulation of Learning Outcomes. This chapter presents the Learning Outcomes for *Arts Education*. Learning Outcomes describe the expected learning and development for all children at the end of a two-year stage, when due account is taken of individual abilities and varying circumstances. They focus on children's understanding, which develops through the acquisition and gradual building of knowledge, skills, concepts, dispositions, attitudes and values in *Arts Education*.

Reflecting the principles and pedagogical approaches in the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, the 'stem' '*Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences*' is used to introduce Learning Outcomes across all stages. This stem aims to foster a learning environment that facilitates rich learning experiences, as outlined in Chapter 6, '*The Arts Education Curriculum in Practice*'.

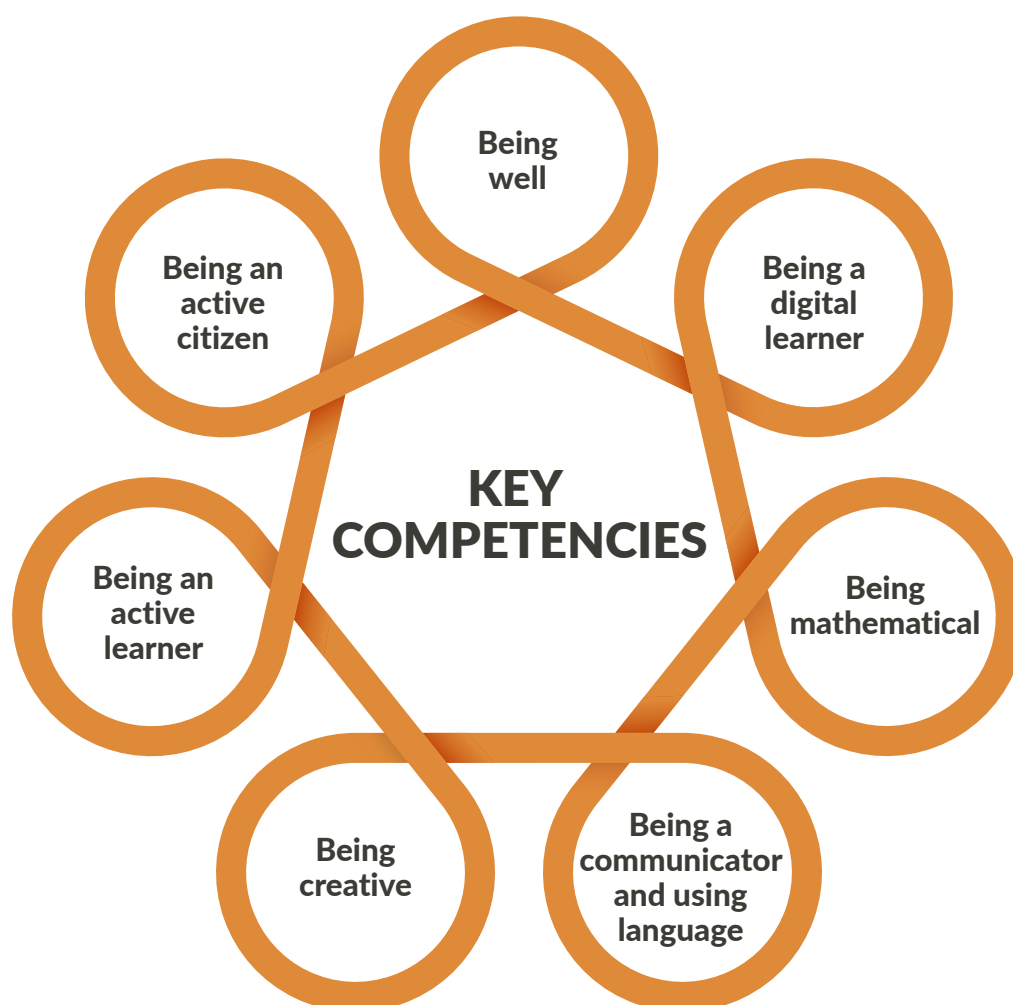
Children learn and teachers teach in a variety of contexts. Learning Outcomes in *Arts Education* are broad and balanced in nature to facilitate teacher agency and flexibility in schools. Given their broad nature, when working with Learning Outcomes, teachers can focus on specific aspects of learning, taking account of the context and prior learning of the children. When preparing for learning and teaching experiences, teachers can focus on particular aspects of a Learning Outcome or, at times, on aspects of multiple Learning Outcomes. They ensure subject-specific learning is addressed across all stages, while also allowing for integrated learning to enhance children's experiences of *Arts Education*. At each stage, the specification provides Learning Outcomes for Art, Drama and Music; Learning Outcomes that are applicable to these and other artforms; and Learning Outcomes that allow for a combination of artforms.



## Key competencies

The primary curriculum has seven key competencies which overlap and combine to support the curriculum's vision. As outlined in the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, the competencies build on the capabilities children acquire through their early childhood education experiences with *Aistear* and are further strengthened in post-primary

school through learning experiences shaped by the *Framework for Junior Cycle*. As children work towards the Learning Outcomes in the *Arts Education* specification and engage in rich learning experiences, they simultaneously build and develop these key competencies.



**Figure 3:** Key competencies

**Table 3:** Examples of attributes of each key competency developed through learning in the *Arts Education* specification

Key competency	Examples of attributes developed through learning in the <i>Arts Education</i> specification
Being an active citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exploring cultures within and beyond Ireland, developing empathy, understanding and a sense of citizenship</li><li>Considering challenges and collaborating on new ideas and possible courses of action</li></ul>
Being an active learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engaging actively as arts-makers</li><li>Reflecting on their own work and the work of others, making choices and exploring techniques and creative processes</li></ul>
Being a communicator and using language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sharing their experiences, thoughts, ideas and feelings in a variety of ways through the arts</li><li>Observing, listening to, interpreting, responding to feedback and being open to diverse perspectives</li></ul>
Being creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expressing ideas and feelings in diverse ways, and creating original work in Art, Drama, Music and <u>other artforms</u></li><li>Experimenting with various techniques, <u>instruments</u>, <u>materials</u> and approaches</li></ul>
Being a digital learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Using a range of <u>digital tools</u> to experience, make, or record Art, Drama, Music and <u>other artforms</u></li><li>Engaging with <u>media arts</u></li></ul>
Being mathematical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recognising and creating patterns and <u>rhythms</u> incorporating time and duration</li><li>Understanding the use of space and proportions</li></ul>
Being well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Experiencing joy and fulfilment in artistic engagement</li><li>Building a sense of community by participating in collaborative artistic projects</li></ul>

To assist teachers in identifying the key competencies that have been embedded within the Learning Outcomes you will see initials beside each Learning Outcome, as explained in Table 4. In each instance, up to three key competencies are identified. It should be noted that in many instances other key competencies, outside of the three identified, are also embedded in the Learning Outcomes.

**Table 4:** Key competency legend

Initials	Key competency
AC	Being an active citizen
AL	Being an active learner
CL	Being a communicator and using language
C	Being creative
DL	Being a digital learner
M	Being mathematical
W	Being well







## Concepts

The concepts are the key ingredients and essential building blocks for Art, Drama and Music. Similar to the key competencies, they play a vital role in underpinning the Learning Outcomes across all stages of the curriculum. Engagement with a range of images, sounds, arts works and other stimuli

from various contexts and environments supports children's conceptual learning and development in *Arts Education*.

The following tables provide definitions of the concepts in Art, Drama and Music and Appendix A provides further detail on the concepts.

**Table 5:** Art concepts

Art concepts	
<b>Line</b>	Connects two points and can be thick/thin, delicate/bold, curved/straight, etc.
<b>Shape</b>	<u>Geometric</u> , like squares and circles, or <u>organic</u> like free-form shapes
<b>Form</b>	Constructed in 3D by using <u>materials</u> and techniques, suggested in 2D by using colour and tone
<b>Colour and tone</b>	<u>Primary colours</u> can be mixed or layered to create a range of <u>secondary</u> or <u>tertiary blends</u> . Tone is the lightness or darkness of a colour.
<b>Texture</b>	How a surface feels to touch or looks (rough/smooth, etc.)
<b>Space</b>	The areas around, within and between different parts of a composition
<b>Pattern and rhythm</b>	Repetition and variation in use of line, shape, colour and texture in artwork

**Table 6:** Drama concepts

Drama concepts	
<b>Action and plot</b>	What happens in the drama
<b>Role and character</b>	The roles and characters in the drama, how they look/move/sound/behave and how they relate to each other
<b>Movement</b>	The use of the body in exploration and expression
<b>Place and space</b>	The setting of the drama and how this is symbolised
<b>Sound</b>	The use of sounds in exploration and expression
<b>Tension</b>	A dilemma, conflict, issue, problem, mystery or suspense
<b>Time</b>	The time period, the time of day, the duration or the sequence of the action

**Table 7:** Music concepts

Music concepts	
<b>Pulse</b>	Underlying 'heartbeat' that can be felt in most music, often called the 'steady beat'
<b>Tempo</b>	The speed of the pulse in music (slow/fast)
<b>Duration and rhythm</b>	Length (short/long) and combinations of sounds and silences
<b>Pitch</b>	Low/high quality of sounds
<b>Dynamics</b>	Soft/loud quality of sounds/music
<b>Timbre</b>	Unique sound(s) associated with a specific instrument, e.g., voice, tin whistle, piano
<b>Texture</b>	Layering of sound in music (solo, <u>unison</u> , multiple <u>sound sources</u> at once)
<b>Structure</b>	Overall organisation of a piece of music, built by contrast and repetition

The term **arts works** should be taken to include examples of children's personal creations as well as a range of fine art, design, craft, dramas, plays, songs, tunes, musical pieces, dances, media arts and other digital creative works from Ireland and the wider world.

The term **arts-making** should be taken to include the ongoing creative process and completed work in any artform or combination of artforms.

**2D art** can include drawings, paintings, prints/rubbings and collages. **3D art** can include papier mâché, constructions, clay pieces, pottery and sculptures, crafts, textiles, fabric and fibre and dioramas. These examples are non-exhaustive.

While 2D and 3D art are specifically referenced in some Learning Outcomes, mixed media, digital art and emergent forms of art could also be explored.

## Learning Outcomes for Strand: Exploring and creating

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Junior and senior infants	First and second classes	Third and fourth classes	Fifth and sixth classes

Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:

Art			
explore and <u>improvise</u> ways to express a variety of ideas and themes in <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> using various <u>materials</u> , tools and techniques. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	explore, <u>improvise</u> and demonstrate ways to express a variety of ideas and themes in <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> using an increased variety of <u>materials</u> , tools and techniques. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	explore, express and represent ideas and themes in a range of <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	explore, express, represent and adapt ideas and themes in a range of <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>
create <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> exploring space, line, shape, colour, tone, form, texture, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, C, AC</b>	design and create <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> with increased attention to space, line, shape, colour, tone, form, texture, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	experiment with and choose various tools and <u>materials</u> and apply techniques creatively in a range of <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	experiment with and choose various tools and <u>materials</u> and apply techniques creatively with increased confidence and control in a range of <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> . <b>AL, C, DL</b>
		plan, design and create art using <u>design principles</u> (including light, contrast, scale and symmetry) and line, shape, form, colour, tone, texture, space, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, C, M</b>	plan, design, reimagine, create and refine art using <u>design principles</u> (including light, contrast, scale and symmetry) and line, shape, form, colour, tone, texture, space, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, C, M</b>
Drama			
<u>improvise</u> and enact fictional scenarios on a variety of themes in response to stimuli and <u>Teacher-in-role</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	<u>improvise</u> , enact and sustain engagement with fictional scenarios on a variety of themes in response to teacher engagement and the use of stimuli. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	explore, <u>improvise</u> and represent ideas in a range of <u>dramatic forms</u> that communicate ideas and explore human themes, relationships and dilemmas. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	explore, <u>improvise</u> , represent and adapt ideas in a range of <u>dramatic forms</u> to explore and communicate complex ideas, themes, relationships and dilemmas. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
co-create and/or adapt simple stories and characters (with support) using movement, sound, space, objects and tension. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	create and/or adapt simple stories and characters using movement, sound, space, objects and tension. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	devise, structure and rework action or scenes using character, movement, sound, space, objects and tension in a spontaneous and/or rehearsed way. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	devise, adapt, structure, rework and refine action or scenes developing roles, characters, movement, sound, space, objects and tension in a spontaneous and/or rehearsed way. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
		plan and capture their drama work through <u>storyboarding</u> , <u>journalling</u> and/or using <u>digital tools</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	consider appropriate ways to plan and capture their drama work through <u>storyboarding</u> , <u>journalling</u> , <u>scripting</u> and/or using <u>digital tools</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>

### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
**DL** = Being a digital learner

**CL** = Being a communicator and using language  
**M** = Being mathematical  
**W** = Being well



## Learning Outcomes for Strand: **Exploring and creating**

### Stage 1

Junior and senior infants

### Stage 2

First and second classes

### Stage 3

Third and fourth classes

### Stage 4

Fifth and sixth classes

*Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:*

## Music

explore, improvise and create rhythms, melodies and short musical pieces based on a range of themes using strong contrasts in pitch, duration, rhythm, timbre, texture, tempo, dynamics and structure. **AL, CL, C**

improvise and create rhythms, melodies and short musical pieces based on a range of themes using increased variety and contrast in pitch, duration, rhythm, timbre, texture, tempo, dynamics and structure. **AL, CL, C**

improvise, compose, adapt and extend rhythms and melodies using a range of sound sources [voice, body, instruments] and/or digital tools. **AL, CL, C**

improvise, compose, reimagine, combine and extend rhythms and melodies using a range of sound sources [voice, body, instruments] and/or digital tools. **AL, CL, C**

create symbols, pictures and graphic scores to represent their music-making. **AL, CL, C**

create symbols, pictures and graphic scores and use stick notation to represent their music-making. **AL, CL, C**

compose musical pieces that apply pitch, duration, rhythm, timbre, texture, tempo, dynamics, structure and instrumental and expressive techniques to communicate themes and ideas. **AL, CL, C**

compose and refine detailed musical pieces that apply pulse, pitch, duration, rhythm, timbre, texture, tempo, dynamics, structure and a broad range of instrumental and expressive techniques to communicate themes and ideas. **CL, C, DL**

create graphic scores and use a range of symbols, stick notation and/or staff notation to represent their music-making. **AL, CL, C**

create detailed graphic scores and use a range of symbols, stick notation and staff notation to represent their music-making. **AL, CL, C**

## Art, Drama, Music and other artforms

explore, experiment, improvise and create, integrating a combination of Art, Drama, Music and/or other artforms. **AL, CL, C**

explore, experiment, improvise, plan and create, integrating a combination of Art, Drama, Music and/or other artforms. **AL, CL, C**

explore, experiment, improvise, plan, create and refine, integrating a combination of Art, Drama, Music and/or other artforms. **AL, CL, C**

### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
**DL** = Being a digital learner

**CL** = Being a communicator and using language  
**M** = Being mathematical  
**W** = Being well

## Learning Outcomes for Strand: Performing and presenting

Stage 1 Junior and senior infants	Stage 2 First and second classes	Stage 3 Third and fourth classes	Stage 4 Fifth and sixth classes
<i>Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:</i>			
<b>Art</b>			
share and discuss their artwork referring to themes, ideas, figures and objects. <b>AL, CL, C</b>		show and describe their art-making process reflecting on use of tools, materials and techniques across a range of styles and media. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	show, describe and critique their art-making process and use of tools, materials and techniques across a range of styles and media. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
show and describe choice of <u>materials</u> , space, line, shape, colour, tone, form, texture, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	show and describe choice and creative use of <u>materials</u> , space, line, shape, colour, tone, form, texture, pattern and rhythm. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	show and explain how their choice and use of <u>design principles</u> , and space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm supports their art-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	demonstrate and explain how their choice and use of <u>design principles</u> , and space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm enhances their art-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
<b>Drama</b>			
engage with <u>sociodramatic play</u> , enter into imagined fictional contexts and enact dramatic stories in an <u>improvised</u> and/or rehearsed way. <b>AL, CL, C</b>		prepare, participate in and/or record <u>improvised</u> or rehearsed dramas, for sharing in class or with the wider school community. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	prepare, structure, participate in, refine and/or record <u>improvised</u> or rehearsed dramas, for sharing in class or with the wider school community. <b>CL, C, DL</b>
show awareness of role, character, place, space, movement, sound, time and tension. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	show use of role, character, place, space, movement, sound, time and tension. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	demonstrate use of role, character, space, movement, sound, time and tension in ways that support their dramatic story-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	demonstrate use of role, character, space, movement, sound, time and tension in ways that enhance their dramatic story-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
<b>Music</b>			
sing, play and <u>chant</u> a variety of songs, <u>rhythms</u> , <u>melodies</u> and musical pieces with and without movement. <b>AL, CL, C</b>		use voice, body, <u>instruments</u> , techniques and/or <u>digital tools</u> creatively to sing, play and record a variety of songs and musical pieces. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	use voice, body, <u>instruments</u> , techniques and/or <u>digital tools</u> creatively to <u>arrange</u> , interpret, sing, play and record a variety of songs and musical pieces. <b>AL, C, DL</b>
show awareness of pulse, pitch, duration, rhythm and contrasting texture, tempo, dynamics, timbre and structure in their music-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	show basic control of pulse, pitch, duration, rhythm, texture, tempo, dynamics, timbre and structure in their music-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	demonstrate controlled and expressive use of pulse, tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in their music-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	demonstrate confident, controlled and expressive use of pulse, tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in their music-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>

### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
**DL** = Being a digital learner

**CL** = Being a communicator and using language  
**M** = Being mathematical  
**W** = Being well

## Learning Outcomes for Strand: **Performing and presenting**

### Stage 1

Junior and senior infants

### Stage 2

First and second classes

### Stage 3

Third and fourth classes

### Stage 4

Fifth and sixth classes

*Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:*

### Art, Drama, Music and other artforms

perform, present, discuss and share work in Art, Drama, Music and/or a combination of various artforms. **AL, CL, C**

structure, perform, present and share work in Art, Drama, Music and/or a combination of various artforms. **CL, C, W**

organise, structure, perform, present and share work in Art, Drama, Music and/or a combination of various artforms in impactful ways. **CL, C, W**

reflect upon and discuss their personal and collaborative arts-making. **AL, CL, W**

reflect upon, discuss and evaluate their personal and collaborative arts-making. **AL, CL, W**

#### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
**DL** = Being a digital learner

**CL** = Being a communicator and using language  
**M** = Being mathematical  
**W** = Being well

## Learning Outcomes for Strand: **Responding and connecting**

Stage 1 Junior and senior infants	Stage 2 First and second classes	Stage 3 Third and fourth classes	Stage 4 Fifth and sixth classes
<i>Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:</i>			
<b>Art</b>			
recognise and respond to the main themes and ideas in <u>artwork</u> and notice how these can inspire creating. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	respond to and reflect on the main themes and ideas in <u>artwork</u> and explore how these can inspire creating. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	respond to ideas and themes in <u>artwork</u> and make connections with their own expressive art-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	respond to and critically analyse ideas and themes in <u>artwork</u> and make connections with their own expressive art-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
notice space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm in <u>artwork</u> and in the world around them. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	recognise, observe and describe space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm in <u>artwork</u> and in the world around them. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	recognise and describe use and effect of space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm in a variety of <u>artwork</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	analyse and critique use and effect of space, line, shape, colour, form, texture, pattern and rhythm in a variety of <u>artwork</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>
<b>Drama</b>			
respond to and make connections with the action, plot, roles, characters, and use of movement, place, space, sound, tension and time in dramas. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	respond to, reflect on and make connections with the action, plot, roles, characters, and use of movement, place, space, sound, tension and time in dramas. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	recognise and describe how the action, plot, roles, characters, place, space, time and tension support drama-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	analyse and critique how the use of the action, plot, roles, characters, place, space, time and tension enhance drama-making. <b>AL, CL, C</b>
recognise, respond to and reflect on the thematic focus, ideas and courses of action in dramas. <b>AC, CL, C</b>	respond to, reflect on and shape the thematic focus, interrogate ideas and consider courses of action in dramas. <b>AC, CL, C</b>	respond to, make connections with and interrogate the themes, relationships, dilemmas and courses of action in dramas. <b>AC, CL, W</b>	respond to, make connections with, interrogate and critically analyse themes, relationships, dilemmas and courses of action in dramas. <b>AC, CL, W</b>
<b>Music</b>			
listen to, respond and reflect on a variety of songs, musical pieces and excerpts in a range of active, <u>sensory and embodied ways</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	listen to, follow, respond and reflect on a variety of songs, musical pieces and excerpts in a range of active, <u>sensory and embodied ways</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	listen to, follow, interpret, respond, reflect on and analyse a variety of songs, musical pieces and excerpts in a range of active, <u>sensory and embodied ways</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>	listen to, follow, interpret, respond, reflect on, analyse and critique a variety of songs, musical pieces and excerpts in a range of active <u>sensory and embodied ways</u> . <b>AL, CL, C</b>
notice pulse and strongly contrasting examples of tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in a variety of music. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	recognise, show and describe pulse and contrasting examples of tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in a variety of music. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	recognise and describe use and effect of pulse, tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in a variety of music. <b>AL, CL, C</b>	analyse and critique use and effect of pulse, tempo, duration, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure in a variety of music. <b>AL, CL, C</b>

### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
**DL** = Being a digital learner

**CL** = Being a communicator and using language  
**M** = Being mathematical  
**W** = Being well



## Learning Outcomes for Strand: **Responding and connecting**

### Stage 1

Junior and senior infants

### Stage 2

First and second classes

### Stage 3

Third and fourth classes

### Stage 4

Fifth and sixth classes

*Through appropriately playful and engaging learning experiences, children should be able to:*

### Art, Drama, Music and other artforms

engage with a variety of stimuli, arts works, digital and in-person events, exhibitions and performances from Ireland and the wider world. **AC, CL, C**

engage with and describe a variety of stimuli, arts works, digital and in-person events, exhibitions and performances from Ireland and the wider world. **AC, CL, C**

identify characteristics, instruments and techniques associated with arts works of different genres, periods and contexts from Ireland and the wider world. **AC, CL, C**

identify, compare and contrast interpretations, characteristics, instruments and techniques associated with arts works of various artists, musicians, periods, genres and cultural contexts from Ireland and the wider world. **AC, CL, C**

respond to arts-making in the classroom and school community. **AL, CL, W**

respond to and appraise arts-making in the classroom and school community. **AL, CL, W**

connect arts-making to their lives and to traditions from local and wider communities and cultures. **AC, CL, W**

connect arts-making to their lives and to traditions from local, national and international communities and cultures with sensitivity to and understanding of the context. **AC, CL, W**

appreciate the structure, impact, affect and aesthetic qualities of arts works, digital and in-person events, exhibitions and performances from Ireland and the wider world. **AL, CL, W**

appreciate and critique the structure, impact, affect and aesthetic qualities of arts works, digital and in-person events, exhibitions and performances from Ireland and the wider world. **AL, CL, W**

#### Key competencies:

**AC** = Being an active citizen  
**C** = Being creative

**AL** = Being an active learner  
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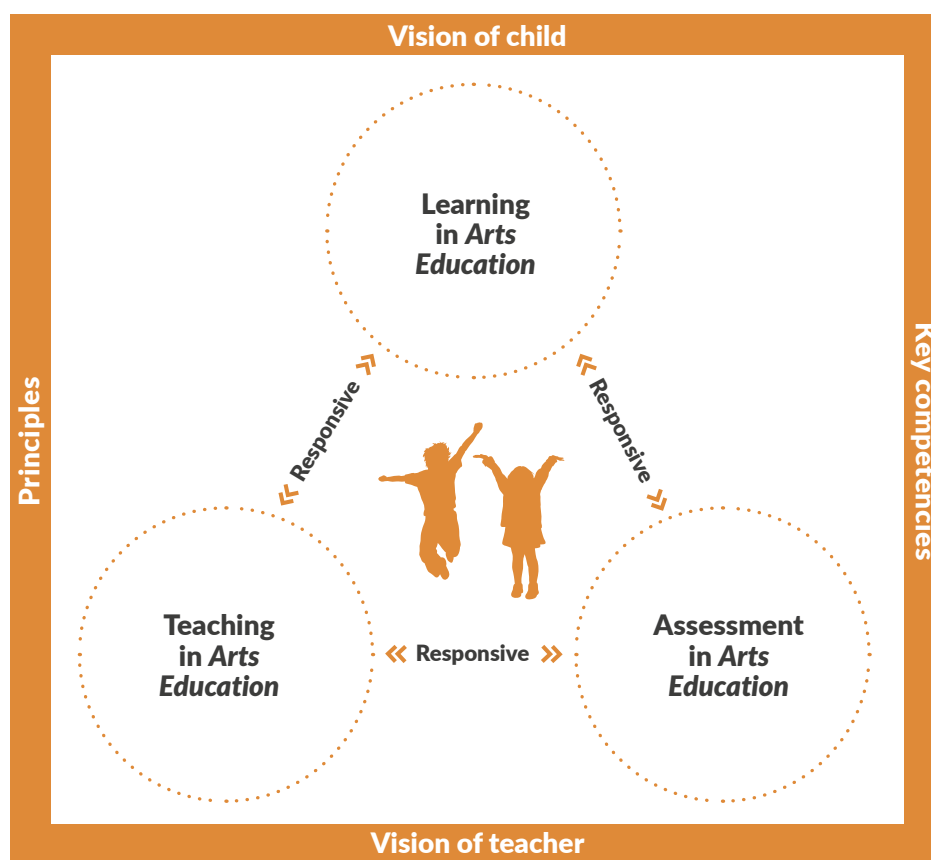




## 6. The Arts Education Curriculum in Practice

The curriculum comes to life through learning, teaching and assessment, moving beyond the printed page to engage, inspire and empower children in their learning. *Arts Education* is underpinned by the vision, principles, key competencies and statements on learning, teaching and assessment in the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.

Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive and flourish in a supportive and engaging learning environment. The relationship between child and teacher is key to enabling this. The child is at the centre of the learning process and so an understanding of their prior learning, interests, experiences and knowledge is crucial for creating inclusive and appropriately challenging learning experiences. Learning in *Arts Education* is improved by clearly identifying the focus of new learning, recognising ways for children to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and designing a variety of learning experiences drawing on a range of pedagogical approaches.



**Figure 4:** The Arts Education curriculum in practice

The remainder of this chapter outlines the main features of children's learning in *Arts Education*, the pedagogical approaches that support and enhance it, and guidance in assessing children's learning and progression.

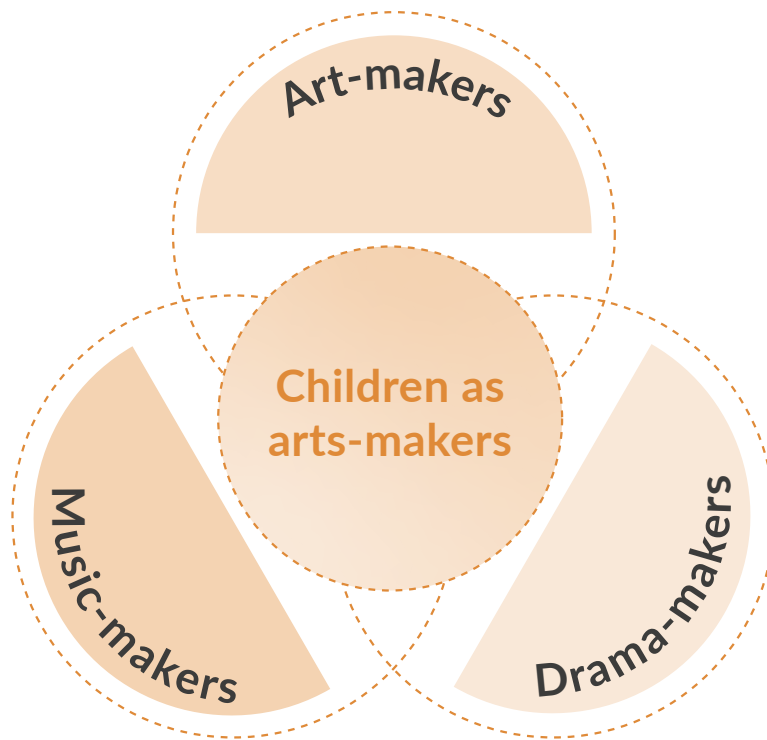


## 6a. Learning in Arts Education

### Being an arts-maker

*Arts Education* encourages children to work as arts-makers who engage meaningfully with individual and combinations of artforms. Deep engagement in appropriately challenging arts-making within a community of learners is scaffolded and supported. Children's agency is fostered as they develop confidence and competence in their knowledge,

understanding and application of skills and concepts. They experience a wide variety of arts works by observing, listening, moving, responding, discussing, appraising, critiquing and reflecting. This enriches and enhances their ability to engage as active arts-makers who understand and appreciate the relevance, impact, beauty and value of the arts.



**Figure 5:** Children as arts-makers

### Being an art-maker

Children are active art-makers when exploring art and the world around them. They draw on experiences and stimuli to ignite the imagination and engage in meaning-making through art. Children generate ideas, make artistic decisions and express themselves with confidence and creativity using a variety of materials, skills and techniques. They create and share unique, personal and collective 2D, 3D, mixed media and digital art in a range of styles and genres.

### Being a drama-maker

Children are active drama-makers when exploring and creating a variety of dramatic ideas, situations, themes and stories. Children's drama-making is enhanced by engaging with various dramatic forms that allow them to enter into fictional scenarios, explore significant themes, express themselves and symbolise and structure their ideas. They give drama form by using the body, space and objects to improvise scenarios, create action, role-play, enact, reflect on and perform drama.

### Being a music-maker

Children are active music-makers when exploring and engaging with a variety of songs and musical pieces in sensory and embodied ways. Children play games, use solfa, hand signs, rhythm syllables, notation, movement, body percussion and digital tools as they develop skills in Music. They express themselves, explore themes and ideas, make creative choices and use a range techniques when singing, playing instruments, interpreting, composing, recording and sharing music with others.



## Strands

In providing for playful and engaging learning experiences, it is essential to offer opportunities for children to engage with the strands of the *Arts Education* specification.

Strand	Examples within the <i>Arts Education</i> specification
<b>Exploring and creating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using their imagination</li><li>• Generating ideas and developing creative solutions</li><li>• Exploring, discovering, innovating</li><li>• Improvising, composing, devising, designing, making, adapting</li><li>• Developing and applying skills in <u>arts-making</u></li><li>• Co-creating, collaborating, working as a team</li></ul>
<b>Performing and presenting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking creative risks</li><li>• Developing confidence and seeing themselves as artists</li><li>• Expressing and communicating with confidence and efficacy</li><li>• Considering purpose, intention and audience</li><li>• Choosing <u>multimodal</u> approaches and/or <u>digital tools</u> to record and share</li><li>• Interpreting, arranging, adapting and refining performances and presentations</li><li>• Collaborating with other artists</li></ul>
<b>Responding and connecting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring <u>arts works</u> that are special and important to themselves and others</li><li>• Looking at, listening to and experiencing unique, renowned and high-quality <u>arts works</u></li><li>• Interpreting, appreciating and critiquing creative works</li><li>• Making connections between <u>arts works</u> and their lives</li><li>• Recognising diversity in the arts of local, Irish, and wider cultures and communities</li><li>• Identifying and appreciating the value and power of the arts</li><li>• Recognising connections within <i>Arts Education</i> and across other curriculum areas</li></ul>



## Supporting children's learning in *Arts Education*

Each child is an individual with a unique set of strengths that need to be nurtured. Learning Outcomes provide the opportunity for all children to learn through multiple pathways supporting individualised and inclusive learning experiences. This is particularly important for children who have special educational needs.<sup>1</sup>

Additional Support Pathways outline different ways that children might engage with or demonstrate progression towards Learning Outcomes in *Arts Education*. Using the pathways, teachers can consider the learning experience in greater detail and identify appropriate levels of challenge for children. In the course of their learning, children can be experiencing, attending, responding, initiating, acquiring, becoming fluent and generalising.

Although the pathways are listed sequentially, it is important to note that children may be engaging in each pathway at different times or simultaneously, depending on their diverse learning needs.

The following table describes seven pathways that may be useful for teachers to consider in preparing and providing for equitable opportunities for children to engage with and demonstrate progression in their learning in *Arts Education*. For each pathway, an example is offered, however, examples are illustrative and represent just one of many possible ways children might engage with and demonstrate their learning.

<sup>1</sup> The language used to describe educational needs and disabilities is evolving. For the purpose of clarity and to align with current policy and legislation, the term 'special educational needs' is used here.

**Table 8:** Examples of the Additional Support Pathways in Arts Education

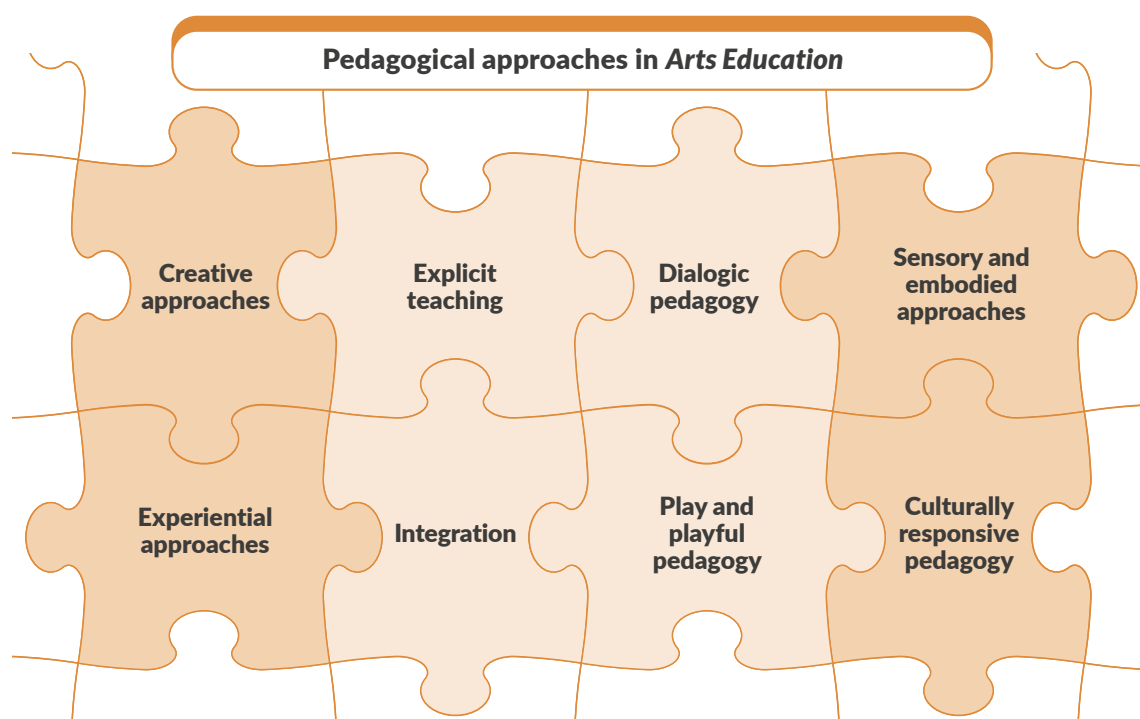
Additional support pathway	Example in Arts Education
<b>Experiencing</b> The child is present during a learning activity. They are exposed to and/or aware of the learning environment. They are beginning to acclimatise to aspects of the learning environment such as objects, people, sounds and other sensory experiences.	During a music session, the child is exposed to the sounds of different <u>instruments</u> being played. They begin to acclimatise to the sensory environment, including the pulse of the music, the timbre, pitch and vibrations of the <u>instruments</u> , or the movement of others engaging with the <u>instruments</u> .
<b>Attending</b> The child becomes attentive to and/or engaged with the learning activities presented by changing gesture, posture, vocalisation, eye gaze, movement, etc. They are acclimatised to the learning environment.	During a drama activity, the child becomes attentive to the unfolding story told by the teacher. They follow the teacher's actions with their eyes, adjust their posture to face the action, or vocalise in response to the changing tone or gestures of the characters, showing engagement with the activity.
<b>Responding</b> The child demonstrates capacity to actively or purposefully take an interest in the learning environment. They begin to indicate likes, dislikes or preferences. They actively respond to a learning activity with or without support.	While painting, the child actively chooses between colours, pointing out their preferred one. They use a brush, their fingers or another body part to make marks on the paper. They might smile, vocalise or show excitement when using their preferred colour, indicating interest and engagement in the learning.
<b>Initiating</b> The child shows curiosity about the learning environment. They actively and independently seek opportunities to engage with and/or influence that environment.	When taking part in a dance activity, the child independently moves their arms, legs, another body part or object in response to music, even before being prompted by the teacher. They might experiment with spinning, swaying or clapping, showing curiosity and a desire to engage actively through movement with the pulse and rhythm of the music in the environment.
<b>Acquiring</b> The child demonstrates that knowledge, a skill or a concept is being learned. They explore and participate in the learning.	In music learning, the child explores how to play a simple rhythm on a drum by watching the teacher and then tapping the drum themselves. They actively participate in the activity, experimenting with different speeds and patterns, showing they are beginning to learn the concepts of tempo, duration and rhythm.
<b>Becoming fluent</b> The child moves towards fluency and accuracy in familiar learning contexts. They independently and consistently demonstrate recall mastery of the knowledge, skill or concept learned.	The child independently and consistently uses verbal or physical or imaginative behaviour associated with a character they are exploring. For example, they might extend an imaginary rope across a river made from scarves and encourage others to cross or knock on an imagined door to make an entrance, behaving with progressive fluency as their fictional character.
<b>Generalising</b> The child transfers and applies learned knowledge, skills or concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts.	The child applies their knowledge of creating texture, learned during a clay-modelling activity, to a new art project involving papier-mâché. They independently recall and use techniques like pressing or scratching to add texture to their work in this new context.

## 6b. Teaching in Arts Education

‘How’ children learn is as important as ‘what’ they learn in *Arts Education*. Aligned with the principles of the *Primary Curriculum Framework* and reflecting the seven key competencies, this section outlines pedagogical approaches that are essential in the provision of playful and engaging learning experiences for all children. Taken together, they emphasise the importance of adapting teaching to the unique learning contexts in classrooms and schools. High-quality teaching values the diverse backgrounds, abilities, interests, strengths and needs children bring to the classroom. It aims to foster an inclusive, culturally responsive and

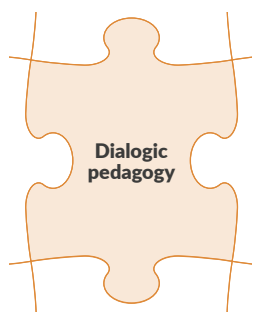
engaging environment where every child feels safe, seen and valued. Positive relationships between children and teachers are essential, where children’s voices are listened to and acted upon, fostering a sense of ownership in their learning. By maintaining high expectations for all children and providing appropriately challenging learning experiences, teachers can inspire confidence and enable each child to reach their potential.

The following pedagogical approaches are essential to the provision of meaningful learning experiences in *Arts Education*.



**Figure 6:** Teaching in Arts Education





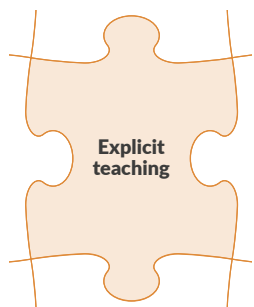
### Dialogic pedagogy

Children learn through dialogue and interaction. Dialogic pedagogy is a collaborative approach where children and teachers address learning together, expressing and developing ideas and thinking. It involves all forms of communication between children and/or between child and teacher, fostering an inclusive environment where every child's voice is heard and valued. This reciprocal dialogue encourages exploration of complex ideas, critical thinking and informed decision-making, fostering a sense of agency.

When using dialogic pedagogy, the focus of learning must be clear to guide the dialogue. Children's thoughts build on each other, leading to new understandings. In the classroom, children feel empowered to contribute and have a say in their learning. A balance between teacher-guided and child-led dialogue enables deep engagement, facilitated by effective questioning, active listening and purposeful responses.

In *Arts Education*, teachers can use dialogic pedagogy by:

- establishing a safe environment where children feel confident to discuss artistic choices, to build on their own and one another's contributions, to respect each other's ideas and give purposeful and considered responses
- supporting children in talking about their creative process and critiquing high quality pieces of work
- encouraging children to engage in personal and collective meaning-making and engage with ideas connected to socio-cultural contexts as a way of investigating the world and informing their arts-making
- providing children with active opportunities to co-create, engage in conversation, ask questions and to perform and present their work.



### Explicit teaching

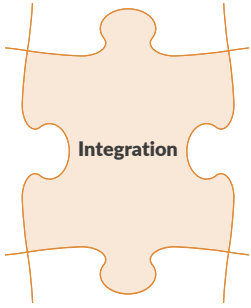
Explicit teaching enables the teacher to clearly share new knowledge, skills, concepts and language while modelling positive dispositions in a structured way. It should be considerate of children's developmental stages, their prior learning, abilities and needs. Through explicit teaching, the teacher demonstrates tasks or concepts by carefully modelling and scaffolding their own thinking, making the learning process transparent. Clear explanations, examples and demonstrations help support children's understanding. High levels of teacher-child interaction foster engagement, with questioning encouraging children to elaborate on their learning while staying interested, connected and motivated.

Guided and independent practice are crucial. Initially, children practise with teacher support and feedback, then gradually transition to independent activities to consolidate learning. The teacher ensures meaningful interaction and engagement for all children.

Timely, developmental feedback addresses misunderstandings and reinforces prior learning, guiding children towards new learning. This approach builds confidence and competence, ensuring active participation in learning.

In *Arts Education*, teachers can use explicit teaching by:

- modelling an openness to engaging in trial and error, reflecting, creating and performing as an integral part of the creative process
- demonstrating the use of the language, skills, concepts and techniques and sourcing a broad range of examples from contemporary, traditional, and historical contexts associated with Art, Drama, Music and other artforms
- providing support and feedback to facilitate children's engagement as confident, reflective, skilled, active and agentic arts-makers
- scaffolding and sequencing learning activities to facilitate progression in children's learning.



## Integration

Integration reflects the interconnected nature of the world children experience daily. It provides opportunities to make connections within and across curriculum areas. Collaborating with children to identify ways to connect their learning to their lives fosters relevance and supports deeper understanding.

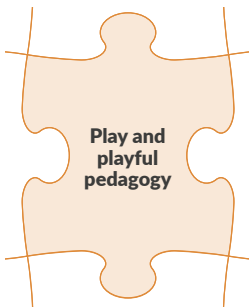
Integration dissolves traditional curriculum boundaries, creating cohesive learning experiences. For example, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) combines subject knowledge and language acquisition in meaningful, real-world contexts.

Teachers should purposefully anchor integration within the curriculum through the key competencies and Learning Outcomes, emphasising deeper understanding, innovation, critical thinking and engagement. Children's interests, cross-cutting themes, interdisciplinary skills, big ideas and real-world problems can provide effective starting points.

Integration explores topics from multiple perspectives, considering how key competencies contribute to holistic understanding and appreciation, and reflecting on how integration enhances and deepens these competencies.

In *Arts Education*, teachers can use integration by:

- encouraging flexible use of knowledge and skills to integrate within the arts through interdisciplinary and multimodal forms
- teaching common artistic concepts, processes and ways of thinking to explore two or more artforms in mutually reinforcing ways, e.g., performance that develops dramatic, musical, visual and movement/dance skills simultaneously
- drawing on themes and content from children's broader learning as inspiration while working towards Learning Outcomes in *Arts Education*
- providing opportunities for problem-solving, decision making, collaboration, design thinking/inquiry-based learning/ project-based work.



## Play and playful pedagogy

Play is valuable throughout childhood, and children have both a right and desire to play. Play and playful pedagogies suit all stages within primary and special schools. Play encompasses a spectrum from child-led play to teacher-led playful activities and shared play where both teachers and children engage and develop the play together. This flexible approach allows for new learning opportunities.

Play promotes active and meaningful learning, connecting new information with existing knowledge. It supports holistic development, including physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual growth, fostering skills like problem-solving, creativity and social interaction. Teachers should ensure that playful learning experiences are aligned with the Learning Outcomes of the curriculum, and with children's abilities, interests, strengths and needs.

A playful environment, indoors and outdoors, enhances learning by being interactive, engaging, inclusive and supportive, encouraging exploration, self-expression, choice and learning from mistakes.

In *Arts Education*, teachers can use play and playful pedagogy by:

- facilitating a broad range of playful artistic experiences across all strands of *Arts Education*
- encouraging playful methods or approaches to observing, listening, moving and responding creatively to works of art, drama and music, and sounds, materials and visual features from the local environment
- incorporating playful, purposeful games and warm-ups into their practices, such as mark-making, improvisation, dramatic games, singing games and rhythm games
- guiding and facilitating children's playful experimentation and creation in Art, Drama, Music and other artforms.

## Creative approaches

Teachers teach creatively by bringing their interests and ideas into the classroom. They respond to children's choices and make professional decisions based on children's interests, curiosity, prior learning and needs. They can also work creatively and collaboratively with colleagues and other professionals.

Being creative is one of the key competencies in the *Primary Curriculum Framework* and involves being inquisitive, using the imagination, developing skills, collaborating and persevering with challenges. This competency recognises children's innate creativity, their creative energy and their need for opportunities to be creative.

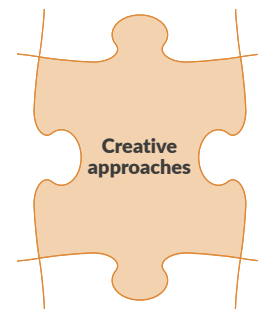
Promoting children's creative potential can impact positively on their motivation, self-esteem and overall development. Teachers use a broad range of methodologies and strategies to facilitate the flow of ideas across artforms.

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### In *Arts Education*, teachers can use creative approaches by:

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- being responsive to and nurturing children's interests
  - providing opportunities for meaningful artistic experiences that involve children exploring, clarifying and expressing ideas and feelings
  - encouraging children to use their imaginations and to explore originality in their work so they can create new possibilities, generate and communicate diverse ideas, problem-solve and create artistic works in a collaborative and supportive environment
  - valuing and enabling deep creative engagement for its expressive and artistic potential
  - providing a variety of stimuli and access to cultural experiences to inspire and nurture children's creativity
  - encouraging risk-taking, trial and error, flexibility, persistence, patience and reflection in an environment where ideas for arts-making are generated through playful curiosity, discovery, imagination and experimentation
  - encouraging children to engage with works of art, drama, music and other artforms and cultivating an appreciation for the unique and creative qualities of other artists' work.
- 





## Culturally responsive pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy recognises and values children's unique capabilities, interests, diverse backgrounds, languages and cultures. It seeks to foster an inclusive learning environment for all. Where it celebrates the rich tapestry of cultural diversity, including local, Irish, European and international traditions and heritages, *Arts Education* helps children to appreciate and value diverse identities. Children bring a wealth of understanding, knowledge and experience of the arts into the

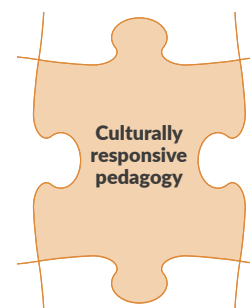
classroom. Teachers should strive to promote genuine intercultural, Irish and international understanding and appreciation in their classrooms. Connecting to broader cultures should be carried out with sensitivity. Children are encouraged to make connections between the arts and geographical, historical and contemporary social and cultural contexts. This integrates with and complements learning and teaching across the curriculum.

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### In *Arts Education*, teachers can use culturally responsive pedagogy by:

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- fostering relationships through collaborative ways of working, sharing and experiencing the arts
- incorporating diverse cultural perspectives in the teaching of *Arts Education*
- ensuring children's learning in the arts has meaningful links to local and broader communities and contexts
- providing opportunities for children to experience dance, music and arts works associated with local, Irish and international traditions, cultures and heritages
- supporting children to consider artist intentionality and viewer interpretation and to explore how these are informed by different contexts and cultures.



## Experiential approaches

*Arts Education* focuses on learning by doing. Teachers provide opportunities for active engagement in fulfilling experiences of arts-making and guided reflection. They support children in consolidating and applying their learning to new contexts in Art, Drama, Music and other artforms.

Teachers prioritise children's engagement in meaningful experiences of arts-making, and observing, listening, moving and responding to arts works and the natural environment. In crafting learning experiences, teachers consider children's ability, prior learning, interests and cultural backgrounds. They also consider how certain arts works (e.g., a painting, play, song or musical

piece) might illustrate concepts, skills, techniques and suggest arts-based language appropriate to children's age and stage.

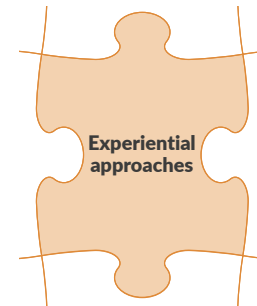
Teachers guide children in reflection and discussion to share personal and collective responses, and to develop their conceptual knowledge, skill, technique and understanding. They provide opportunities for children to consolidate their understanding of the concepts and inform their creative decision-making across all strands of the specification.

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### In *Arts Education*, teachers can use experiential approaches by:

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- emphasising process in *Arts Education* and valuing the unique contributions made by all children
- ensuring that new learning is grounded in and supports children's active engagement in arts-making
- creating engaging opportunities for children to experience, experiment, reflect upon art, drama, music and other artforms
- encouraging creative, skilled and nuanced use of concepts and techniques in line with children's age, stage and ability.



## Sensory and embodied approaches

Teaching in *Arts Education* places emphasis on children's active, sensory and embodied engagement and appreciates the interconnectedness of the body and the mind. Teachers provide opportunities for children to use their minds, bodies and senses to experience, notice, engage with, respond to and learn about the arts and the world around them in multimodal and multisensory ways.

When engaging children in sensory and embodied *Arts Education*, teachers apply a range of strategies for visual, aural and kinaesthetic learning. They provide ways for children to experience, notice, consider, talk about, experiment with and respond to various stimuli. Such stimuli include images, visual artworks, sound sources, textures, dramas, scripts, pieces of music, songs with movement, dances, symbols and notation, visual cues, instruments and hands-on tactile activities.

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### In *Arts Education*, teachers can use sensory and embodied approaches by:

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- encouraging engagement with and manipulation of a wide range of materials, images, sounds, movements, textures, objects, media, props and instruments through hands-on, tactile activities
  - promoting active engagement in attentive listening, observation, deep exploration and purposeful movement
  - organising opportunities for creative and structured movement, and honing fine-motor and gross-motor skills
  - encouraging reflection, response, creative decision-making and expression as part of holistic learning in and through the arts
  - facilitating multimodal and multisensory engagement that links children's body, mind, senses and emotions to the learning in *Arts Education*.
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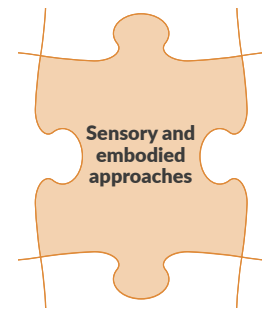






Figure 7: Engaging children in sensory and embodied approaches in Arts Education







## 6c. Assessment in Arts Education

Every child has the potential to learn and thrive, and meaningful assessment is integral in nurturing this potential. As one of the eight overarching principles of the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, assessment is understood as a collaborative process, involving children, teachers, parents and, at times, other stakeholders. It involves an ongoing process of gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting information about a child's progress and achievement. Importantly, it provides an opportunity to gain insights into children's learning progress, to promote collaborative and self-reflection and to actively engage children in the assessment of their own learning.

### Aligning assessment to the focus of learning

At the heart of education is the journey of each child's growth, and capturing rich portraits of their learning and progression over time is essential to this journey. Generally, assessment should directly relate to the focus of learning that children are pursuing at any given time through the Learning Outcomes of the *Arts Education* specification. Assessment often involves focusing on specific aspects of a Learning Outcome, rather than the entire outcome, to provide more focused insights into what children know, understand, or are able to do throughout a learning experience.

In *Arts Education*, children share their learning through positive, meaningful and child-centred experiences in an open, respectful and collaborative classroom environment. Teacher, peer- and self-assessment supports children's progress in developing artistic skills, processes and creativity. It can help teachers identify areas for further support or challenge, guiding teaching practices and future learning experiences. Assessment empowers children to reflect on their work, make and explain artistic choices and interpretations and deepen their appreciation of the arts.

### Opportunities for assessment in Arts Education

The curriculum supports a continuum of assessment ranging from 'intuitive' to 'planned interactions' to 'assessment events'. The three types of assessment are complementary and are necessary to gain a comprehensive picture of a child's progress and achievement. In *Arts Education*, learning and teaching is process-oriented in primary and special schools. This means that the emphasis is placed on intuitive assessment and planned interactions over and above assessment events.

**Table 9:** Types of assessment

Intuitive assessment	Planned interactions	Assessment events
...occurs naturally and on an ongoing basis during learning experiences. It is integrated into pedagogy, can be invisible, yet still intentional to the teacher, and is a very real part of the process.	...are a little more explicit and include practices such as having conversations with children, questioning, asking children to construct concept maps, and following up on intuitive assessments or assessment events.	...differ from other types of assessment in that (1) they are distinct events, (2) they almost always involve producing a record of the outcomes of the assessment and (3) children are aware they are being assessed.



## Gathering assessment information in Arts Education

Children will demonstrate their learning in many ways and through the use of a broad range of methods, teachers can gather rich information about children's learning in *Arts Education*. Having a clear understanding of the information that is needed to build a picture of children's progress will support teachers to identify the most suitable methods to use. Below is a non-exhaustive list of methods likely to be useful in assessing children's progress in *Arts Education* as they learn through exploring, creating, performing, presenting, responding and connecting.

### Observation

Observations involve teachers actively monitoring, listening to and engaging with children during learning experiences. This method provides valuable insights into children's knowledge and understanding, enjoyment, engagement and interactions, enabling teachers to respond to opportune learning situations and guide further learning effectively.

### Feedback

Feedback is an integral part of the learning process, involving timely, constructive and focused interactions between teachers and children. It encourages reflection, recognition of progress and identification of next steps in learning. Feedback helps children critically analyse their learning, celebrate achievements and address challenges, guiding their future learning experiences.

### Questioning

Questioning can involve well-crafted, open-ended and probing questions that support understanding, critical thinking and reflection. It encourages children to make connections, consider different perspectives and engage deeply with the learning process.

### Peer- and self-assessment

Peer- and self-assessment involve children reflecting on, sharing and discussing their learning with teacher support as appropriate. This method fosters self-reflection, collaboration and intrinsic motivation within an open, respectful and supportive learning environment. It can scaffold and support children's creative decision-making in *Arts Education*.

### Checklists, rubrics and success criteria

Checklists, rubrics and success criteria are clear and concise. They can be co-created and used by teachers and children. They remind children of the specific skills, concepts and processes that guide meaningful arts-making. This can offer a scaffold to enhance and develop children's work in *Arts Education*.

### Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of a child's work, chosen and curated by the child in collaboration with the teacher. It reflects their learning and development over time and supports reflection, goal setting and self-assessment. They can be digital or physical, including various artefacts like images, videos, recordings, projects and samples of learning, demonstrating growth and progression in different curriculum areas.

Documenting a child's learning is important. Purposeful use of documentation arises out of the process of gathering evidence. Children and teachers can use different ways to document assessment information, such as notes, photographs, videos and learning stories. Portfolios, as well as being an assessment method, offer a meaningful way to compile, organise and showcase assessment information that reflects the child's authentic learning journey. Such documentation contributes to the rich, holistic picture of each child as they learn, progress and develop.

### Using assessment information to inform next steps in children's learning

At the heart of effective learning is the meaningful use of assessment information. How assessment information is used will determine its overall effectiveness in supporting children's learning. Children's active involvement during assessment processes fosters a sense of ownership over their learning and can encourage self-reflection, critical thinking and growth. Effective feedback is crucial in the learning process, providing opportunities for children to reflect on their successes and progress.

A feature of high-quality teaching is the ability of teachers to respond to their unique classroom contexts by gathering, recording and analysing evidence to make informed judgements about children's progress and guide their learning and teaching decisions in *Arts Education*.

These decisions are informed and shaped by:

- knowledge of the children and their prior learning
- knowledge of the curriculum
- knowledge of pedagogy.

### Knowledge of the children and their prior learning

In *Arts Education*, children are encouraged to express their ideas, thoughts and preferences and reflect on their prior learning. This informs the starting point and scaffolds required for new learning. Knowledge of children's understanding can help teachers to foster an inclusive, supportive and effective learning environment. It can help ensure learning experiences meet children's needs and interests and are relevant, meaningful, enjoyable, agentic and appropriately challenging.

### Knowledge of the curriculum

Teachers' knowledge of the *Arts Education* specification enables them to prepare, facilitate and assess appropriate and authentic learning experiences for children. Familiarity with the Learning Outcomes, concepts, skills, values and dispositions in *Arts Education* supports assessment of children's engagement, learning and progress. This information can be used responsively to support ongoing decision-making about the next steps for learning and teaching.

### Knowledge of pedagogy

Teachers draw on their pedagogical knowledge and professional judgement to inform learning, teaching and assessment. By reflecting on learning opportunities (as described in Section 6a) and pedagogical approaches (as described in Section 6b), teachers can refine their practices and adjust the learning environment to enrich children's *Arts Education*. They ensure that learning is built upon a shared understanding of active, agentic and successful arts-making.







## 6d. Broad-ranging experiences in Arts Education

Experiences of the arts are broad-ranging and can involve expression, interpretation and/or response as a maker, performer, listener, observer and audience-member. While Art, Drama and Music are the three subjects in *Arts Education*, there is a tapestry of other artforms that add colour to the world around us. To ensure broad-ranging experiences in *Arts Education*, teachers maintain a balance of learning in Art, Drama and Music for the children in their class. They recognise opportunities to make meaningful connections between children's learning in these subjects and exploration of other artforms, including dance and media arts, as appropriate.

### Dance

Dance is an artform that children explore in both *Arts Education* and Physical Education in primary and special school. Through experiences of dance, children learn how to use their bodies to express ideas, feelings, creativity and musicality. They explore aesthetic and artistic expression, while they learn about body and space awareness and dynamics and relationships in movement. In Drama, children use movement as an embodied form of expression. Children use their bodies to experience and respond to music and actively demonstrate their understanding of music concepts. Exploring folk dance and dance from diverse cultural contexts can enrich children's experiences and connect to learning about Irish and broader cultures.

### Media arts

Media arts refers to arts works created and edited through digital technologies. Through media arts, children extend learning in Art, Drama and Music and use their literacy and technology skills. For example, children can use digital tools to make animations by capturing and editing images created in Art. They can also script, record and edit films incorporating props, scenes, music, movement and drama.

The examples above are non-exhaustive. When engaging children in learning experiences in other artforms, teachers are creative, flexible and responsive to the interests and abilities in their classroom.

## Collaboration and partnerships

Teachers are best placed to respond to the context and needs of the children in their class. However, in some instances, teachers can work in collaboration with a partner (be that a colleague in the school/neighbouring school, parent or visiting artist) or engage with an arts organisation, gallery, theatre, programme, etc., to facilitate learning in the arts. To extend children's engagement with a variety of rich and meaningful arts experiences, musicians, visual artists, drama-makers, dancers or other arts-makers may come to the school to share their work. Visits to exhibitions, plays and musical performances in person and/or online can also enrich children's learning.

If working in partnership, a mutually respectful and collaborative approach to the provision of learning experiences is essential. Preparation should consider the school context and connections with children's prior learning. It should also ensure that the needs of all children are met. Schools and teachers should ensure any external input aligns with approaches to learning, teaching and assessment as outlined in the *Arts Education* specification. Consideration should be given to the progression of children's learning, alignment between the external facilitator and the *Arts Education* specification in terms of content, pedagogical approaches and the children's needs, age and maturity.

Where external inputs, programmes and facilitators are featured, the classroom teacher retains a central and active role in the learning and teaching. This can include supporting children, team teaching and ensuring meaningful connections with prior and future learning. External facilitators should always work under the guidance and supervision of the classroom teacher who remains with the children at all times. In all instances, teachers should build in opportunities for reflection. This supports the teacher to gather feedback, reflect on and appraise the learning experience as part of a holistic *Arts Education* and to consider next steps for learning and teaching.







## 7. Outline of the Online Arts Education Toolkit

The online *Arts Education Toolkit* provides practical support for teachers in building rich learning experiences for children. The contents and components of the online toolkit evolve over time.

### Examples of children's learning

Developed with teachers, these examples provide insights into how teachers work with Learning Outcomes to make decisions about what they teach, the types of activities, experiences and pedagogies they use and the information they gather on how well children are doing in their learning.

### Support materials for teachers

The support materials include important resources and reference material to support teachers to enact the curriculum in a meaningful way. They have been developed in response to research and the evolving needs of children, teachers and school communities.

### Supports for progression

Children learn and develop at different rates and this can look different across the curriculum areas and subjects. In response to research and the diverse range of children attending our primary and special schools, a range of supports have been developed to ensure all children progress in their learning and development.





## 8. Glossary

A cappella	A cappella refers to singing without instrumental accompaniment.
ABA	ABA is a 3-part musical structure consisting of (1) an opening section, (2) a contrasting section, and (3) a repetition of the first section.
Aesthetic qualities	Aesthetic qualities involve striking, emotive, sensory and/or beautiful qualities associated with <u>arts works</u> .
Affect of arts works	Affect of <u>arts works</u> refers to sensory, cognitive and/or emotional responses associated with experiencing <u>arts works</u> .
Arrange	Arranging in music refers to the reworking/adaptation of an existing piece of music to create a version that whilst being new, remains connected to the original.
Articulation	Articulation is an expressive musical technique referring specifically to how a note is played or sung, for example staccato (short and separated from other notes), legato (smooth and connected to other notes), accent (with greater emphasis), etc.
Arts-making	Arts-making refers to the ongoing creative process and completed work in any artform or combination of artforms.
Arts works	Arts works include children's personal creations as well as a range of fine art, design, craft, drama, plays, songs, tunes, musical pieces, dances, <u>media arts</u> and other digital creative works from Ireland and the wider world.
Artworks	Artworks refers to works specifically in visual art, e.g., painting, clay, print, etc.
Body awareness	Body awareness is being conscious of different body parts that move, different shapes the body can make and different actions the body can make.
Body percussion	Body percussion involves using body movements, such as clapping, clicking, stomping, etc., to show and/or create rhythm.
Canon/Round	A canon/round is a piece of music that involves exact imitation of a <u>melody</u> any number of beats later in two or more parts. Canon in movement involves exact imitation of movement any number of beats later in two or more parts.
Chanting	Chanting involves repeated spoken <u>rhythms</u> and/or melodic phrases.
Complementary colours	Complementary colours are colours that sit across from each other on the colour wheel.
Contour	Contour means outline.
Design principles	Design principles include balance, tension, symmetry, harmony, light, scale and contrast.
Digital art	Digital art refers to art created with the use of <u>digital tools</u> .
Digital tools	Digital tools refer to software and online resources that can be used in the creation, recording and sharing of arts works.
Dramatic forms	Dramatic forms refer to different ways of making drama, e.g., <u>improvisation</u> , mime, freezeframes, devised scenes, plays, reader's theatre, puppetry, radio plays and docudrama.
Drone	A drone is a long held note or notes that accompany a song or piece of music.
Dynamics in movement	Dynamics in movement involves awareness and exploration of how the body moves, for example, fast or slow, sudden or sustained, strong or light.

Embodied	Embodied refers to the use of the body to explore, express, or interpret ideas, emphasising physical engagement as part of the creative and learning process.
Emergent forms of art	Emergent forms of art refers to art that explores new or unconventional mediums, techniques or concepts that have not yet been recognised or defined, possibly arising out from technological advancements or experimental creative processes, leading to innovative or unexpected artistic experiences.
Expressive techniques	Expressive techniques refer to the way music is played to communicate an idea, theme or emotion and/or create interest and variety, for example by altering dynamics, pulse or tempo, or using phrasing, vibrato and articulation.
External facilitators	External facilitators are professionals who bring their skillsets to the school to enrich children's learning in <i>Arts Education</i> .
Genre	Genre refers to the style, form or category of arts.
Geometric shapes	Geometric shapes can be 2D or 3D and recognised and categorised based on a specific outline/ boundary and other attributes including curves, lines, and angles, e.g., square, rectangle, circle, triangle, cylinder, trapezoid.
Graphic scores	Graphic scores involve representation of music through visual symbols outside of standard notation.
Hand signs	Hand signs refer to gestures used to indicate pitch in <u>solfa</u> . Hand signs can also be employed to engage in song singing using Irish Sign Language.
Harmonious colours	Harmonious colours sit near each other on the colour wheel. They can work well together and create a mix of colours that is aesthetically pleasing.
Improvise	Improvise means to create spontaneously and/or without preparation.
Inner hearing	Inner hearing is the process of thinking sound rather than externally making sound, also known as audiation.
Instrumental techniques	Instrumental techniques refer to how a voice or other <u>instruments</u> can be used or played in a range of unique ways for example, strings (plucking or strumming), voice (whispering, rapping, singing) and <u>digital tools</u> (manipulating sounds).
Instruments/ sound sources	Instruments/sound sources refer to objects or devices that are used to make musical sounds. These can include the voice or body, percussion instruments, tuned instruments, untuned instruments, digital instruments, homemade instruments and other objects from the environment. The properties of an instrument/sound source (e.g., shape, size, materials) influence its timbre.
Materials	Materials are what art is made from, e.g., paper, pencils, markers, brushes, paints, clay, wire, wool, ink, fabric, etc.
Media arts	Media arts refers to arts works created and edited through digital technologies, such as video, film, radio, animation and other creative media.
Medium	A medium refers to the material used to create art.
Melody/Melodies	A melody is a tune made by combining <u>rhythms</u> and pitches.
Metre	Metre refers to how the pulse in music is grouped into a given number of recurring strong and weak beats. It gives music a sense of flow and predictability and can be indicated by a time signature, e.g., 2/4, 4/4, 6/8.

Mixed media	Mixed media refers to artwork created using more than one medium.
Multimodal	Multimodal refers to the use of various ways to enable and demonstrate learning, e.g., speaking, exhibiting, using technology.
Musicality	Musicality refers to sensitivity to and knowledge of music.
Notation	Notation is the visual representation of music through use of signs and symbols. This can encompass a range of images and graphic notation (e.g., on graphic scores), stick notation, <u>solfa</u> and hand signs as well as letter names for music notes and staff notation. Letters, words and abbreviations for musical terms may also be included to provide additional information about the concepts and style of performance.
Organic shapes	Organic shapes are shapes with an irregular, free-flowing and natural appearance. Unlike geometric shapes, organic shapes are often asymmetrical and unpredictable.
Ostinatos	Ostinatos are repeated pattern of melody or rhythm to accompany a song or piece of music.
Other artforms	Other artforms is a term used in the specification to refer to the wide variety of artforms outside of the curriculum subjects Art, Drama and Music.
Partner songs	Partner songs are songs that fit together and can be performed together creating harmony.
Phrasing	Phrasing is the shaping of a group of notes/short musical phrase as part of a larger structure for expression, similar to how a sentence can be read as part of a story.
Primary colours	The primary colours are red, yellow, blue.
Relationships in movement	Relationships in movement refers to the way a child interacts with others in movement. For example, working in partners/groups, leading/following, mirroring, in <u>unison</u> /contrasting or <u>canon</u> . It also incorporates movement in relation to objects, such as over, under, through and around.
Rhythms	Rhythms are patterns and combinations of sounds and silences of different durations. Rhythmic accuracy requires grasp of underlying pulse and <u>metre</u> .
Rhythm syllables	Rhythm syllables refer to words or syllables used to demonstrate different durations, for example, a crotchet is represented as ta and a quaver as ti.
Scoring clay	Scoring clay refers to scratch hatch marks created as part of the process to join clay pieces together.
Secondary blends	Secondary blends are colour blends created by mixing two primary colours.
Sensory and embodied ways/ movement to music	Sensory and embodied ways of interacting with/movement to music involves multi-sensory engagement and response through structured and unstructured movements, <u>body percussion</u> and gesture, passing of objects and/or manipulation of <u>materials</u> , textures, objects, media, props and <u>instruments</u> in active, hands-on, tactile activities.
Sociodramatic play	Sociodramatic play is where children interact with others while they act out imaginary situations, become different characters and pretend they are in different locations and times.
Solfa	Solfa refers to moveable names given to pitches, for example, d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d.
Space awareness	Space awareness involves exploring how the body can move in space, for example, in different directions, in curved or straight lines and across low, medium and high levels.
Staff notation	Staff notation refers to music notes and other symbols written on a five-line stave.
Stick notation	Stick notation is shorthand notation used for showing rhythm quickly and easily, for example, a crotchet is represented as   and two quavers as ▯

Storyboard	A storyboard is a series of images used to plan or sequence the action of a drama or work in <u>media arts</u> .
Teacher-in-role	Teacher-in-role refers to when the teacher takes a role in drama to support, guide or scaffold drama-making.
Tertiary blends	Tertiary blends are colour blends created by mixing a primary colour and a secondary blend.
Unison	Unison means performing the same thing at the same time.
2D art	2D art includes but is not limited to drawings, paintings, prints/rubbings, collages.
3D art	3D art includes but is not limited to constructions, clay pieces, pottery, sculptures.



## 9. References

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## Appendix A. Concepts, skills, values and dispositions in *Arts Education*

### Concepts

The concepts in Art, Drama and Music represent key knowledge that is necessary for children to acquire to hone and develop their skill and understanding in *Arts Education*. As this is a process-based curriculum, concepts provide children with the ability to apply their skills effectively.

As children learn about the concepts in Art, Drama and Music through the Learning Outcomes, they explore how this knowledge can be used to enhance arts-making by themselves and others.

In practice, children engage in learning experiences that involve:



**Table A1:** Art concepts in practice

Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, analysing lines with a range of different characteristics</li><li>• Creating various lines with shading and <u>contouring</u> to create movement, emphasis and contrast</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of line</li></ul>
Shape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, analysing individual and combinations of shapes (<u>geometric</u> and <u>organic</u>), recognising their connection to a variety of lines and each other</li><li>• Creating various shapes with shading and <u>contouring</u> as appropriate</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of <u>geometric</u> and <u>organic</u> shapes</li></ul>
Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, handling, analysing a variety of <u>3D art</u>, recognising use of line, shape, colour and tone to suggest form and depth on 2D surfaces and <u>artworks</u></li><li>• Constructing a variety of 3D forms with attention to balance, symmetry and shadow and using line, shape, colour and tone to suggest form in 2D artwork</li><li>• Describing, appraising their work constructing and suggesting form</li></ul>
Colour and tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, analysing colour and tone, and recognising <u>primary</u>, <u>secondary</u>, <u>tertiary</u>, warm, cool, <u>complementary</u> and <u>harmonious colours</u> from the colour wheel</li><li>• Choosing various warm, cool, <u>primary</u>, <u>secondary</u>, <u>tertiary</u>, <u>complementary</u> and <u>harmonious colours</u>, mixing, blending and shading as appropriate</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of colour and tone</li></ul>
Texture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, handling, analysing textures in <u>3D art</u> and sculptures, and use of line, pattern, colour and tone to give the illusion of texture in <u>2D art</u></li><li>• Applying, creating textural effects in chosen media through manipulating surfaces, <u>scoring clay</u>, folding paper and using line, pattern and tone, etc.</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of textural effects</li></ul>
Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring, observing, analysing open and closed space, techniques associated with perspective, positioning of objects, foreground, middle ground and background, and recognising how applying proportion and scale in <u>2D</u> and <u>3D art</u> can create the illusion of depth</li><li>• Using open, closed, positive and negative space, perspective, overlapping, proportion, scale, foreground, middle ground and background in their artwork</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of space</li></ul>
Pattern and rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observing, analysing uses of pattern and variation</li><li>• Using repetition and variation of line, shape, colour to suggest texture and to create tension, contrast and harmony</li><li>• Describing, appraising their use of pattern and rhythm</li></ul>

**Table A2:** Drama concepts in practice

Action and plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Entering into a fictional scenario and committing to the action of the drama</li><li>• Exploring, drawing on or devising material that develops stories with a variety of themes and content, responding to scenes from stories (familiar stories, stories taken in a new direction or stories that unfold during a lesson), considering cause and effect</li><li>• Considering the structure of the plot and the most significant moments within the action of the drama and how these could be clearly conveyed</li></ul>
Role and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Committing to and maintaining focus in role, listening and responding to others in role</li><li>• Considering the background, motivation, and relationships of fictional and non-fictional characters</li><li>• Communicating the attitude, voice or emotional state of a character, using body language (e.g., posture, gestures, facial expression, stance) and varying vocal levels and tone, differentiating between stereotypes and authentic characters</li></ul>
Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responding imaginatively and devising movement to stimuli, e.g., words, stories, poems, pictures, music</li><li>• Exploring the movements of different parts of the body and the ways in which the body can move in space with or without others using body actions such as travelling, levels, gesture and stillness</li><li>• Appreciating or devising movement as a means of expression and communication in relation to others and its artistic and <u>aesthetic qualities</u></li></ul>
Place and space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustaining focus and exploring how characters inhabit the space, considering how others could observe the drama, modifying this to suit different audiences</li><li>• Establishing a clear setting using simple objects, props and furniture to represent place and space</li><li>• Considering the location and context of the drama, where it is happening and what impact the environment has on the characters and story</li></ul>
Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring and devising sounds that can be applied to set the scene or enrich drama</li><li>• Appreciating how the use of sound effects, voice music, <u>digital tools</u> and/or silence can add to atmosphere</li><li>• Using sounds for effect to support and enhance the making and sharing of drama</li></ul>
Tension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating or responding to tension that arises between characters when each values or desires something different or has varying points of view</li><li>• Engaging with and devising scenarios that explore a dilemma, conflict, issue, problem or mystery that drive the drama forward and consider how these dilemmas can be brought towards a resolution</li><li>• Considering appropriate and engaging ways to explore and communicate tension in <u>dramatic forms</u></li></ul>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring how dramatic stories and characters can have a past, present and future, being aware of the time period (e.g., past, present, future), duration (e.g., one hour/year), the time of day (e.g., 3am) and that we can jump in time from one part of the story to another</li><li>• Considering the significance of the time period (e.g., medieval times or 100 years from now), the time of day (e.g., the middle of the night), the duration (e.g., five years)</li><li>• Considering the length of the drama and how clear demonstration of time can be important when sharing work</li></ul>

**Table A3:** Music concepts in practice

<b>Pulse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, following music, recognising pulse and characteristic strong/weak beats in <u>genres</u> and dances (e.g., 4/4 <u>metre</u> – Rock; 6/8 <u>metre</u> – Jig; 3/4 <u>metre</u> – Waltz)</li> <li>Keeping in time when singing, playing, moving and <u>inner hearing</u></li> <li>Improvising, composing, notating music with (and without) a steady beat</li> </ul>
<b>Tempo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, recognising tempo along a continuum (very slow/ fast) and <u>expressive techniques</u> involving sudden and gradual tempo change</li> <li>Selecting and using a range of tempos and tempo changes</li> <li>Selecting, improvising, composing, notating tempo and tempo changes</li> </ul>
<b>Duration and rhythm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, imitating, recognising durations of sounds and silences (long(er), short(er) and the same duration), and <u>rhythms</u> combining sounds and silences of different durations</li> <li>Performing <u>rhythms</u> with accuracy by ear, from memory and from <u>notation</u></li> <li>Selecting, improvising, composing, notating <u>rhythms</u> and <u>ostinatos</u></li> </ul>
<b>Pitch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, imitating, recognising, following sounds (low(er), high(er), the same pitch), scales and <u>melodies</u> combining pitches and durations</li> <li>Matching pitch, singing and playing in tune by ear, from memory, from <u>solfa</u>, from <u>hand signs</u> and from <u>notation</u></li> <li>Exploring, improvising, composing, notating pitches and <u>melodies</u></li> </ul>
<b>Dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, recognising dynamics along a continuum (very soft/ loud), <u>articulation</u> and <u>expressive techniques</u> involving sudden and gradual dynamics change</li> <li>Selecting, using a range of dynamics and dynamics changes</li> <li>Selecting, improvising, composing, notating dynamics and dynamics changes</li> </ul>
<b>Timbre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, recognising characteristic natural, digital and instrumental sounds, families of <u>instruments</u> and <u>instrumental techniques</u></li> <li>Using a variety of <u>instruments</u> (voice, body, percussion instruments, tuned and untuned instruments, homemade instruments, digital instruments), <u>articulation</u> and <u>instrumental techniques</u> when performing</li> <li>Exploring, improvising, composing, notating diverse timbres, <u>instruments</u> and <u>instrumental techniques</u></li> </ul>
<b>Texture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, recognising layers of sound in music</li> <li>Participating in a <u>cappella</u> music-making, singing and playing <u>partner songs</u>, <u>canons/rounds</u>, and music and songs with games, movement, <u>body percussion</u>, <u>drones</u>, <u>ostinatos</u>, accompaniment and with more than one part</li> <li>Composing, notating music with a range of different textures and layers</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing, discovering, showing with movement, recognising contrasting and repeated sections and music structures, e.g., call and response, <u>ABA</u>, verse-chorus</li> <li>Performing songs and music with contrast, repetition and varying structures</li> <li>Improvising, composing, notating music with contrast, repetition and specific structure</li> </ul>



# Skills

As this is a process-based curriculum, skills represent relevant and important processes that children acquire and develop in *Arts Education*. Skills can be cognitive (e.g., critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving), practical and physical (e.g., using the body, materials and tools)

or social (e.g., communication, collaboration) in nature. In Learning Outcomes, skills refer to what children are expected to be able to do or demonstrate at the end of each stage. These examples are non-exhaustive.



Figure A1: Skills in the Arts Education specification

## Values

Values are the beliefs that children hold about what is important, desirable and worthwhile, both for themselves and for society. In Learning Outcomes, values refer to the principles that guide and motivate children's behaviours, thoughts, decisions and

ethical judgements. The values in *Arts Education* are Creativity, Artistic and aesthetic appreciation, Critical thinking, Inclusivity, Voice and choice, shown below in Figure A2.



**Figure A2:** Values in the *Arts Education* specification

# Dispositions

Dispositions are habits, behaviours and mindsets that influence children’s learning and personal growth, and affect their overall engagement and interest in *Arts Education*. In Learning Outcomes, dispositions refer to how children engage with their learning.

The dispositions in *Arts Education* are Playfulness, Expressiveness, Collaboration, Reflectiveness, Curiosity, Perseverance and Openness.



**Figure A3:** Dispositions in the *Arts Education* specification





