



MUSIC Generation
MAKING MUSIC EDUCATION HAPPEN

CEATHARLACH / CARLOW

Ireland's National Music Education Programme
A Music Network initiative, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds,
The Department of Education and Skills
and Local Music Education Partnerships



STRATEGY
2017 - 2021

STRATEGY
2017





FOREWORD

Music Generation Carlow (MGC) is part of Music Generation (MG), Ireland's National Performance Music Education (PME) programme. Locally, the programme is co-funded by Kilkenny & Carlow Education and Training Board and Carlow County Council. Nationally, initiated by Music Network, it is co-funded by U2, the Ireland Funds and the Department of Education and Skills.

MGC has gone from strength to strength since its inception in 2013 when it initially delivered PME opportunities to 1200 children and young people on a weekly basis. The programme currently facilitates delivery to 4500 children and young people (CYP) per week across a broad range of musical genres including traditional, rock, pop, early childhood music, brass, wind, and vocal.

The opportunities for creativity and for joy in addition to the feeling of well-being experienced by the CYP involved is palpable in the numerous school environments and community initiatives where a team of 27 musicians deliver an ambitious programme. The establishment of an instrument bank in 2014 serves to provide both greater access and increased participation.

We in Carlow Music Education Partnership (CMEP) are very proud of our programme which has a focus on excellence of delivery and an ambition for every child to have access, in a child-centred music-making environment.

On behalf of CMEP and every child and young person who has experienced joy from their participation in the programme I would like to acknowledge the commitment and the unwavering dedication of our Programme Director, Paula Phelan. Paula's passion for ensuring a quality experience for every participant permeates every aspect of this exceptional programme.

As we set out our strategic priorities for the future and the challenges that it will bring we look back to Plato for inspiration:

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything".

Anne Ahern

Anne Ahern

Chair - Carlow Music Education Partnership





INTRODUCTION

This document lays out our strategic priorities for the years 2017-2021 so that our stakeholders can join us in the next phase of Music Generation Carlow's growth. MGC has a deep belief in every child's right to be a creative citizen and our role is to create the landscape and opportunity for children and young people in Carlow to be their best possible self, with and through music.

Much has changed in County Carlow since 2013. We have welcomed new citizens and our young population has grown. Our programme too has grown and with that comes the challenge of meeting the clear demand from the people of County Carlow for affordable, high quality, performance music education opportunities for their children. Research about the significance of early childhood development has brought about a changed emphasis in thinking about how we work with children and the value that the arts play in the lives of healthy and happy active citizens.

In response to this changing landscape and knowledge, it is our responsibility to develop and deliver a programme that places children and young people at the centre. I have faith that their experiences in music can transform their understanding of the world and the choices they make.

We have identified six strategic priorities for Music Generation Carlow 2017-21. These priorities have been developed through discussions, surveys, focus groups and interviews with children, parents, musicians, partners, school principals and our Music Education Partnership (governance body). We will review our progress against these priorities each year, and adjust our plans accordingly.

In essence, as we move through the next five years we will work hard to make MGC a vibrant, excellent programme. We will amplify the child's voice in this process and work tirelessly to build the infrastructure and capabilities that will enable us to deliver on these goals.

We have so much to be proud of in MGC's achievements to date. I am looking forward to leading the programme into the future so that children and young people in County Carlow have the opportunity to feel the joy of creating music in their daily lives.

Paula Phelan

Paula Phelan

Programme Director - Music Generation Carlow



OUR VISION

That every child in County Carlow can have the opportunity to engage with and progress through an excellent performance music education programme.

OUR MISSION

To create the space for children in County Carlow to make great music, bringing a feeling of joy that will stay with them for life.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

- **EXCELLENCE**
- **CREATIVITY**
- **ACCESS**
- **PARTNERSHIP**
- **ADVOCACY**
- **SUSTAINABILITY**



GOAL: Develop and sustain the optimum conditions in which children and young people can create their music, supported by a team of professional musicians.

We want children and young people to flourish in and through music, and to enable them to be the best that they can be. We know this requires continuing professional development (CPD) for musicians, ongoing review of processes, outcomes and experiences, and punctilious attention to operational detail.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Provide CPD for musicians on a range of key skills including: classroom management; planning; supporting progression; behaviour management; differentiation, including children with additional needs; and assertiveness
- Provide CPD for musicians on creativity in music-making and learning and on facilitating and acting on youth voice

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Musicians are more skilled in these areas resulting in more children being fully included in their MGC journey, which is evidenced through reflective feedback, surveys and team meetings
- More children are taking leadership in music-making; more children are listened to in their learning journeys which is evidenced through reflective feedback, surveys, team meetings and interviews with both children and musicians



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Develop clearer, more detailed conversations and agreements with our school partners
- Establish successful county ensembles as progression routes: 2017 Boombrassic; 2017 Youth Vocal Ensemble; 2018 County Orff Ensemble; 2019 String Ensemble; 2020 Original Music Festival for Young People

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Classroom teachers are more confident about partnership-working with MGC musicians within the classroom environment; principals are more knowledgeable about the benefits MGC activities can bring to the school environment – evidenced through informal feedback and partnership discussion and documentation
- Ensembles are full, creative and flourishing – evidenced through musician reflection, student feedback, observation and performance



GOAL: Enable children and young people to be creative citizens.

Child-centred music-making encourages self-confidence, stimulates imagination and helps develop choice-making skills. To facilitate this, we need to listen carefully to children and young people's viewpoints, and support our musicians to work with CYP in taking creative risks and trying fresh approaches.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Provide CPD for musicians on a range of key skills including creativity in small group teaching, creativity in classroom teaching and creativity in performance
- Provide CPD for musicians on facilitating and acting on youth voice in the creative process

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Teaching and learning environments are notably creative and expressive with music-making at the centre of each classroom environment – evidenced through regular monthly observation, musician reflection, informal feedback from stakeholders and annual interviews
- Musicians are actively creating space for the CYP voice in an age appropriate way – evidenced through planning processes, informal feedback from CYP, termly observation and musician reflection



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Present the CYP's creative processes as examples of their work regularly
- Listen to CYP's views and employ participative decision-making by CYP in our artistic development processes

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- The CYP's work is being presented in a number of ways e.g. open classes, recordings, video, concerts, peer sharing, workshops and formal concert opportunities
- There is evidence that the CYP's voice is forming the creative process in a spirit of mutual respect e.g. in planning processes, interviews with young people and repertoire choice



GOAL: Improve opportunities for children and young people with special educational needs.

All children and young people in Carlow have a right to meaningful music-making opportunities. During the period of this strategy, we have identified a specific need to ensure that our programme better serves CYP with special educational needs.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Develop and support a Lead Musician role to develop a programme for children with special educational needs
- Provide CPD for musicians on a range of key skills for working with children with special educational needs
- Identify a partnership opportunity with a school or organisation that has expertise in working with children with special educational needs

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- A Lead Musician is appointed and supported to gain further knowledge in the area by September 2017
- The Lead Musician has developed a CPD programme for all musicians on the team and musicians are availing of this opportunity by September 2018
- An appropriate partnership is identified and the partner organisation is engaging with us to provide PME for their students by September 2019



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Facilitate meaningful music-making for children with special education needs in Carlow
- Continue to subsidise the cost of tuition to enable access to PME for CYP from varying socio-economic backgrounds

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- A well-resourced programme for children with special educational needs has commenced in 2019
- There is evidence that our programmes are accessed by CYP from varying socio-economic backgrounds



GOAL: Develop, sustain and deepen relevant partnerships with the national Music Generation network and with local, national and international stakeholders that enable our mission and vision.

Our programme is based on effective partnership-working, which in turn is underpinned by solution-focused dialogue and mutual respect. We want to explore new ways of reflecting on and strengthening the shared learning across all our partnerships.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Identity national and international partnerships that have a synergy with our established programmes that will help strengthen our processes
- Strengthen our partnerships with local stakeholders through dialogue and information-sharing

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- We have formed national or international highly functioning partnerships for our Vocal, Early Childhood and Traditional Programmes by 2021
- We have formed an active principals group and are working with schools and organisations through shared planning initiatives and feedback strategies to strengthen our partnerships at local level by September 2018



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- In the knowledge that CYP rely on the adults in their lives to access PME through MGC we will work to cultivate strong partnerships with parents and guardians

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- We have improved our communication with parents through well-planned email, newsletter, phone, text, social media, reporting and feedback strategies for each programme by 2021





GOAL: Develop and implement a ‘*practice-as-research*’ model and system for case study capture, in order to establish a useful bank of evidence about the work of MGC to inform and advocate for the programme internally and externally.

We want to understand more about how to achieve the most meaningful impacts through our work. We want to share case studies about children and young people’s musical journeys with a broader audience, so that the power and impact of participation in music is more generally understood.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Form a strategic alliance with Carlow County Council through Carlow Arts Office to identify case study options for research, learning and informing the programme development
- Work to develop a research partnership with a Higher Level Institution that will focus on the building of a research practitioner approach to PME in Carlow

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- By 2019 we have identified a case study and developed a frame of reference for the research with Carlow County Council through Carlow Arts Office
- We have recruited a post-doctoral research fellow in partnership with a Higher Level Institution by 2019



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Work through CPD opportunities to develop a team of musicians that are research practitioners
- The MEP members will work to build advocacy for the programme by developing their own work plan to support this action, in particular in relation to sourcing matched income

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Each Lead Musician is engaging in their own research practitioner approach to the development of their programmes by 2021
- The MEP has developed an effective work plan for the period of this strategy by April 2018



GOAL: Diversify programme and income streams to ensure that MGC has a long-term future.

Over the period of this strategy it will be important to research and establish additional programme strands underpinned by new partnerships and funding streams. Through diversifying programme income streams, we can ensure economic resilience for the future.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- The MEP will work proactively to establish new income streams to support additional programming
- Actively strengthen our governance structures by seeking out examples of best practice
- Prudently manage and report on our finances, paying close attention to our funders' compliance requirements

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Our county ensembles are self-sustaining and supported by new income streams, beginning with Reelig by September 2018
- The MEP is exploring best practice from other MG areas and in active dialogue with other MEPs around shared learning opportunities by May 2019
- Our financial reporting is delivered with efficiency and transparency



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS WE WILL:

- Accurately report on our participation rates paying close attention to compliance requirements and units of measure
- Build the identity of the programme by ensuring we have a fixed physical space adequate for our work
- The MEP will work to ensure sustainability of the programme by ensuring the operational structures necessary for the delivery of an excellent service are provided

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS

- Our statistical reporting is delivered with efficiency, accuracy and transparency
- We have easy access to a building that can house team meetings, CPD, performances and tuition by September 2021
- An excellent service is being provided through a well-resourced operational team





BRASS

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VALUES

CHILD-CENTRED

We are committed to music-making that is as far as possible co-constructed in equal partnership between adults and young people, and driven by mutual learning.

AMBITIOUS

We have confidence in children and young people, musicians and partners to achieve the very best that they can, and we support them to aim high.

RISK-TAKING

We encourage musicians, children and young people to take creative risks, learn from experience and value that journey of discovery.

RESPECTFUL

We are committed to active listening and respect for difference in all our dialogues.

We are musically open-minded and value musical diversity.

HONESTY

We strive to be open and transparent in all our dealings, and invite the same in return from our colleagues, participants and partners.





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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliána
Chill Chainmigh agus Cheatharlócha
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



CARLOW
COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHARLE CHONTAE CHEATHARLÓCHA



DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS

