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The Vogler Partners Steering Group

Sligo County Council, Sligo Borough Council, Music Network, The Arts Council and Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick

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Front Cover Image: Children from Moylough and Ballintogher National Schools at a Vogler Quartet Workshop, with their teachers Brian Cahill, Seamus McCormack and Cellist Stephen Forck, April, 2003. Photographer Steve Rodgers.



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Section One - Executive Summary

1.1. The Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency

The Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency was distinctive from the outset in terms of its long-term developmental approach and its commitment to inform policy and practice at local and national levels in the areas of education, instrumental tuition and performance. It was ambitious not only in its aim but also in its structure, which incorporated a cross-sectoral partnership group made up of arts and education agencies working at regional and national level.

1.2. The Vogler primary curriculum support programme

The Vogler primary curriculum support programme was an important strand in the residency, which promoted musical capacity building in schools across the county, taking into account the diversity of needs and resources. The programme was adapted by a facilitator who designed and delivered training and resources to the teachers, enabling them to deliver music workshops in the periods between visits by the Vogler Quartet. Feedback from all stakeholders suggests that the facilitator's role was pivotal in achieving positive, long-term sustainable outcomes in the programme.

1.3. The impact

The programme impacted significantly on the children and teachers as well as on the musicians and the members of the specialist support team:

- As a result of their exposure to the Vogler primary curriculum programme, the children experienced a number of positive changes in their attitudes, knowledge, skills and understandings, not only in the area of classical/ chamber music, but in relation to music in general. These outcomes were sustained for the most part one year after the conclusion of the residency. Children who attended instrumental tuition in the Sligo Academy of Music benefited particularly from their interaction with the musicians in the classroom

- **The teachers** also experienced a number of positive changes in their attitudes, knowledge, skills and understandings, not only in the area of classical/ chamber music, but in relation to teaching music in general. For many, the development of a more positive personal relationship with the music resulted in a more confident and creative approach to teaching music in the classroom. Positive outcomes were sustained for the most part but the teachers could foresee difficulties in maintaining a focus on music and a high level of creativity in the classroom in the absence of a structured live music programme. The 'Vogler teachers' have developed into a significant music resource in the region but further support is required to consolidate the learning and to enable them to share their skills with their peers. In particular, links are needed with local music resource organisations in the areas of instrumental tuition and performance.

- **Members of the Vogler Quartet** found their attitudes towards music education altered over the course of the residency; they came to see their work in the classroom as an enhancement of their artistic development. They also found that their skills in communication and pedagogical practice were enhanced by their involvement in the programme. The quartet has gone on to become more involved in educational work in Germany as a result of its experiences in Sligo.

- The Vogler primary curriculum support **facilitator** learned new skills and developed creative approaches in linking live music performance to the primary curriculum, not just in music but across a range of subjects. She also developed skills in training, support and resource development as well as research techniques. A **guest composer** articulated a clear link between education work in general and her artistic practice, which is inspired by the openness, imagination and humour of the children with whom she works, and their tendency to pare everything back to the bare essentials.

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1.4. Key factors in the success of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme¹

Underpinning all of the key factors identified was the role of the facilitator and her skills in devising, delivering and resourcing the programme through training, support and the design of appropriate materials.

In terms of **structure and content**, participants identified the following elements:

- an enabling approach
- extended timeframe
- provision of a focus on music
- links to the music curriculum
- cross-curricular approach
- artistic quality
- clarity of roles
- inclusion of all children regardless of musical ability
- musical challenge
- novelty
- clustering of schools for Vogler workshops
- opportunities to make connections with other musical genres
- complementary interventions in composition and traditional music
- ongoing opportunities for reflection, evaluation and change

In terms of **delivery**, participants identified the following elements:

- live music performance in the school environment
- relationships between the musicians/ children/ teachers
- collaboration between musicians and teachers/ the teachers' active role in delivering the programme between visits by the Vogler Quartet
- participation and interaction
- creativity
- fun
- opportunities for mutual learning
- commitment from the teachers
- flexibility (and the individual personalities) of the musicians
- administrative support and co-ordination from Sligo County Council Arts Office

In terms of **training**, participants identified the following elements:

- summer training courses
- evening preparatory sessions
- ongoing facilitator support
- informal networking, advice and support among the teachers

In terms of **resources**, participants identified the following elements:

- access to instruments
- access to specially designed Vogler resource packs

1.5. The organising partners

The organising partners found that the positive outcomes that emerged from the Vogler residency overall were generally sustained one year on from the conclusion of the programme. Besides having achieved an increased profile and having developed a series of valuable relationships at local, national and international levels, the partners experienced a series of learning outcomes with the potential to influence future policy and provision in the areas of:

- Live music education
- The role of touring musicians
- The school as a legitimate site for high quality art
- The nature of artists' residencies
- Flexible training provision for musicians, facilitators/ mediators and teachers

- The development and maintenance of partnership structures

The organising partners intend to channel their enhanced understandings of education and local music development into policy and provision at both local and national level.

¹ It is interesting to note the resonance between some of the key factors identified in the Vogler primary curriculum support programme and those identified in a piece of research that examined other music education programmes in Ireland and abroad. Issue of capacity building, timeframe, collaboration, interaction, challenge, training for musicians and access to administrative support and resources all emerged as key factors in *Bringing live music to the classroom: Exploring the benefits to teachers, musicians and students - A report on findings of a comparative study of music initiatives (2004)* - Aileen Donagher McGowan for Sligo County Council Arts Office

Section Two - Introduction

2.1. The aims of the research

The Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency was an innovative use of an international string quartet as the central resource in a programme of long-term music education and development in Sligo, which took place between 1999 and 2004. In a sense, the residency programme is not yet over, despite the official departure of the quartet over a year ago. This research marks another phase in the long-term developmental approach that conceives of an artists' residency as something that goes beyond the physical presence of the artists, although their sustained participation and collaboration is at its heart.

This research explores the learning that has emerged from the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency with special emphasis on the Vogler primary curriculum support programme.² It describes the continuing impact of the primary programme and identifies issues of sustainability that have emerged. It outlines and analyses key features underpinning its most successful elements, and considers how they might be consolidated so that increased capacity can be sustained and further developed, and policy and practice informed in the future. It is important to note that this report is not an evaluation.³ Despite looking back to the experiences of various stakeholders, the focus here is resolutely on the future. Outcomes are interrogated with regard to the factors that influenced them and

their potential to inform future policy and practice.

The Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency had three main strands: education, instrumental tuition and performance. This research pays particular attention to the Vogler primary curriculum support strand of the residency, which was designed and delivered in collaboration with teachers throughout the county. Two other programmes that were developed under the education strand are examined briefly and in comparative terms. These can be found in the Appendices section⁴ of the report and include the Guth project (2003-2004), a traditional music programme devised and delivered in primary schools by traditional musician Colm O'Donnell, and the Vogler second level school programme (1999-2004). The report only addresses the instrumental tuition and performance strands insofar as it traces the crossovers that took place between them and the Vogler primary curriculum support programme.⁵

This research has been funded by the Department of Education and Science and co-ordinated by the cross-sectoral Vogler Partners Steering Group, which incorporates interests from formal education and local and national music and arts development. It is made up of representatives from Sligo County Council Arts Office, Music Network,⁶ the Arts Council and Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick.

At local level, it is intended that this report will contribute to long term planning and the development of arts policy. It is part of Sligo County Council's ten-year arts development vision, which seeks to address prioritised needs in a sustained and coherent way, underpinned by a commitment to research and policy development. As the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency was a central strategy in addressing music education and development needs in the county, this report describes and analyses the local experience as a

means of informing the next stage of the development process.

At national level, it is hoped that this report will contribute to a developing understanding of the nature and value of artists' residencies as effective mechanisms for local music education and development, and that its dissemination will help to inform future planning and provision not only in music but across a range of art forms.



Children participating in a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, Soeey, 2003.

² The national primary curriculum support programme, which is run by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (N.C.C.A.), is differentiated from Vogler primary curriculum support programme by the use of the initials P.C.S.P. to indicate the former throughout the report

³ Independent consultants, interactions, were commissioned to conduct an evaluation of the residency in 2003. The resulting report, *Vogler Quartet in Sligo Evaluation Report* outlined significant changes in local capacity, particularly in relation to primary education, classical music promotion and provision of instrumental tuition.

⁴ Appendices One and Two

⁵ There is a brief overview of key outcomes in the instrumental tuition and performance strands and some proposals for future development in Appendices Three and Four. These are not afforded the same level of detail and analysis given to the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, as they fall beyond the scope of this research

⁶ Music Network is the national music development agency

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2.2. Terms of reference

The initial tender notice drawn up by the Vogler Partner Steering Group called for a researcher to 'undertake a study of key aspects of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency Programme (1999-2004)', with 'a central but not exclusive focus... (on) the education strand of the Vogler Quartet Residency (VQR), particularly that pertaining to curriculum support at primary school level'. A more detailed brief was also made available, along with a set of research questions compiled by the Steering Group in collaboration with independent consultant, Martin Drury.

2.3. Methodology

2.3.1. Background documentation

Two main sources of documentation were consulted in the course of the research:

- local documentation including archive material, reports, correspondence and publicity materials
- national and international documentation including articles and reports concerning music education, local music development, and the nature of artists' residencies

A full list of published articles and reports can be found in Appendix Five.

2.3.2. Meetings, interviews and school visits

A series of meetings, interviews and school visits was organised in the period April - June 2005.

These included a mixture of individual and group meetings with participating:

- primary school teachers
- primary school children
- members of the specialist support team who worked with teachers and musicians at primary and second level
- musicians
- second level school teachers
- local promoters
- local music performance groups/ arts and education resource organisations
- partner organisations at steering group level

Some individuals also followed up on their contributions through telephone/ e-mail/ postal correspondence⁷.

2.3.3. Attribution

The comments and observations made during the course of representative meetings, interviews, phone conversations etc. have not been attributed to any one individual, except in cases where individuals worked alone and did not represent a group or organisation.

2.3.4. The structure of the report

Section one contains an executive summary of the research findings

Section two outlines the parameters and methodology of the research

Section three presents the background to the establishment of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency at both local and national level. It gives a brief overview of the history, structure, timeframe and aims of the residency.⁸

Section four is the largest section of the report containing the heart of the research task. It examines the sustained impact on those involved in the Vogler primary curriculum support strand of the residency, the crossovers that took place with the performance and tuition strands, and the key features that underpinned the most successful elements. It also outlines emerging needs and contains suggestions for future development. The focus on positive outcomes and the key factors underpinning them does not imply an absence of

difficulties or suggest that improvements could not be made in some areas of the programme.⁹ In keeping with the forward-looking nature of the research and the constructive ethos that informs it, participants were invited to suggest changes of emphasis or additions they would like to see in future interventions.¹⁰

Section five has as its focus the residency's organising partners and describes the ways in which the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency continues to impact on them. It identifies and analyses learning outcomes and explores the implications in terms of policy and practice.

Section six concludes that the positive outcomes from the Vogler primary curriculum support programme have been sustained a year after the conclusion of the residency. It proposes the consolidation of learning in Sligo with local and national support, and highlights opportunities for further collaboration and mutual learning across the arts and education sectors at national level. It suggests that such collaboration would facilitate the further refinement of the Vogler primary curriculum support model, maximise opportunities for the dissemination of learning, and contribute to future planning and provision in music education and development.

⁷ A full list of the people who contributed to the research can be found in Appendix Six

⁸ A more detailed description of the project can be found in the evaluation report: *Vogler Quartet in Sligo Evaluation Report (2003) - interactions*

⁹ For further details, see *Vogler Quartet in Sligo Evaluation Report (2003) - interactions*

¹⁰ For reference purposes, all proposals for the future are highlighted within the text in both Sections Four and Five

Section Three - Background

3.1. The context in which the residency was planned and delivered

Artists' residencies are not a new phenomenon on the Irish cultural landscape. Each year, artists from a range of disciplines come together with a diversity of groups, communities and organisations for varying periods of sustained collaboration. No two residencies look the same, each having its own individual needs, aims and levels of resources, and each achieving varying levels of sustainability with regard to outcomes. The learning that has emerged from artists' residencies in Ireland and elsewhere informed the planning and delivery of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency, and yet there are a certain elements that make the Sligo project distinctive. These elements include:

- the policy-driven and strategically sophisticated nature of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency, which was complex, long-term and holistic, combining the three strands of music education, instrumental tuition and performance as a mechanism to address a wide range of local music needs
- the emphasis on equal access to high quality music across all three strands (listed above), which ensured that children and seasoned concert-goers were valued equally
- the interest and commitment shown not only to the effective delivery of a collaborative music intervention at local

level, but also to the self-reflective process that facilitated adjustments and new investments throughout the residency, and the interrogation of the experience as a means of contributing to policy development and good practice at national level

- the integrated partnership structure that oversaw and underpinned the residency, which brought a wide range of interests, skills and resources to the planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation of the programme

Since its establishment in 1997, Sligo County Council Arts Office has been keen to explore strategies for long term development that would be locally owned and sustainable beyond any specific intervention. In analysing the musical life of the county, a number of significant musical strengths and weaknesses were apparent. While the county benefited from a particularly vibrant traditional music scene and a range of resources in the areas of jazz and popular music, access and exposure to classical music remained minimal in the late 1990s. Few classical concerts were promoted and there was no consistent audience for them. There was no tradition of classical string playing and tuition was largely unavailable. No structures existed to facilitate linkages between visiting classical musicians and the local community, a situation that was exacerbated in local schools, although Sligo did not differ significantly from the rest of the country

Vogler Quartet in Sligo, Composer-in-Residence Project with Elaine Agnew, Rathcormac National School, 2001.

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in this regard. Despite the acknowledged centrality of performance in music education, both teachers and musicians lacked the structures and supports necessary to establish points of contact and collaboration.¹¹

On the positive side, a number of opportunities were emerging in the shape of local individuals and organisations that could be supported to engage in long term programmes for sustainable music development. In terms of performance, a voluntary music promotion group, Con Brio, was interested in establishing a professional concert series, while a group of Early Music enthusiasts, Sligo Early Music Ensemble, was anxious to promote learning and performance opportunities for its members. In the area of classical tuition, a local musician put forward a proposal for the provision of locally based string teaching classes, which showed potential to evolve into the more structured and sustainable Sligo Academy of Music. Another untapped opportunity lay in the teachers and children in schools around the county, who were seen as essential elements in any local music development strategy. Teachers were already bringing enthusiasm, understanding, and in some cases musical expertise to the classroom, and children represented a legitimate audience for music performance and collaboration of the highest quality.

At a national level, Music Network and the Arts Council were cognisant of the gaps in classical music provision in Sligo and of the

recommendation of The PIANO Report in 1996, which had proposed the establishment of professional ensembles in Sligo and Galway. Both agencies were also aware of the particular gaps in relation to music education and tuition, and had first hand experience of the difficulty in addressing broader music development issues in the absence of a coherent framework for music education.

In response to this particular combination of factors, the partner organisations initiated the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency, a mechanism for integrated music development that placed the Vogler String Quartet as a central resource around which, a range of locally owned initiatives would be supported to grow. Bearing in mind the difficulties of sustainability that had been experienced by so many short-term residency programmes and other such interventions in the past, the partners committed to the long-term provision of resources at local and national level with a view to influencing policy and practice.

3.2. Resources

The cost and resources required to deliver a residency programme such as Vogler Quartet in Sligo are many and varied, particularly in the context of an experimental pilot initiative. For example the establishment of the residency programme required the Assistant Arts Officer to work full time on the project for approximately the first year. This level of input gradually decreased as the programme structures became more refined.

From the beginning a range of funders supported the music education programme: ESB/

Musicnetwork (1999-2002), In Career Development Unit (ICDU) Department of Education and Science (2000-2004), The Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon (1999-2004), Sligo County Council (1999-2004), and Sligo Borough Council (1999-2004). The following information is offered as an illustration of the costs associated with the Education Strand of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency Programme from 2000-2004 at Primary and Post Primary levels. It is important to note however, that the education strand formed one part of an integrated music development programme for County Sligo, which also included performance and instrumental tuition.

Vogler Quartet in Sligo Education Programme (2000 - 2004)

Total Fees, Travel and Subsistence for music education facilitators and specialist advisor	€ 16,687.00
Vogler Quartet Costs	€ 49,569.00
Administration Costs	€ 20,319.00
Total Vogler Quartet in Sligo Music Education Costs (2000 - 2004)	€ 86,575.00

Source: Sligo Arts Office, funding application to the In Career Development Unit (ICDU) Department of Education and Science 2000 -2003.

In addition to the Vogler primary curriculum support programme two complementary residency programmes were run concurrently in music composition, dance and visual art in 2002 and 2004 respectively. The total additional cost of these residencies was €22,000.

¹¹ In his essay *The Music Education National Debate (MEND) and the Music Network feasibility study into the provision of instrumental/ vocal tuition in Ireland*, Frank Henaghan finds the key questions of the MEND report can be reduced to a single issue - 'The challenge is to comprehensively demystify the role of performance as the central driving force of the whole musical enterprise'. This essay can be found in *A National System of Local Music Education Services - Report of a Feasibility Study - Music Network (2003)*

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3.3. A profile of the Vogler Quartet

The members of the Vogler Quartet are: Tim Vogler (first violin), Frank Reinecke (second violin), Stefan Fehlandt (viola) and Stephan Forck (cello). Formed in East Berlin in 1985, the Vogler Quartet quickly established itself as one of the finest quartets of this generation, renowned for an extraordinary musical intelligence, creative playing, powerful interpretations and unconventional programming. In 1986 they came to international prominence through winning the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, with the press jury prize and a special prize for the best interpretation of a contemporary work. They were subsequently invited to study with the renowned LaSalle Quartet in Basel, Switzerland

and at the University of Cincinnati, U.S.A. In 1987 they took part in masterclasses with Arnold Steinhard (Guarneri Quartet), and Sandor Vegh. György Kurtag continues to be an inspiration to the quartet.

The Vogler Quartet combine an international schedule in all the major music centres in Europe, the USA, Canada, Japan, Israel and New Zealand with a busy teaching career which includes masterclasses and individual lessons at the Hanns Eisler and Detmold Music Conservatories. The quartet also have a keen interest in the performance of contemporary music and, through their Sligo residency, have premiered pieces by Donnacha Dennehy, Ian Wilson, Seoirse Bodley, Stephen Gardner, Deirdre McCrea & Gerald Barry.



The Vogler Quartet: (Left to Right) Frank Reinecke (second violin) Stefan Fehlandt (viola) Tim Vogler (first violin) and Stephan Forck (cello).

Recordings with BMG/RCA-Classics include works by Bartók, Beethoven, Debussy, Janáček, Shostakovich, Ravel and the complete string quartets by Brahms and Schumann. A CD for Nimbus Records features Max Reger's String Quartet op. 109 and Clarinet Quintet (with Karl Leister).

3.4 An overview of the three strands of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency

The members of the quartet worked on music development programmes in the areas of education, instrumental tuition and performance. Each programme was built on the principles of access, quality and sustainability.

3.4.1. The education strand¹²

The education programme operated at primary, second and third levels in County Sligo from 1999-2004. A youth and community music project also took place in St. Anne's Youth and Community Centre from 2000-2001. The aim of the overall education programme was to adapt a non-specialised, inclusive and participative programme, recognising the broad value that music can play in developing the learning skills of the student, without presuming any specialist fore-knowledge of music from either teachers or students.

At primary level, it aimed to provide access to live music in a classroom context, which would successfully add value to the three key elements within the new national curriculum: listening and responding, composing and performing. At second level, it aimed to enable transition year students to access music through the principles of participation and enjoyment adopting a cross-curricular approach and seeking to locate classical music and a number of significant composers in an historical, social and geographical context. In later years it focused on first year and senior year students and aimed to assist them to appreciate and critically evaluate music. At third level the education programme aimed to increase participation levels in music through inclusive and innovative workshop performances.

¹² As the main body of the report deals with the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, a more detailed background to this element of the education strand can be found in Section 4.1.

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3.4.2. The instrumental tuition strand¹³

Overall, the partner organisations wished to make a contribution to stimulating the demand for a sustainable, high quality, instrumental tuition service in Sligo. The residency programme was seen as a way of making a contribution to the work of Sligo Academy of Music (S.A.M.) in initiating such a service for the region. In 1999, a pre-instrumental Music is Fun programme was designed by S.A.M. in collaboration with the organising partners, which aimed to expose young children to organised music-making for the first time. In the following years, a beginners string tuition programme was offered on a part-subsidised basis to thirty children who participated in consecutive annual models of a general musicianship course.

3.4.3. The performance strand

The performance programme aimed to develop an audience for classical/ chamber music of the highest quality through a new series of accessible performance opportunities presented in a variety of venues and contexts by local groups and organisations. To these ends, the Vogler Quartet worked with Con Brio, a voluntary music promoter, providing a resident ensemble as the basis for its annual music series, which runs from autumn to the spring. The quartet also formed the basis for a new annual chamber music festival, the Vogler Spring Festival, which brought Irish and

international musicians, composers and audiences to Drumcliffe in County Sligo each year. More informally, two members of the quartet also worked with members of the Sligo Early Music Ensemble.

3.5. The main outcomes of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency

The interactions evaluation report (2003), which examined all aspects of the residency found that it had:

- created a new model of public funding for the arts
- piloted and developed a new form of workable strategic partnership at local and national level with diverse organisations
- delivered a new model of music education and development in Sligo
- created a new chamber music festival for the North West
- impacted dramatically on:
 - the number and quality of classical music performances
 - the size of audiences
 - the economic welfare of the region

In its broadest sense, it reported that the residency had:

- raised standards for strategic partnership, local ownership, artistic quality and process led artistic development
- placed local arts development in an international context
- created a model of music development that generated learning and should be disseminated



Teacher Brian Cahill performing with children from Moylough National School and the Vogler Quartet, Moylough, 2003.

¹³ For more detailed description of the tuition strand and/ or the performance strand, please refer to *Vogler Quartet in Sligo Evaluation Report-interactions* (2003)

Section Four - The Vogler Primary Curriculum Support Programme

This section is the largest section of the report. It explores the impact of the Vogler curriculum support programme on the different stakeholders involved. It presents background information on the programme itself and on the context in which the research took place before exploring and analysing the ways in which it impacted on the schools, the children, the teachers, the support team, and the members of the Vogler Quartet.

4.1. Background

The Vogler primary curriculum support programme brought members of the Vogler Quartet into primary school classrooms throughout Sligo, to work collaboratively and creatively with teachers and children on elements of listening, responding, performing and composing music. From the beginning it took an individualised approach; the programme was designed, piloted and modified in order to meet the varied needs of schools of contrasting size across a wide geographical spread, each with different structures, traditions and levels of music resources.¹⁴ A broad range of artistic, educational, developmental, and administrative expertise was brought to bear on the content, design and delivery of the programme, incorporating ideas and contributions from local and national partners, and members of a selected support team.

Following the piloting of the initial structure, Aileen Donagher McGowan¹⁵ was appointed facilitator, a position that was at the very heart of the emerging curriculum support model. The facilitator was required to undertake certain prioritised tasks immediately. Firstly, she set about adapting the existing structure and drawing up a practical music programme that brought the children into contact with the Vogler Quartet in the school environment and assisted them to participate in collaborative music-making. Secondly, she facilitated effective communication and collaboration between musicians and teachers, liaising between the two groups and organising opportunities for them to come together on an informal basis. And thirdly, she supported the teachers to deliver the music programme in the periods between the musicians' visits¹⁶. She encouraged teachers to emphasise interaction, interpretation, creativity and fun in their work, and supported them through the provision of ongoing training and support and a specially designed resource pack. She also ran summer courses and evening preparatory sessions in advance of quartet workshops. On the basis of this training, teachers prepared set material with their classes over a six-week period prior to the quartet's workshops, for which they were clustered with two or three other schools facilitating maximum levels of participation and interaction.

Over time, it became clear that the teachers required additional support to link the Vogler experience directly to the primary music curriculum in order to maximise the value of the intervention and to integrate it with their workload. It also became clear that the musicians required advice and support with regard to communications, repertoire and pedagogical approaches in order to enable them to interact effectively with the children and to maximise their collaboration with the teachers. The facilitator responded to these emerging needs by developing new roles and taking on new responsibilities as required.

The Vogler primary curriculum support programme brought twenty-five teachers, one thousand five hundred children and twenty primary schools into direct contact with the members of the Vogler Quartet over the five years of the residency. The input of the quartet was underpinned and complemented by the input of the facilitator, teachers and additional musicians, composers and artists who worked with the teachers and children at different stages. In year three, composer and music animateur, Elaine Agnew, planned and delivered a Composer-in-Residence project incorporating a training weekend for teachers and a final performance with five participating schools. A range of short-term residencies also took place in the final year of the programme when seventeen primary schools took part in a celebratory event in the Hawk's Well Theatre. Participating artists included

Colm O'Donnell (traditional musician), Elaine Agnew (composer), Imelda Peppard (visual artist), and Kate Wilson (dancer).

All participating schools had access to tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments from the Sligo Music Instrument Bank¹⁷ for the duration of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, but many subsequently went on to develop their own instrument banks.

4.2. Context

Section four is informed by participant feedback one year after the formal conclusion of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency. Individuals and groups were asked to identify ways in which the residency continues to affect them and the factors that underpin these effects. Understandably, feedback is local and specific. As such it provides a concrete basis for analysis and application to other similar programmes but it is important to remember that these specific experiences took place in a supportive context characterised by organisational and policy commitment at local and national level. This background may have been invisible to participants at times but it contributed significantly to the positive learning environment in which they were free to explore, experiment and develop the programme on an ongoing basis.

¹⁴The programme was initially shaped and designed by Breda O'Shea, an ex primary school teacher working in the area of teacher training and music. During the pilot year (1999/2000) Breda delivered an in-service training course in November for primary teachers interested in participating in the programme. This was followed by a period of testing and evaluating the model and rounded off by a summer training course with participating teachers. The pilot process allowed time and space for reflection and, as a result, the model was altered significantly over time. One of the most significant outcomes from the pilot year was the establishment of the post of facilitator and the identification of Aileen Donagher McGowan as an ideal candidate for the position.

¹⁵Aileen Donagher McGowan first took part in the Vogler primary curriculum support programme as a teacher/ participant/ principal of Owenbeg N.S. She is currently conducting research into the area of music education and the needs of primary teachers under the auspices of Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. She also delivered P.C.S.P. training courses throughout the academic year 2004/2005.

¹⁶Visits by the Vogler Quartet took place approximately twice a year. The teachers delivered a six week music programme in the lead up to each visit.

¹⁷ Supported by the IRMA Trust



Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, S.N. Molaise, Grange 2002.
Learning Support Teacher (Ardkeerin National School), Frances Moran.

4.3. Variables

In looking at the sustained impact of the programme, it is important to note the degree to which it differed from school to school. While the lack of exposure to classical performance in the classroom was a factor that united them, the experiences of the children, teachers and schools differed according to a range of variables, which included:

- the duration of involvement by each individual school/ teacher/ group of children
- the number of teachers involved in each school
- the proportion of children involved in each school
- the staff resources in terms of musical interest, confidence, training and expertise
- the musical history and culture of each school
- the level of awareness and involvement of the parents

The impact of the programme was felt more keenly among smaller schools, with higher levels of interest and involvement achieved. Teachers from schools that took a whole-school approach reported a range of beneficial effects that they expect to be sustained over many years, travelling up through the school with the youngest children. Where schools did not take a whole-school approach, but where numbers were

relatively small, a high level of interest was still achieved among non-participating children and teachers. This was especially the case in schools where team-work practices were well established among teachers. In one such school, the programme was adopted by non-participating teachers who found it to be 'a revelation', demonstrating what could be achieved, even in circumstances where a teacher does not have a particularly strong musical background. In larger schools, the impact was generally more confined to those teachers and groups directly involved in the programme. In such schools, those teachers and students who were not directly involved tended to be aware of the programme's existence but were unfamiliar with its specifics, and not particularly engaged by it.

The duration of the schools' involvement and their musical history also influenced the overall impact of the programme on the whole-school community. Some schools were involved from the beginning of the programme in 1999 while others only joined in 2002 when the programme was extended. Schools involved over the full five-year residency generally judged the outcomes to be significant and lasting.¹⁸ This was particularly the case in schools where music was not especially valued prior to the residency. One teacher described a significant shift in attitude among both the children and the parents at her school who showed little interest in music prior to the residency and where parents would regularly write letters to excuse their children

¹⁸ The programme was particularly effective where schools took responsibility for ensuring programme continuity. For example, a number of key teachers moved on from their schools during the period of the residency; the success of the programme depended on the schools' commitment to replacing such teachers and supporting their replacements.

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from participating in music activities. The teacher described how their school now has a vibrant and enthusiastic music scene, which is fully supported by both children and parents. Another teacher described how the place of music had not changed at their school per se, as traditional music had always been valued and practised there, but how a significant shift had occurred in the range of musical interest that now existed among both teachers and children.

Parents and the local community members were informed and involved in the programme to differing degrees from school to school but in most cases, they were invited to attend schools based performances. Limited hall size restricted opportunities for participation in some schools but where parents, relatives and siblings were accommodated, the levels of awareness, enthusiasm and support for the programme increased accordingly. The final celebratory concert, which was held in the Hawk's Well in June 2004, was aimed primarily at parents in order to give them an insight into the work that had taken place in the classroom over the years.

4.4. The Children

4.4.1. The impact

Research visits took place in four schools in May 2005 facilitating children to provide direct feedback¹⁹ on their experience of the programme and the way in which it continues to impact on them. The comments of the children have been supplemented with the observations and analyses of participating teachers and members of the Vogler Quartet. Outcomes relating to exposure, enjoyment, awareness and enthusiasm for music and music-making are grouped under the heading *Attitudes*, while those relating to curriculum based musical knowledge and understanding, creative interpretation and cross-curricular learning are to be found under the heading *Knowledge, skills and understanding*.²⁰

4.4.2. Attitudes

The majority of children had little or no **exposure to classical/ chamber music**, live or recorded, prior to the residency and were unfamiliar with the particularities relating to string quartets: the instruments, the repertoire or the composers. Caricatures and stereotypes influenced their ideas about classical music and classical musicians. One child used to jump up to 'do the conductor' in an exaggerated way at the first sound of orchestral or string music, but stopped after meeting the quartet and hearing them perform. Others anticipated musicians who were 'old' and 'English', who would play music that would be 'boring' and 'slow'. They were surprised at the appearance and nationality of the quartet, and the nature of the music, which they found to be 'lively', 'fun' and 'good craic'.

The children **enjoyed the experience** of hearing the music played live and spoke of their enjoyment of getting up close to the musicians and their instruments. They developed an appreciation for the appearance, sound and in some cases, the feel of individual instruments. Many were particularly impressed by the sound, shape and size of the unfamiliar cello.

Collaboration with the musicians improved the children's **self-confidence** and **self-esteem**. They enjoyed the opportunities to perform for the quartet and alongside them. One boy commented that the collaborative performance

on stage at the Hawk's Well made him 'feel important'. One year on, the children still demonstrated an obvious pride in their achievements in this regard.

The children's **listening habits** were altered as a result of their experience. They retained their enjoyment of classical music and although they no longer had access to the quartet, they continued to enjoy listening to classical recordings during school hours. It was obvious from their lively input that they still associated classical music with fun. They took note when classical music was played on the radio and used in films, advertisements and television programmes. A tiny minority reported that they listened to Lyric FM and/ or classical CDs at home, mainly due to the interests of their parents, but heightened by their own musical experiences at school.

Teachers observed that many of the children now engage more enthusiastically in all types of musical activities inside and outside the classroom, although this differed in degree from school to school. **Participation** in choirs and bands increased significantly in some schools and one teacher noted particular changes among the older children who had been reluctant to take part prior to the residency. Another noted a change in the pro-active way that children started to request access to the instrument bank in order to compose atmospheric sounds during storytelling. One school choir added an accompaniment of tuned percussion to their performances, a move

¹⁹ Direct quotes are used wherever possible to denote direct feedback from the children

²⁰ As this is a future oriented piece of research and not an evaluation, the outcomes are summarised briefly and in broad strokes. For those interested in evaluating an arts education project, see *the arts - education interface: a mutual learning triangle? P.18 - 24 (2005)* - NFER, for an interesting framework of outcome categories for children working with artists in school settings.

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that was very popular with both children and parents alike. Other teachers reported more subtle changes in their schools, with children demonstrating a greater interest in listening to music and talking about it, and choosing to bring their instruments into school from home.

Teachers observed that the music programme reached some *children who did not participate easily in other aspects of their schooling*, and had a calming influence on those who were hyperactive.²¹ One quartet member observed that certain children sat very still at first, hesitant to get involved, but grew more confident, creative and participative over time, 'blossoming' as he put it 'into something quite beautiful'.

4.4.3. Knowledge, skills and understanding

Teachers reported an *increased ability* among children to identify the sound of violin, viola and cello, and in many cases to follow an instrumental line in a piece of music. During one school visit, the children offered to demonstrate a series of physical movements they had devised to illustrate different instrumental lines in a particular piece of music and despite the passage of a year, they retained the basic ability to listen and differentiate between instruments.

The children also developed an *increased understanding* of the elements of music in the course of the programme, particularly rhythm, tone, pulse and tempo. They learned to respond

to musical terms such as forte and pizzicato and in some schools, they learned to work with staff notation in the context of choral and percussion pieces. Their musical *confidence and performance skills* were enhanced by their active preparation of performance material in advance of the quartet's visit, and by their musical interaction with members of the quartet. Teachers particularly noted an advance in their abilities in singing and percussion.

During my research visits to schools, the children demonstrated a range of songs they had learned, some providing accompaniment with percussion instruments, whistles and in one case, ukuleles. They also demonstrated *knowledge* about a number of composers from the classical, romantic and modern periods, and in some cases about the societies in which they lived and worked, and the pieces of music they had composed. Due to the cross-curricular nature of the programme, they interpreted and illustrated a lot of learning through art and other project work incorporating history, geography and a range of other subjects. The project format enabled them to re-visit their learning easily a year later.

4.4.4. Overlap with the tuition strand

A small number of children were inspired to take up instrumental tuition. The Director of the Sligo Academy of Music (S.A.M.) confirmed that there had been an increased level of interest from children attending 'Vogler schools'. A small number took up violin or other classical instruments while more turned to widely available instruments such as guitar and harmonica. The choice appeared to be influenced by factors of location and expense. Children from Sligo town and surrounding areas were generally more aware of the academy and more likely to attend classes there. Individual teachers remarked on the existence of a lingering cultural bias against classical music in some localities where it would

be accorded low priority at best, even after the residency. In such circumstances parents would be unlikely to encourage their children to take up a classical instrument, especially as the instruments would not be easily available and might prove expensive. This was confirmed by one child during a field visit, who reported a desire to learn the piano but who had taken up guitar instead as piano was 'too expensive'.

Children who did attend the academy during the residency found their classroom encounters with the quartet significantly enhanced. Besides the opportunity to get to know the musicians better, they were invited to illustrate various musical points in the classroom and took an active part in collaborative performances with the quartet.



Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, S.N. Realt Na Mara, Rosses Point, 2000.

²¹ This point also arose in relation to the Guth residency with Traditional musician, Colm O'Donnell - see Appendix One.

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4.4.5. *Overlap with the performance strand*

There was very little crossover with the more formal performance strand of the residency, and very little sense among the teachers that it would have added anything extra. A small group of children attended at least one concert in Drumcliffe as well as some performance workshops²² with their parents. However, these children were an exception and the general level of awareness of the Con Brio concert series and the Vogler Spring Festival was low, often restricted to those living in the vicinity of Drumcliffe. For the majority of children, the Vogler performance programme was synonymous with schools based performances and the farewell concert at the Hawk's Well Theatre, in which they had a central role themselves.

4.4.6. *Primary to second level transfer*

It is interesting to note, the comments of one second level school teacher²³ who observed that children who had participated in the Vogler programme came into the secondary system with a good memory of their musical experiences and an ability to discuss them. In comparison to other children, they had more interest in music in general, better listening skills and better abilities in recognising classical repertoire. The teacher found this particularly noticeable among the boys, as it was unusual in her experience.

4.4.7. *Key factors influencing the children's artistic and educational experience*

For purposes of clarity, the key factors identified in each section (relating to the experiences of children, teachers, facilitators and musicians) have been sub-divided as follows:²⁴

- Structure and content
- Delivery
- Training
- Resources

In some cases, participants suggested a greater emphasis on particular factors that underpinned success of the programme. These suggestions have been highlighted within the text in order to ensure that they are taken into consideration in any future planning process.

a. *Key elements - structure and content*

Novelty - The unfamiliarity of the music and the novelty of working alongside professional classical musicians from another country heightened the children's interest and enthusiasm for the programme.

The cross-curricular approach - The children particularly enjoyed the opportunity to link their musical experiences to their favourite subjects on the curriculum, as well as to other art forms.²⁵ Teachers and musicians also commented on the ways in which this allowed every child to

contribute to different aspects of the programme, using different abilities with varying degrees of confidence.

Musical connections - The programme encouraged musical connections across genres. Children were invited to bring traditional instruments with them to school and play alongside members of the Vogler Quartet. This helped to broaden the musical frame of reference and validate the diversity of musical traditions.

Timeframe - The shortest period any child was involved was one year while some were participants for the full five years of the programme. The generous timeframe gave children the opportunity to move beyond any negative stereotypes they associated with the classical genre and build positive relationships with the music and the musicians. Some of the children who were involved over a number of years became significant music resources within their schools, with an ability to help other children and to support teachers. The extended timeframe allowed teachers and musicians to hone their skills and interactive approaches, significantly contributing to the quality of the children's experiences over time.²⁶ The teachers developed more trust in themselves and the children, and took greater creative risks as a result. The musicians developed more appropriate levels of communication as they got to know the children better, and moved from a more formal 'concert style' workshop approach

to an interactive style that emphasised enjoyment and creativity.

For future reference, teachers proposed more frequent opportunities for direct contact between the children and the musicians, in order to build relationships further and enhance opportunities for creative interaction.



Vogler Quartet, Post Primary Music Education Workshop, Convent of Jesus and Mary, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo, 2000.

²² These were part of the third level programme and took place in Sligo Institute of Technology and in the model:iland, an arts centre located in Sligo town

²³ In the absence of more in-depth research, this observation regarding children from the Vogler programme should be looked upon as interesting but should not be extrapolated further. I spoke to just two second level teachers who had participated in the programme. The second of these could not comment on the children coming from the Vogler programme at primary level, as she was not aware of their identities.

²⁴ In some cases, the factors identified relate to just one or two of the headings

²⁵ Colm O'Donnell also gave an example of a child who discovered an unsuspected talent in creative writing after contributing lyrics to a group composition in the Guth programme - see Appendix One

²⁶ This is explored more fully in sections 4.5. and 4.6.

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Quality - The children were exposed to live music of exceptional quality throughout the residency contributing to their appreciation of artistic expression and skill. The calibre of the musicians encouraged the children to see themselves as an authentic music audience and the school as an authentic performance venue. It provided role models and encouraged the children to imagine a future where they too could achieve such high musical standards. It is interesting to note, however, that while stakeholders acknowledged the exceptional quality of the Vogler Quartet as a key factor in the programme's success, most teachers emphasised the need to match artistic quality with high quality skills in communication and pedagogy

For future reference, the teachers proposed more structured training for musicians prior to their participation in schools programmes, to enable them to develop an understanding of appropriate child-centred approaches in the specific environment of the primary classroom.

Inclusion - The inclusion of all children regardless of musical ability was crucial in making the programme a positive and enjoyable experience. The children were encouraged to contribute to the best of their abilities, musically, artistically and academically.

For future reference, both the teachers and the facilitator suggested further reinforcement of the principle of inclusion backed up with training and resources, to combat any temptation that may arise to exclude those perceived to be 'without a note in their heads' from performance programmes. This is particularly relevant where cross-curricular work is involved, to ensure it is always seen as an addition not an alternative to music participation. At school level, they also suggested that additional strategies would be developed to expose all of the children to professional performance at some stage.

b. Key elements - delivery

Environment - The children enjoyed hearing the musicians perform in the intimate familiarity of school surroundings. Many of them commented on the potential to get up close to the musicians and their instruments, and to watch them making music. They also liked getting close on a personal basis. The teachers pointed out that the immediacy of the children's experience helped them to make the connection between the musicians, their instruments and the creative act of making music. The creative, non-competitive environment, in which they came together with children from neighbouring schools, provided a positive alternative to their usual competitive experiences at sporting events.

Relationships - The children enjoyed interacting with the musicians who were described as having 'good personalities' and a 'good sense of humour'. They made the children laugh, telling funny stories and making animal sounds with their instruments. The teachers also commented on the strong relationship that developed between the musicians and the children and their obvious enjoyment in working together. The children admired the musicians and were motivated to work hard in order to impress them.

Fun - Fun was central from the children's point of view. Their list of highlights included musical games, performance opportunities (individual, group and in collaboration with the members of

the quartet) and related activities in music, art, drama and dance.

Participation and creativity - The teachers, musicians and facilitators pointed out that the children's fun derived from elements of participation and creativity that were central to the programme. It encouraged them to be creative and to see themselves as musicians and artists. It valued individual contributions and moved away from the old, more restrictive and didactic approach to music in the classroom, which one teacher characterised as: 'sit up in yer seat and sing!'

c. Key elements - resources

Access to instruments - the loan of percussion instruments facilitated greater levels of participation among the children in the build up and during the Vogler workshops. A number of schools were encouraged by the positive experiences of the children in using the instruments and purchased their own selection afterwards. These have contributed to the development of subsequent musical activities among the children.

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4.4.8. Future actions - the children's responses

When asked about the future the children responded²⁷ that they would like to:

- keep in contact with the members of the Vogler Quartet
- meet and work with musicians from a range of genres including traditional, country, pop, rock and jazz

4.4.9. Research commentary

It is interesting to note that the introduction of an unfamiliar genre was not a barrier to the children's participation. If anything, the novelty factor generated added enthusiasm. The 'live' nature of the musical experience impressed children most and it would appear that as long as this experience is fun, creative, and based on the child's active participation, any genre or style may be considered suitable, regardless of familiarity, obscurity, or the positive or negative stereotypes surrounding it.

The children's responses went beyond the particularities of the music programmed, demonstrating the need for creative strategies to capitalise on learning across a diversity of genres, styles and even subjects. A number of children in the Vogler programme developed interests in non-classical instruments as a result of their contact with a string quartet. Similarly, they put

no barriers on their learning outcomes and saw their achievements in art and other subject areas as valid components of the music project. The children's lack of fear of composition is also instructive. It would appear that the children approached the expression of ideas and feelings in sound in much the same way as they would have approached the making of a painting or a poem. The learning here is for adults who tend to see composition as something more complicated and daunting, inextricably linked to high levels of skill and knowledge.

Relationships are at the heart of the child's creative experience and the musician's ability to relate to children at an appropriate level is of primary importance. It was interesting to see how the Vogler Quartet's ability to develop positive relationships with the children at primary level, compensated considerably for their lack of pedagogical experience²⁸ and how the extended time frame facilitated this process. It was also interesting however, to see the way in which teachers valued skills in communication and pedagogy equally with artistic quality when analysing the elements that contributed to children's learning and enjoyment. This reflects current thinking among the organising partners who emphasise the need to engage high quality performers with appropriate skills and methodologies that focus on interaction and that value the child's experiences and perceptions of music rather 'handing down' received learning.

Feedback illustrates the way in which clear communication can be facilitated by an extended timeframe. While a good rapport between artists and children can be developed immediately, the five year timeframe of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme provided participants with scope to develop trust and explore a diversity of possibilities for creative collaboration. Good communications can also be enhanced by consideration of physical factors such as group size and venue. While teachers or mediators may deliver important elements of a collaborative programme, the opportunities for direct contact between the musicians and the children should be maximised.

It is interesting to note the enhanced musical experience of those children who attended the

Sligo Academy of Music. It is unfortunate that the same opportunities were not available to all children involved in the Vogler primary curriculum support programme due to the lack of a peripatetic tuition scheme in the county. The current separation between music education and instrumental tuition in primary schools is unhelpful and future programmes would benefit significantly if the resources were put in place to enable a more holistic approach. Finally, it is worth noting the subsequent growth in musical activities in some of the schools and the way in which they were enhanced by newly developed instrument banks. This would suggest that sustainability is significantly aided by the building of resources in a practical context, where they can be tried and tested with support and guidance.



Stefan Fehlandt (viola), Vogler Quartet, Composer-in-Residence Project with Elaine Agnew, St. Anne's Youth and Community Centre, 2000.

²⁷ Future actions proposed by teachers, musicians and members of the specialist support team can be found in sections 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 respectively

²⁸ More discussion of the specialised training needs of musicians working in education can be found in Section 4.6 and again in Section 5.2.ii

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4.5. The teachers

4.5.1. The impact

While participating teachers shared a commitment to improving their ability to deliver the music curriculum, they came from a wide range of musical backgrounds with varying levels of confidence, training and experience. Consequently, the project impacted on them in different ways and to different degrees. In broad terms, the teachers agreed that the project resulted in more positive attitudes towards classical/ chamber music (and in some cases, towards the teaching of music in general). It increased their levels of confidence, creativity and skill in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Outcomes relating to exposure, appreciation, awareness, enthusiasm and confidence are covered under the heading *Attitudes*. Those relating to the teachers' ability to deliver the music curriculum, to make music a creative and fun experience for children, and to plan and organise music activities effectively in collaboration with musicians are covered under the heading *Knowledge, creativity and skills*.

4.5.2. Attitudes

Overall the programme left participants feeling more comfortable with and **appreciative of classical/ chamber** music and more positive about its place in the classroom. Where teachers were

already interested and confident, the programme heightened these qualities and created a greater awareness of artistic and creative possibilities in their work. Where teachers were unfamiliar with the music and lacking in self-confidence, it helped them **conquer their fears** and **opened up new musical vistas**.

Many teachers continue to feel **increased enthusiasm for teaching music** now that the residency has finished. They are more broadminded about incorporating less familiar genres and styles in their work and feel **more positive about working alongside professional musicians**, regardless of genre. Most, if not all would view future collaborations as a mechanism to support them to deliver the curriculum rather than something separate or added on.

The teachers remain **more self-assured** in terms of the content they cover and the approaches they take to music in the classroom. They are comfortable introducing classical compositions and are more imaginative and adventurous in their teaching approaches. Many continue to use ideas learned from the Vogler programme (such as cross-curricular themes) while a few have gone on to adapt the programme using local musical resources. Generally the teachers are more **willing to take risks** as a result of their experience.

Significantly, the teachers not only **trust** their own musical abilities more; they also trust more in the

musical abilities of the children. As a result they tend to challenge the children more in terms of music and their general creativity.

4.5.3. Knowledge, creativity and skills

Taking individual differences into account, the overall **ability of the teachers to deliver the primary music curriculum** increased significantly during the residency and the experience continues to impact on practice in the classroom. In a piece of research conducted by the facilitator Aileen Donagher McGowan, twenty-three out of twenty-four participating teachers identified new skills they had developed, including improved approaches to listening and responding, conducting the children in singing and percussion work, and engaging the children in simple composition²⁹.

With the help of the facilitator, who designed specialised resource packs and provided ongoing training and support, the teachers found access points to **cover rhythm, tone, pulse and tempo** as they arose in the music. In the preparatory work leading up to the quartet's visits, the teachers used a range of **musical terms** repeatedly and in practical contexts, so the children became familiar with their use and learned to respond appropriately.

The teachers were encouraged to incorporate **musical literacy** and introduce elements of notation. For some, this was new and challenging.

When deciding the extent upon which to focus on these elements in ratio to the provision of a **positive music experience**, teachers were influenced to a large degree by the level of formal music training they had received. They were also influenced by the history of music activity at their school. One teacher described her school as having no history of music participation but a fledgling interest in singing. She was anxious to capitalise on the positive musical experience offered by the Vogler programme in order to encourage the children's interest further. While she covered some of the theoretical elements of music, she was anxious not to put the children off by linking it too inextricably with the more formalised elements of learning.

During the five years of the programme, the teachers' abilities to **introduce more fun** and to make the music more **interactive** increased, and they report that the results can still be found in their classrooms. The training and resources equipped them with games, exercises and ideas that prompted the children into creative interpretation of the music. They learned to create linkages across subjects and with other art forms, expanding their ability to make **creative connections**. In some cases, they developed a more flexible and creative approach to the allocation of subject time, although this remained a difficult issue for some. While no structured programme of live music has been introduced in schools since the quartet left³⁰, many teachers continue to work with the ideas and resources

²⁹ From research in progress by Aileen Donagher McGowan - The information is drawn from responses to the question: *What skills, if any, did you develop in the course of the Vogler programme?*

³⁰ The Guth Project (a traditional music education programme) took place during the final year of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency (2003/2004)

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from the residency, applying them where possible across the curriculum, using recorded music where necessary.

Finally, the teachers' *planning and organisational skills* improved significantly. Planning tools from the resource packs were easy to use, and the clarity of the aims and objectives for each part of the programme facilitated teachers to monitor

their work effectively. Some commented on the adaptability of this learning across the curriculum. While opportunities for *collaborative planning* were not prioritised (or requested) throughout the five years, some teachers did become involved in the planning process towards the end and collaborated with the facilitator in the development of resource materials. These experiences intensified the prior learning.



Teacher Seamus McCormack performing with children from Scoil Naomh Teasa, Ballintogher, at a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, 2003.

4.5.4. Overlap with the national Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP)

There was some synchronicity between the Vogler primary curriculum support programme and the work of the national P.C.S.P. in the 2004/2005 period, and in some cases the two were so complementary, that it is impossible to differentiate the impact of one from the other. The teachers experienced a strong resonance between the content and approaches advocated by the two programmes. The teachers felt very comfortable with the material covered by the P.C.S.P. as a result. They were particularly familiar with elements of percussion and composition and felt they were 'a step ahead' of the other teachers attending the P.C.S.P. training.

The Vogler programme also influenced the way in which schools used the arts grant received from the Department of Education and Science. Those who used the funding to build instrument banks observed that they may not have done so if they had not been involved in the residency. As part of the Vogler programme, the facilitator had offered advice on instruments and demonstrated their practical usage in the classroom. Without this, they may not have seen the value of having an instrument bank in the school.

4.5.5. Teacher impact: some additional perspectives

An indication of the ways in which the programme impacted on teachers can be seen in

comments made by other artists and composers who came into contact with them over the period of the residency.

One musician noted that Vogler teachers were generally more organised, more helpful and more hands-on in their approach than other teachers with whom he had worked, who had not participated on the Vogler primary curriculum support programme.³¹ They demonstrated a more positive attitude towards music and took a more participative approach with the children involved. Some collaborated in the planning and organising of workshops and all maximised the opportunities for mutual learning. They provided informal support to the musician in the classroom and shared their knowledge of educational approaches and classroom management skills.

These comments were echoed by a composer/experienced music amateur who worked on elements of the Vogler primary curriculum programme. From her experience of working in schools around the country, she found the 'Vogler teachers' particularly well organised. On workshop days they had rooms prepared and the instruments ready when she arrived. They were eager and able to become actively involved in the workshops and showed confidence in working with a professional artist. At a practical level, they also took responsibility for clearing things away when the workshop was finished.

³¹ The musician pointed out that there were individual exceptions from schools that did not participate in the Vogler primary curriculum programme. He also observed that enthusiasm for a music project may be the greatest support a teacher can offer, regardless of collaborative music experience or skills

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4.5.6. Overlap with the instrumental tuition strand

In general, the teachers did not experience any formal overlap with the tuition or performance programmes. Independently of the curriculum support programme, a small number of teachers sent their own children to Sligo Academy of Music for classes. These included some who lived a considerable distance from the academy's base in Sligo town.

4.5.7. Overlap with the performance strand

All of the teachers were aware of the Con Brio concert series and the Vogler Spring Festival in Drumcliffe. They had received invitations to selected concerts in the Spring Festival over the years, and some were influenced to attend as a result of their involvement in the schools programme. However, in the absence of a more formal link with the curriculum support programme, the majority of invitations were not taken up.

4.5.8. Key elements influencing the teachers' artistic and educational experience

In many ways, the successful outcomes for the children underpinned the experiences of their teachers so there are a number of clear crossovers with the key factors already identified in Section 4.4. In this section however, teachers have identified specific elements that contributed significantly to their own positive educational and

artistic experiences. Before identifying these elements, it may be useful to make some preliminary observations about the role of the facilitator, which was a crucial factor in every aspect of the programme including its overall structure and delivery and the training and resources provided.

The facilitator provided an important bridge between the teacher and the musicians, and between the musical art form and the curriculum.³² Her role permeated all aspects of the Vogler primary curriculum programme. When discussing key factors below, the teachers often comment on the efficacy of 'the programme' in providing them with challenge, focus etc. It is important to remember that 'the programme' is made up of many parts including overall design, content, delivery, training and resource development, all of which were influenced by the work of the facilitator. All stakeholders observed the way in which the role was particularly well served by Aileen Donagher McGowan, especially considering the broad range of responsibilities it entailed. The elements that made her particularly effective in the role included her:

- understanding and background in music
- training and experience as a primary teacher and familiarity with the whole primary curriculum (not just music)
- initial involvement as a teacher/participant on the Vogler programme
- commitment to supporting teachers through the programme, rather than adding pressure

- ability to work creatively with repertoire and generate games, structures etc
- interest and enthusiasm for the project
- openness to embrace and encourage musical challenge
- excellent communication skills

a. Key elements - structure and content

Challenge - The programme opened new musical horizons to many teachers, exposing them to a genre and style of music that was challenging for some, and that they would not have sought out for themselves.

Focus - Despite the demands of the curriculum, teachers were motivated to prioritise music, especially in the periods leading up to a visit from the quartet. The workshops provided teachers with a clear goal in a specific timeframe, and inspired them to develop higher levels of participation and creativity among the children. This was quite pressurising but in a positive way.

For future reference, the teachers pointed out that while they have managed to sustain the benefits of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme in most areas, retaining a concentrated focus on music is problematic and requires further support. Also, in the absence of a structured programme they find it difficult to maintain a consistently creative approach to music without falling back into old routines.

The enabling approach - At all stages, the programme emphasised the development of the teachers' confidence and ability, and placed their learning needs at a central point alongside the learning of the children. The facilitator backed up this approach by providing specially designed resources as well as practical training and support.

The cross-curricular approach - The way in which the programme integrated music with other subjects on the curriculum helped teachers to cover their workload, instead of adding to it. Teachers with less confidence in music found it particularly helpful that they could utilise their personal strengths in English, History, Art etc. within a music context.

Clustering - The term clustering refers to the coming together of a small number of participating primary schools for Vogler workshops. At a practical level, clustering facilitated the participation of more schools in the programme. It also facilitated networking and informal support among teachers, encouraging them to look to one another for advice and ideas. Some teachers enhanced the effectiveness of their cluster groups by collecting and exchanging information with other teachers, then mediating with the musicians to facilitate maximum participation during workshops.

³² An account of the work of the facilitator can be found in the Section 4.1.

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Complementary interventions - A number of complementary programmes added to the learning outcomes of the Vogler programme. These included:

Composition - Some teachers were exposed to composition for the first time through the intervention with Elaine Agnew. They found it addressed fears and gave rise to additional ideas for creativity.

For future reference, teachers with varied levels of confidence and musical expertise all suggested further emphasis and support in the area of composition.



Children Performing at the launch of the Vogler Spring Festival, Sligo County Hall, 2001.

The Guth programme - On the other hand, the traditional music programme designed and delivered by traditional singer and musician Colm O'Donnell³³ played to the musical strengths of some teachers, and gave them another perspective on what can be achieved with a structured programme in a different genre.

b. Key elements - delivery

Relationships - An informal evening of shared music-making in the early days of the programme, helped teachers to see the quartet members as ordinary people as well as professional musicians of international repute. This broke down barriers and improved communications. The musicians were always friendly and approachable, making teachers feel more comfortable over time, and contributing to their ability to collaborate effectively.

For future reference, teachers felt that relationships with 'resident' artists would be further enhanced through an increased level of contact in a range of artistic, educational and social contexts.

Collaboration - Teachers were empowered by their role in sharing the delivery of the programme. Their involvement in aspects of planning and resource development was also facilitated towards the end, when levels of confidence and skills had risen.

For future reference, teachers would like more structured opportunities to work alongside the musicians in collaborative planning, resource design and skill-sharing and training.

The musicians' flexibility - For many teachers the flexibility of the musicians was fundamental to the success of the project. Their willingness and ability to modify their initial formal approach to music making and communication, and their enthusiasm for developing more effective pedagogical approaches was emphasised more than any other attribute, artistic or otherwise.

Administrative support and co-ordination - While a certain amount of informal co-ordination took place among participants, they were largely dependent on professional communications and support from Sligo County Council Arts Office.

³³ For details of the Guth programme, see Appendix One

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c. Key elements - training and support

Training courses - The summer training courses and evening preparatory sessions were essential in introducing the teachers to new ideas, materials and approaches. They equipped and motivated teachers to use the Vogler resource packs, which were specially designed by the facilitator.

For future reference, the teachers pointed out that much of the training depended on voluntary commitment,³⁴ a feature that would be unsustainable in the long term. Support from the Department of Education and Science is required in order to provide substitute cover for teachers taking part in training (including collaborative planning) with musicians during school hours. Less ideally, it could sanction a system of time-in-lieu for out of hours training, but once again substitute hours would be required. Without substitute cover, schools are left under-resourced and creative programmes can lose support among management and staff.

Ongoing facilitator support - While the role of the facilitator has already been discussed, it is important to emphasise the flexibility of the support and advice that was on offer to teachers, who could avail of it at different times and to

varying degrees, depending on their individual needs.

Informal support - The cluster groups also gave rise to informal networking and some teachers contacted each other for advice and encouragement.

d. Key elements - resources

Resource Packs - The mix of recordings, planning materials, information and practical games and exercises contained in the Vogler packs empowered teachers to work independently between quartet visits and remain useful now that the residency has concluded. What distinguishes the Vogler packs from others that arrive regularly in staff rooms and remain unopened, is the way in which they are situated within a practical programme of live music performance with integrated training and support.

For future reference, the teachers would like increased opportunities to be involved in the design of resource materials in collaboration with the facilitator/s and the musicians.

Access to instruments - The provision of instruments on loan was significant. The instrument bank provided teachers with opportunities to try out a diversity of percussion instruments and see what worked well, without any financial outlay. It also created the motivation to purchase replacements when the loan period came to an end.

*4.5.9. Future actions - the teachers' responses***Continued contact with the Vogler Quartet** -

Teachers made two suggestions with regard to future connections with the quartet, including:

- **A children's concert in the Vogler Spring Festival programme** - A music programme could be prepared and delivered by the teachers in advance of the concert to facilitate the children to participate. The concert would need to take place on a school day leading up to the festival weekend but could form part of the official programme.
- **An annual workshop linked to a performance programme** - Based on the possibility of an annual visit by the quartet to perform for local promoters, participating schools could link in with the visit and organise a workshop during their stay. Again, teachers could prepare and deliver a programme in advance to facilitate participation and interaction.

- Other curriculum-based performance programmes

- Teachers want to be invited to participate in future live music programmes linked to the curriculum, with similar levels of back up support and resources. They see a risk of slipping back into old, less creative habits without such support. Suggestions included linkages with a range of non-commercial genres, including classical (with some particular requests for brass and woodwind), traditional, and jazz³⁵.

- The piloting of a whole-school approach³⁶

- While a whole-school approach cannot be forced upon any school, the suggestion was made for a volunteer pilot programme among a number of schools of all sizes. In this way, the live music programme would make its way up through the school, starting with first class, and moving through the whole community of teachers and children, with specific strategies to reach out to parents and members of the community.

³⁴ The teachers attended the evening sessions voluntarily during term time

³⁵ Classical and traditional music were most commonly mentioned

³⁶ A discussion of the impact of the whole-school approach as part of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme can be found in Section 4.3. The identification of the whole-school approach as a key element in successful school residencies is in line with findings from the Arts Council's Artist in Residence in Schools Scheme, which ended in 2002.

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- *The development of a national music resource pack* - Teachers would like to see the existing resource pack expanded and developed into a national music resource pack. A modular pack is needed, which would cover a diversity of genres, and would incorporate age specific exercises and approaches for each. The pack should have scope for individualisation, in order to encourage schools to incorporate elements of local musical culture and engage with the music resources available in the area.

- *Advocacy for a national music day* - Following the success of the Vogler residency, one teacher suggested advocating for a national music day. This would help to provide the 'focus' on music that was so important in the residency and would encourage information sharing and engagement of local music resources.



Children from S.N. Molaise, Grange preparing for a performance during a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, 2002.

4.5.10. Research commentary

The complexity of the facilitator's role was mentioned often. While the Vogler primary curriculum support programme was lucky to find somebody with the considerable skills and abilities of Aileen Donagher McGowan, it is worth considering whether one person could or should be expected to fulfil such a wide remit. Such a concentration of responsibilities in one person leaves a project dependent and potentially vulnerable. The process of facilitation could be addressed in a number of ways in the future with possibilities for building teams of facilitators and with greater emphasis on co-planning and skill-sharing.

The facilitator's emphasis on addressing the teachers' learning needs at every level was clearly a significant factor in the success of the programme. Using a live music programme, backed up with training and resources was an effective way of addressing those needs, providing teachers with the practical motivation and the responsibility for developing or improving appropriate skills. The teachers were exposed to all elements of the music curriculum through the live music experience with the Vogler Quartet and through their ongoing contact with the facilitator and the resource pack she developed for use between quartet visits. Their experience included exposure to those elements of music they disliked or in which they had the least confidence. It is interesting to note the different

degrees to which teachers tackled those more difficult elements, and the flexibility of the programme in allowing each participant to choose his or her pace of learning.

Feedback would suggest that the link between personal enjoyment and confidence in music is closely linked to professional practice; the more comfortable the teachers became with different aspects of classical/ chamber music, the more willing they were to incorporate these aspects into their teaching. For example, some teachers commented on the way in which theoretical principles that appeared irrelevant or uninspiring on the page became more interesting when they were practically linked to live music performance in the classroom and backed up by the support and resources provided by the facilitator. In this way the teachers' own musical understanding was enhanced and they gained confidence to share this learning with the children in their class.

Across the range of skills and confidence, composition appeared to generate the highest levels of creative enjoyment on one hand and fear on the other, among participating teachers. The value of exposure and training in the area of composition is illustrated by the positive experience of the teachers who participated in the programme delivered by composer and music animateur Elaine Agnew, although it is also clear that there is a need for further support in this regard.

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The centrality of good relationships was re-emphasised, this time between teachers and musicians. Despite spending time together in the classroom, the development of good relationships between teachers and musicians cannot be taken for granted. The pro-active strategies devised by the facilitator in Sligo succeeded in bringing the two groups together in a positive sociable context, and this set the tone for their subsequent working relationship. This experience could be usefully considered in future residency programmes as teachers can find the contact with artists intimidating³⁷ and fear creates a barrier to effective communication and collaboration. It is interesting to note that such fears are not exclusive to music. A recent report exploring the work of professional writers in the classroom raised the same issue.³⁸

The teachers' involvement in the planning process and in the development of resources contributed not only to the quality of the programme in its final months, but also to the confidence and skills-development of teachers. Teachers may not identify the need for collaboration at the beginning of a programme, indeed they may avoid it due to lack of confidence. For this reason, progressive levels of collaboration could be usefully structured in from the beginning, with support from a facilitator. It is important that the process does not become a negative experience resulting in any additional administrative burden for participating teachers. Support and resources are required from the Department of Education

and Science in order to integrate the collaborative planning process more effectively in the context of future residencies, especially in relation to the supply of substitute cover³⁹.

It is important that teachers are supported to maintain a focus on live music performance in the classroom beyond the life of any residency. Following the experience of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, many of the teachers in Sligo are enthusiastic to work with musicians from a range of different genres. With an improved music infrastructure in the county as a result of the residency, there should be ample opportunities to facilitate such an engagement if sufficient support can be harnessed at local and national level. There is scope for improved linkages between schools and local music resources with possibilities for diverse performance inputs ranging from music students attending Sligo Academy of Music to international musicians of exceptional quality such as the Vogler Quartet. The organising partnership has already demonstrated a commitment to long term provision and support linked to policy development. If this is taken forward into the future, there are strong possibilities that the learning outcomes from the Vogler primary curriculum support programme could be reinforced and applied to new musical scenarios in Sligo and beyond.⁴⁰

The increased skills and confidence among teachers who participated in the Vogler primary

curriculum support programme represents a significant invigoration of music education in the region. In keeping with the theme of capacity building that characterised the programme, the teachers could be facilitated to share their increased musical confidence and skills with other teachers, encouraging them to introduce live music, adopt more creative approaches and make use of the resource packs and instrument banks available.

4.6. The members of the Vogler Quartet⁴¹

4.6.1. The impact

Members of the quartet found their attitudes towards music education altered and their skills in communication and pedagogy enhanced through their participation in the curriculum support strand of the residency. These changes were further enhanced by their involvement in performance workshops in the third level programme, and there is significant overlap between the two⁴².

4.6.2. Attitudes

The musicians' understanding of the value and place of educational work changed over the course of the residency. Instead of seeing it as a distinct strand, separate from their work as professional performers, the musicians came to recognise it as an enhancement of their artistic development. One of the musicians described an

early experience where they played a Haydn Minuet and were amazed at the reaction of the children, who found it funny and laughed out loud in obvious enjoyment during the performance. The direct nature of the children's response was like a 'little kick' for the musicians, in both personal and artistic terms. Being used to concert audiences, who betray no obvious response during performances, it caused them to feel the freshness of the music again.⁴³

The musicians became more aware of their responsibility to deepen the relationship between audiences of all ages and the music they played. At the beginning of the project, they had some doubts about the suitability of children as an audience for classical music, but by the end of the residency those doubts had disappeared. They saw that children were open and interested in all kinds of music.

The musicians enjoyed the contact with the children, teachers and facilitator, and developed greater confidence in their abilities to work in this context. They formed strong connections with the children and were moved to see the way in which music impacted positively on them. Their interest in this area was complemented by their experience as parents, which made them more aware of the needs of children. They developed a greater understanding and regard for the specific skills required for classroom-based work and an awareness of the professional training needs of musicians who intend to work in the classroom.

³⁷ And vice-versa, as seen in Section 4.6

³⁸ *A Review of the Poetry Ireland Writers-In -Schools Scheme* (p.114) - Poetry Ireland (2005). The researcher observes that some teachers were 'afraid of writers' and pointed out the negative implications with regard to effective partnership, collaboration and evaluation.

³⁹ Similar points have been made by teachers and principals involved in other schools based arts interventions. See *A Review of the Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools Scheme* - 2005 (p.86) and *Red Lines Between the Fingers - A Review of the IMMA/ Breaking the Cycle Project* - 2002 (p.68)

⁴⁰ The implications at national level are discussed in Section Five and again in the Conclusion

⁴¹ For background information on the Vogler Quartet see Section 3.3.

⁴² Performance workshops were held in Sligo Institute of Technology and the model:iland, an arts centre in Sligo town. As well as speaking about the general background to a particular composition, the musicians isolated specific elements of musical interest, then discussed and demonstrated them before performing the whole work.

⁴³ The link between educational work and artistic interpretation was even stronger in terms of their work in the performance workshops, where detailed discussions caused them to play the relevant compositions in a 'fresher, more convincing way.'

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Vogler Quartet, Music Education Facilitator, Aileen Donaher McGowan, McFibis Centre, Enniscrone, 2000.

The need for such training is emerging as an issue in institutions in Germany and members of the quartet are keen to contribute their learning from the curriculum support programme.

As a result of their experience in Sligo, the

quartet has started working with primary school children in Germany. The musicians have initiated a concert series for schools in Berlin and involved themselves in festival programmes for school children and young instrumentalists in both Berlin and Hamburg.

4.6.3. Skills

From their experience on the programme, the musicians gained a range of skills and ideas related to music in the classroom. They learned the importance of making music fun and keeping a class interested through active participation. In the beginning they approached the work more formally. They introduced their instruments and played five or six pieces of music, then gave the children some background to the period, the composers etc. With the support of the facilitator and the teachers, they changed their approach and brought the children into the workshops as co-performers. They learned to use music-related games and to work with themes that cut across a range of subjects. They also learned to identify appropriate repertoire and adapt it, cutting it down to a manageable length in order to meet the needs of the children and keep their attention.

4.6.4. Key factors for the musicians

Two key features underpinned the positive experience of the Vogler Quartet in all three aspects of the residency i.e. education, instrumental tuition and performance. These included:

Support from Sligo County Council Arts Office and Music Network - The support from the Arts Office and Music Network was a crucial factor for the musicians across all three strands. From the beginning, the quartet

experienced very positive communications with these agencies and benefited from their support.⁴⁴

Flexibility regarding the issue of residency - For a number of reasons, full-time residence in Sligo would not have been possible for the quartet so the option of regular extended visits made the residency feasible from their point of view. It kept things fresh, intense and focussed, with the quartet concentrating on fulfilling their commitments and the participants committed to preparing for their visits. There was no time for anyone to grow sloppy or careless about the work.

More specifically, in relation to the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, one key factor underpinned all of the rest:

The role of the facilitator - The facilitator's input enabled the musicians to maximise their interaction with the children and the effectiveness of their collaboration with the teachers. Her ongoing advice and support influenced their understanding and practice in the classroom and her well-structured music programme enabled them to intensify the impact of their visits. Particularly important was the way in which the facilitator encouraged and enabled all of the teachers, including those with less confidence, to deliver the programme between visits by the quartet,⁴⁵ making the input of the musicians more effective and enjoyable. At a practical level, she

⁴⁴ While the musicians didn't mention it themselves, it is important to note that funding from a third partner, the Arts Council, facilitated the provision of these important supports

⁴⁵ The role of the facilitator was particularly important in ensuring continuity considering the Vogler Quartet were in residence on a structured visiting basis

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devised games and approaches, made effective suggestions about repertoire and researched humorous, little-known facts about composers, for use in the classroom. Her background as a local teacher and musician appeared to contribute to the high levels of support for the programme. Her skills were an essential element for the musicians, one of whom described her as 'the most brilliant person of all'.

a. Key elements - structure and content

Clarity - The programme was well thought out and the roles of the musicians and the teachers were clear.

The cross-curricular approach - Opportunities to work across the curriculum introduced additional creativity and enjoyment for the musicians as well as the children. It created linkages between music and everything from bird watching to dance. Clustering - The clustering of schools for visits by the quartet gave rise to a positive and creative atmosphere, with teachers and children from different schools collaborating musically.

b. Key elements - delivery

Relationships - Prior to the residency, the musicians feared 'fights' with the teachers who might not welcome them into the classroom. Instead they found the teachers supportive, helpful and crucial to the success of the project. Their delivery of the programme in the periods

between visits by the quartet added value to the work of the quartet and their practical advice and assistance helped the musicians to work effectively in the classroom. Their authority was particularly welcome in the early days before the musicians had formed relationships with the children. Good communications and friendships were encouraged by the organisation of an informal music evening at the start of the project.

Collaboration - The advance preparation work carried out by teachers made the musicians' contact with the children more meaningful during workshops. Many teachers had musical skills and confidence but even those with less of a musical background contributed significantly. The members of the quartet acknowledged that they did not see the importance of collaborative planning at the beginning of the residency, but learned its value through experience.

Interaction - It was a new experience for the quartet to have a high level of interaction with the children but it was key to the success of the programme. The quartet enjoyed the mix of performing, watching the children perform and then playing music together. They drew energy from seeing the children gain in confidence and creativity throughout the process.

Environment - Working in the primary schools was generally successful; it provoked curiosity among other teachers and students who were not directly involved.



Frank Reinecke (second violin), Vogler Quartet, making music with children from Rathcormac National School, 2002.

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4.6.5. Future actions - the musicians' responses

The musicians have committed to the Vogler Spring Festival in Drumcliffe for five years beyond the conclusion of the residency (2005-2009), and are interested in maintaining a relationship with Con Brio. In this context, they see possibilities for maintaining a link with at least some of the participating schools. Due to the small amount of time available, they would see themselves playing a small part in a broader music education programme.

4.6.6. Research commentary

The collaborative and professional development approach, which characterised the residency and was central to the teachers' positive experience of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme (as outlined in Section 4.5), also had clear advantages for the artists. It was of significant benefit to them to be able to combine skills with other professionals and to have joint rather than sole responsibility for making the programme work. As a result, the musicians' experience of working with children was more enjoyable and more effective. The role of the facilitator is clearly a crucial element in this regard. Her focus on enabling the teachers to deliver the music programme between visits maximised the impact of the quartet's input and was at the heart

of the programme, contributing significantly to its sustainability.

The prioritisation of positive relationships by the musicians echoes previous observations by teachers and children, and reinforces the importance of devising strategies to maximise direct contact and communications. It cannot be assumed that either the artists or the teachers will prioritise such contact themselves initially; the realisation of its value came as an important piece of learning for the Vogler Quartet. This is an aspect of the facilitator's role that needs to be carefully planned and articulated so it is constantly directed towards fostering direct communication between musicians and teachers, rather than replacing it.

It is interesting to note that the musicians' learning outcomes were central to the success of the programme, alongside the learning outcomes for teachers and children. Their whole approach to educational work changed as a result and their enjoyment was enhanced by the experience of interacting and collaborating. This reinforces the value of the Mutual Learning Triangle (MLT) model, which proposes that an effective arts intervention in a school setting is '*...a symbiosis from which outcomes can only be truly maximised when all three parties are operating in the role of both learner and teacher.*'⁴⁶ Despite the positive learning experiences of the Vogler Quartet, it cannot be assumed that all musicians will develop appropriate communication styles and

pedagogical skills on the basis of their experience on the ground. Neither can it be assumed that teachers will volunteer to support and advise musicians the way Sligo teachers did. Musicians require flexible forms of training and support that will take account of the different levels of skill and experience they have in the classroom. Opportunities to come together with teachers for a shared exploration of aims, objectives are also needed, along with mechanisms for skill sharing.

It is interesting to note the impact that educational work had on the artistic practice of the Vogler Quartet and to reflect on whether such outcomes are sufficiently recognised and valued among musicians, artists and arts organisations. Structures are needed to encourage further reflection, dialogue and interaction between artists working in educational settings and to monitor the artistic outcomes of their educational practice. It would be particularly interesting to see dialogue of this kind informing professional music training courses as well as arts policy making bodies at local and national level.

4.7. The support team

Over the course of the five-year residency a number of musicians, composers, educationalists, artists and administrators contributed their expertise to the Vogler primary curriculum support programme. For the purposes of this report, I have focussed on the experiences of two members of the team: the facilitator, Aileen Donagher McGowan⁴⁷ and a guest composer, Elaine Agnew.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *the arts-education interface: a mutual learning triangle?* (2005) - National Foundation for Educational Research

⁴⁷ The facilitator was first involved as a teacher/participant on the Vogler primary curriculum support programme. She took up the role of facilitator in 2001. For further information, see footnotes, Section 4.1

⁴⁸ Elaine Agnew is a composer and experienced music animator. She delivered a Composer-in-residence programme with five of the schools participating in the Vogler primary curriculum programme between January and April 2002.

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4.7.1. The facilitator

4.7.1.i. The impact

Over the five years of the programme the facilitator found that her approach to music in the classroom changed as she learned new skills and became more creative in building linkages across the curriculum. She became more observant and more critical in evaluating content and practice, and more skilled in assessing and adapting repertoire to meet the needs of the children and teachers involved. She also became more confident in communicating with the quartet and asking them to make changes in approach or content where necessary. Recognising the educational and creative potential of performance-based games and exercises, she built up a varied collection, and learned to gauge their timing so that teachers and musicians could work out exactly how much could be covered in a workshop.

The facilitator also developed an interest in research and her ongoing exploration of performance based educational programmes at home and abroad⁴⁹ informed the design and delivery of the programme.

The impact of her experience as facilitator was enhanced by an opportunity to undertake academic research linked to the residency under the auspices of Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick. It also

contributed to her decision to become involved as a music trainer on the P.C.S.P. programme.

4.7.1.ii. Key elements in the Vogler primary curriculum support programme

There is significant crossover in the key factors identified by the facilitator, and those identified by the teachers (see Section 4.5), although there are slightly different reasons given for their importance.

a. Key elements - structure and content

Challenge - The introduction of a musical genre that was unfamiliar intensified the impact on teachers and created greater levels of change than could have been achieved with music that was more familiar.

The enabling approach - This was a key factor in maintaining the interest and enthusiasm of the teachers and in addressing issues of sustainability.

The cross-curricular approach - In the context of the teachers' heavy work-load, it was essential to devise a programme that supported them in their planning and delivery of the curriculum across a range of subjects, rather than adding to their work.

Ongoing evaluation - the residency afforded opportunities to reflect, feed back and instigate changes at all stages of the programme. This encouraged everybody involved to be more observant and more critical in evaluating content and practice, and to learn from shortcomings as well as from strengths.

For future reference, further emphasis could be placed on the formal revision and re-articulation of aims, objectives and roles on a regular, shared basis, regardless of how clear they are in the beginning.

Timeframe - For the facilitator, embarking on the residency was like embarking on an unknown journey, with learning opportunities at every stage. The extended timeframe allowed her (and all of the participants) to take risks, make mistakes and discover what worked most effectively. For example, the close link with the curriculum was not an integral element of the programme at the beginning but evolved organically, as an effective way to meet a range of needs.

b. Key elements - delivery

Relationships - The process of facilitating good communication between the musicians and the teachers was vital so that each could bring their specific and complementary skills to the classroom without distrust or discomfort.

The flexibility of the musicians - The musicians demonstrated a willingness to learn from the teachers and the facilitator. They were keen to work effectively in the classroom even if they had to change their approach. This openness and flexibility kept everybody enthusiastic about the programme and made the experience of collaboration increasingly positive.

The teachers' commitment - The programme was dependent on the commitment of the participating teachers and would not have succeeded without it. There were demands on their time and they had to stretch themselves personally and professionally. They came to preparatory sessions voluntarily and put their energy into promoting the programme among teachers and parents at their schools.

⁴⁹ The findings of the research were collated in a report entitled: Bringing live music to the classroom: exploring the benefits to teachers, musicians and students - A report on findings of comparative study of music initiatives - Aileen Donagher McGowan for Sligo County Council Arts Office (2004)

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c. Key elements - training and support:

Training courses - Early training with Breda O'Shea and Elaine Agnew were pivotal in enabling the facilitator to develop new approaches to music in the classroom.

Ongoing support - Contact with other members of the creative and administrative support team facilitated ongoing opportunities for discussing ideas and solving problems.

4.7.1.iii Future Actions - the facilitator's response

A strategy for progression - Future live music programmes should be developed to build on the positive outcomes to date. They should incorporate progressive levels of musical challenge for teachers and children, providing them with opportunities to build on prior learning and capitalise on the higher levels of confidence as they develop over time.

Linkages with international models - Initial work has taken place identifying international schools-based performance models. The next step is to explore opportunities for contact and mutual learning.

4.7.1.iv. Research commentary

One important piece of learning that emerged from the facilitator's experience on the Vogler primary curriculum support programme was the need to facilitate the musical progression of teachers and children in a flexible way that allows each individual to move forward at an appropriate pace. However, the issue of progression is relevant to the support team too and the experience of the facilitator illustrates the importance of having a strategy for professional progression at all levels. The facilitator was heavily influenced by the early training sessions she attended as a teacher/ participator, which were delivered by Breda O'Shea and Elaine Agnew. These contributed to her ability to take on the role of facilitator where her advice and support informed all aspects of the collaborative music programme. She was facilitated to engage in further research under the auspices of Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick, as part of her ongoing professional development. This strategy has been very effective in building local capacity and has contributed to the sustainability of the programme. It is important to note, however, that new approaches to collaborative music and arts in educational settings are being developed on a constant basis, and the facilitator may have benefited from further exposure to emerging practice. Ongoing access to information, training and support in this area is needed not only by teachers and musicians involved in collaborative

educational programmes, but also by the trainers, facilitators, mediators who inform their practice.

It is also interesting to note the issue of musical challenge, which is raised by the facilitator, particularly in the context of collaborative planning, which is advocated by all stakeholders in different sections of this report. One of the key elements of the Vogler primary curriculum

programme was the introduction of a less familiar musical genre that would not have been selected by the majority of teachers if they had been given the choice. Some independence is required if the facilitator is to retain the freedom to inject elements of musical and educational challenge to live music programmes in schools, and this should be borne in mind when collaborative planning processes are being developed.



Children dancing at a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, Riverstown Hall, 2003.

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4.7.2. The composer

4.7.2.i. The impact

As well as being a professional composer, Elaine Agnew is experienced in working in educational contexts. While it is difficult to distinguish a distinctive impact from her work on the primary curriculum programme⁵⁰ in Sligo, she is very clear about the significance of education work in general on her artistic practice. She is inspired by her educational contact with children, and by the openness, imagination and humour they exhibit in their work with her. They provide her with 'a breath of fresh air' at both a personal and an artistic level. While it is difficult to pinpoint exact points of crossover in her writing, she feels that the child's tendency to pare everything back to the bare essentials may be reflected in the economy and clarity of her compositional work.

4.7.2.ii. Key elements in the Vogler primary curriculum support programme

a. Key elements - delivery

The teachers' application of learning - the composer's experiences with the teachers and children were influenced positively by their involvement in the Vogler programme. Greater levels of interest, confidence and helpfulness were obvious among the teachers and greater skills in listening and participating were obvious among the children. This made the work of the

composer easier in terms of organisation and more satisfying in terms of the creative process.

The personalities of the musicians - The quartet members each had particular, diverse qualities and skills that made them suitable for education work. Although Elaine did not work with them directly in the curriculum support programme, she witnessed them interacting with the children during two performances and worked alongside them in the community-based programme. She found that they brought 'something very special' to their communications with children.

b. Key elements - resources

Access to instruments during the composition project - Having access to high quality percussion instruments during the composition workshops and between visits, facilitated high levels of participation and contributed significantly to the quality of the contact between the composer and the children.

4.7.2.iii. Research commentary

The clear connection between the composer's educational work and artistic practice highlights the potential for learning that exists in this area. Facilitated reflection and discussion is needed among artists not only to identify the linkages between the two practices but to explore opportunities for further reciprocity.

Imaginative interventions such as the Vogler primary curriculum programme can bring a diversity of artists to work on different strands of the same programme. Opportunities for artistic collaboration between these artists would add to the creative experience and give rise to potential for new directions and departures. The composer, Elaine Agnew, worked alone with the children and teachers, using percussion instruments. Collaboration with skilled performers could have contributed a bass line, for example, and this would have facilitated the composer to introduce sustained long notes, which would have enhanced the musical experience for all involved. It also would have shifted the focus more towards performance and this would have encouraged the children to practice more between workshops.

Added value could also be derived from the introduction of skill-sharing opportunities between artists. Performers could benefit from compositional training and support that would enable them to lead children in making their own

arrangements of familiar melodies or planning and realising their own group composition. Collaborations between artists across art forms would add further creative possibilities.

4.7.3. The Guth project

In the final year of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency (2003/2004), an important project was undertaken as a direct consequence of the Vogler residency. Guth, a traditional music programme, was implemented in eight primary schools over a twenty week period with funding and other support from the Arts Council and Sligo County Council Arts Office. Guth is instructive in several ways that are relevant to the current study. For that reason and because of its close affiliation with the Vogler primary curriculum support programme, it is treated in some detail in Appendix One.

⁵⁰ Her work on the primary curriculum did not involve any degree of direct involvement with the Vogler Quartet



Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, McFibbis Centre, Enniscrone, 2000.

Section Five - The experience of the organising partners

5.1. The context

While the focus of this report is on the curriculum support programme at primary level, the organising partners did not experience the educational strand of the residency in isolation. Each agency had varying degrees of interest in the performance and tuition strands, and experienced numerous direct and indirect crossovers between them. As a result, the different strands of the residency are not separated out in this section but are considered as a whole. While there is a brief look at the ways in which outcomes have been sustained since the conclusion of the residency, this section focuses mainly on the learning that emerged with regard to the planning and provision of long-term music interventions and the process of partnership.

5.2. The impact

5.2.1. Practical outcomes

In the evaluation of the initial phases of the residency in 2003, it was found that partners benefited from the:

- Combination of expertise in the partnership group
- Utilisation of learning for other strategic purposes specific to their own organisations
- Development of a more sophisticated understanding of strategic partnership

In more specific terms, it found that Sligo County Council Arts Office had established a developmental remit and been recognised as a key agency in defining local arts development. It also found that Music Network had gained a greater understanding of local arts development and music education, and that its profile as an expert agency in these areas had improved as a result. These outcomes are still relevant a year after the formal conclusion of the residency. In some cases they have strengthened with the passage of time. Additional points worth noting in this regard include:

Profile - The profile of all partner agencies increased at local, national and international levels, among arts communities, educationalists and the general public. Recognition at local level has been particularly valuable for both the local authority arts office and Music Network. The Arts Council, on the other hand, has found the increased profile among local authority arts officers beneficial at national level.

The development of valuable relationships - Valuable relationships have been established both internally and externally. In many cases these relationships demonstrate potential for ongoing collaboration into the future. Internally, relationships between partner organisations have strengthened over time. Despite earlier difficulties in communications and consistency,⁵¹ a better understanding has developed between organisations, and individual partners expressed

⁵¹ See *Vogler Quartet in Sligo - Evaluation Report - interactions* (2003)

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enthusiasm for further opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration. The additional educational expertise, which has been brought to the partnership by the inclusion of Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick, has been welcomed, as has the establishment of a research link with the Department of Education and Science.

Externally, positive relationships have been cultivated at local level with teachers, musicians, promoters, and other stakeholders, leading to increased levels of trust and the opening of some channels of communication that were previously closed. At international level, the key relationship with the Vogler Quartet will continue to impact on music planning and provision at all levels, with opportunities to build on shared learning and experience. Valuable linkages were also formed with a range of other Irish and international musicians and composers over the life of the residency.

5.2.2. Learning outcomes

For agencies concerned with the issues of policy and practice, perhaps the most important outcomes related to changes or developments in thinking and the way in which new learning has been acknowledged and applied, or can be applied in the future. Examples of this include:

The planning and provision of live music in education

- The ongoing link between Sligo

County Council Arts Office and Music Network has already led to significant shifts in the planning and practice of live music in the classroom. The learning from early Music Network projects in Dublin and Kerry influenced the structure of the curriculum support programme in Sligo, which in turn, fed back into the Music Network study of local music education provision and Feasibility Study report.⁵²

An expanded vision of the role of touring musicians

- The Vogler residency challenged thinking around the role of professional touring musicians. It placed the ensemble as a central resource around which locally owned music education and development programmes could develop. This has raised new possibilities for the Arts Council, Music Network, and Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick, all of which are interested in exploring the implications at national level.

The further validation of the school as a legitimate site for art of a high quality

- One distinguishing feature of the Vogler residency, was the fact that it offered children access to the same high quality performance as was offered to the concert-going public. Schools based performances and workshops were accorded similar value to those in more conventional arts settings. For the organising partners, the positive outcomes of this approach have reinforced the validation of schools as legitimate sites for collaboration with professional artists, including artists of exceptional

quality. It has created a basis from which the different agencies can advocate for the inclusion of educational aspects in other music and artists' residencies.

The nature of artists' residencies - Partner organisations have come to see the nature of artists' residencies as a subject for further interrogation. They have moved some way in clarifying their current understanding of the concept, identifying a small number of fundamental elements, which characterised the Sligo experience. These include:

- a sustained professional collaboration between artists and a diversity of groups, communities and organisations
- a programme structured around local needs and contributing to local capacity
- a means of introducing fresh, innovative ways of thinking about art and working with professional artists

Flexibility and time were the two key factors that facilitated the effective implementation of these elements in Sligo. While the issue of time requires little illustration, it is interesting to note how the issue of flexibility underpinned the process from the start. For example, it was envisaged that the members of the quartet would take up full-time residence in Sligo as part of their contract, but it transpired that this would not work for them. In the context of the main aims and objectives of the Sligo residency, this was not an insurmountable difficulty, and their 'residence'

was organised on a structured visiting basis. Each residency partnership needs to examine its own priorities and determine which elements are central to their purpose, rather than applying an inflexible template.

The development of flexible training provision

- Informed by learning from the Vogler residency and other arts education experiences in the past, partner organisations from both arts and education sectors have acknowledged the pressing need for a range of flexible training measures for musicians who engage in collaborative education work. The partner organisations are well placed to advocate and contribute to future provision from a range of different angles. Music Network already has a background in Continuing Professional Development training and mentoring for musicians, while Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick provides full time music education training. The Arts Council has a funding relationship with clients engaged in various forms of arts education training and has prioritised training for artists involved in this area of work in its recent draft strategy.⁵³

⁵² A National System of Local Music Education Services - Report of a Feasibility Study - Music Network (2003)

⁵³ In Partnership for the Arts - Draft Strategy (2005), The Arts Council prioritises a partnership approach to 'target resources at further collaboration between the arts and school communities including professional development and training opportunities for artists and key personnel in arts organisations and the development of a mentoring programme for artists and facilitation of dialogue and exchange between those working in the field.'

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A regular updating of skills is required, whether musicians choose to work in schools as a fundamental part of their artistic practice, or whether they are engaged more sporadically. As well as formal training courses for professional musicians, partner organisations have observed the need for further opportunities for:

- skill-sharing and mentoring among musicians
- facilitated critical reflection among musicians
- skill-sharing between musicians and teachers
- the sharing of artistic and educational understandings and approaches between musicians and teachers
- the ongoing gathering and dissemination of up to date information relating to collaborative practice among musicians, teachers, trainers, facilitators and mediators

A clearer understanding of partnership and what it entails

- The experience of working in partnership over a number of years has generated learning not just with regard to residencies and music education and development, but also with regard to the nature of partnership itself.

Representatives of partner organisations identified an increased understanding of the process of working together and an increased value on the:

- clear articulation of the rationale, purpose, strategy, aims and objectives of the partnership

- management of the process and the resources required to undertake this task
- research and development period
- structures that facilitate ongoing communication and evaluation including clarification of:
 - timeframe
 - representation
 - decision making
 - roles and responsibilities
 - funding
 - planning, evaluation and dissemination processes
 - procedures to address any difficulties that may arise

An example of the way in which the learning has been acknowledged and applied in one of the partner organisations can be found in the emerging Arts Council Strategy⁵⁴ which identifies partnership as central to its way of working in the future. The experience of participating in the Vogler partnership contributed to this significant change in approach. Arts Council representatives recall that participation was particularly challenging in the beginning as it represented an invitation to move beyond their traditional roles of funding and monitoring, and take a role in problem-solving and learning. The value of this process became increasingly apparent over the years.

⁵⁴ *Partnership for the Arts - Draft Strategy* - The Arts Council (2005)

5.3. Future actions

Based on their experiences of the residency and the findings of this and other related pieces of research, the partners plan to channel their enhanced understandings of education and local music development into arts and education policies at local and national level.

At local level, Sligo County Council will draw up proposals for policy backed provision, which will emphasise further structured linkages with local music resources and will call for participation by all who can contribute to the music development process in the future.

Opportunities exist to strengthen existing links with the Sligo Academy of Music, Con Brio, the model:iland arts centre in Sligo town and the Sligo Early Music Ensemble, and to explore possibilities for future collaboration with key agencies such as the Sligo Education Centre (including the cuiditheori/ P.C.S.P) and Sligo VEC.

At national level, the partners will collaborate in exploring practical opportunities to:

- consolidate the learning at local level in Sligo
- further the relationship with the Department of Education and Science
- disseminate the learning at local, national and international levels
- identify options for adaptability and transferability
- explore opportunities to build on shared knowledge and expertise in - order to design (a) training course(s) that will sustain the interface between musicians/artists and educators
- review and develop the Vogler Partner Steering Group structure and processes to maximise effective collaboration into the future⁵⁵

⁵⁵ An interesting framework for partnership collaboration can be found from in *Red Lines Between the Fingers - A Review of the IMMA/ Breaking the Cycle Project* p. 99 - 104 (2003) - IMMA



Tim Vogler (first violin), Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, St. Brendan's National School, Cartron, 1999.

Section Six - Conclusion

The *Vogler Quartet in Sligo Evaluation Report* (2003) concluded with the observation that 'It is rare that one is invited to evaluate a project where the outcome is so positive'. From the feedback of stakeholders one year after the residency formally concluded, it would appear that not only have the main positive outcomes been sustained but that the local music infrastructure, which was carefully built up over the five years of the residency, is now ripe for further development. From the outset, the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency was planned and implemented in a long-term developmental context and it is important that the conclusion of the Vogler residency is seen as a further step along this path rather than the end of the journey.

In music education, the residency paved the way towards the integration of live music performance in the primary curriculum. 'Vogler teachers' now represent an important music resource in the county but further support is required if they are to build on the enthusiasm, confidence, knowledge and skills they acquired, and ultimately to share these skills with their peers. In particular they require access to a diversity of live music programmes of high artistic and pedagogical quality incorporating integrated resources, training and support from a facilitator/ team of facilitators.

Teachers also require support to develop structured links with the other two strands in the residency programme i.e. performance and, more particularly, instrumental tuition. The need for

facilitated networking emerged repeatedly in interviews with different stakeholders who see collaboration as 'a good thing', but who remain unclear as to how to make it happen and, in some cases, nervous about time and resources it would involve. Nonetheless, it is instructive to reflect on the way in which the provision of instrumental tuition significantly enhanced the positive musical experience of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme for a small number of children attending classes at Sligo Academy of Music. It was unfortunate that such tuition was not available to all of the children participating in the programme due to the lack of a locally accessible or peripatetic instrumental tuition scheme covering the county. This was a missed opportunity that could be usefully addressed in future curriculum support programmes.

Much of the success of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme can be attributed to the way in which the residency operated at two distinct levels, fostering a sense of local ownership within a larger context of policy and provision at national level. The Vogler Partners Steering Group is well placed to build on positive outcomes of the programme by capitalising on a range of emerging opportunities at local, national and international level. For example, the development of structured links between schools and local music resources in Sligo will take place against a national backdrop where the issue of instrumental tuition provision is currently on the

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agenda of a number of key agencies in the areas of music/arts and education. A recent Feasibility Study published by Music Network proposed the creation of a national system of Local Music Education Services⁵⁶ that would be 'publicly supported, socially inclusive, community focused, of high quality, to complement the teaching and learning of music in the classroom.' The Arts Council has committed to advocate for full implementation of this system and the Department of Education and Science has approved pilot programmes for County Donegal and the cities of Dublin and Limerick. Such a system could underpin the further development of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme in Sligo and would create opportunities for shared learning in the

development of future models of provision at national level.

In the context of this research, which highlights the need for further specialised training for musicians interested in working in educational settings, it is interesting to note Music Network's commitment to the further development of Continuing Professional Development training and mentoring opportunities. Collaboration in this area could give rise to mutual learning and resource building⁵⁷ at all levels, with valuable experience and resources to be found among the members of the Vogler primary curriculum support team, The Arts Council and Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick.



Mother and child enjoying a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, Riverstown Hall, 2001.

⁵⁶ *A National System of Local Music Education Services - Report of a Feasibility Study* - Music Network (2003). At local level, the report proposes the establishment of partnerships under the auspices of the City/County Development Boards with members from local statutory agencies as well as those representing education, arts and community interests, with key service-delivery roles performed by VECs and Education Centres.

⁵⁷ Besides providing informal training and support for the members of the Vogler Quartet, Aileen Donagher McGowan highlighted an interesting model of training for musicians in France in her report for Sligo County Council Arts Office: *Bringing Live Music to the Classroom: Exploring the benefits to teachers, musicians and students - A report on findings of comparative study of music initiatives* (2004). This model offers a full-time two year course to trained professional musicians and equips them to work in collaboration with teachers in schools

The recently produced Arts Council Draft Strategy⁵⁸ also provides an interesting context for the consolidation of the learning from Vogler primary curriculum support programme⁵⁹. There is a resonance between the discussion of issues of quality, professional training, funding and resourcing in the Arts Council document and the learning that has emerged from the Sligo experience. The potential for future cross-fertilisation of ideas and the utilisation of local experience in informing national policy is considerable and the Arts Council's emerging role as advocate could help facilitate the necessary dialogue at government level.

Overall, the Vogler primary curriculum support programme benefited from a long term developmental approach that emphasised capacity building at local level and drew on cross-sectoral expertise at national level. It is important that the learning is consolidated and effectively disseminated over the coming years in order to influence future planning and provision. Issues of adaptability and transferability will require further exploration in order to distinguish genre-specific issues and strategies from those that apply across a range of genres and art forms in the classroom. The analysis of the Guth project (see Appendix One) is particularly interesting in this regard as it illustrates the benefits of transferring learning from one project to another without the need for slavish repetition.

Consolidation will depend on harnessing support on the ground and at policy-making level. It will require the continued commitment of the Vogler Partners Steering Group, which can draw on a deep pool of information, experience and resources at home and abroad, and the further development of a close working relationship with the Department of Education and Science. With such support and commitment, the Vogler primary curriculum support programme has the potential to develop into an effective and enabling mechanism for bringing live music performance into schools and informing arts education policy and practice, not just in Sligo but across the country.

To this end, it is hoped that the present research report, especially the findings and analysis of the Vogler primary curriculum support programme in Section Four, will inform future policy and practice both locally and nationally.

⁵⁸ *Partnership for the Arts - Draft Strategy* (2005) - The Arts Council

⁵⁹ The Arts Council is also working in partnership on an arts education document entitled 'Towards Best Practice'. It is hoped that the research into the Vogler primary curriculum support programme can feed into this work.

Appendices

Appendix One and Appendix Two contain details of two different education programmes that were designed and delivered during the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency. They are comparative in intent and look at:

- The impact of the Guth Project, a programme delivered in primary schools by traditional singer and musician Colm O'Donnell, and the elements that contributed to its most successful outcomes
- The impact of the Vogler Second Level Programme and the factors underpinning its more successful elements, with a particular focus on the learning that emerged for the different stakeholders involved

Appendix Three and Appendix Four contain a brief overview of the instrumental tuition and performance strands of the residency by way of context for the Vogler primary curriculum programme. These appendices describe the main ways in which the residency continues to impact on the areas of instrumental tuition and performance in Sligo, one year after its conclusion. Proposals for the future are also included.

Appendix Five contains a list of literature consulted in the course of the research.

Appendix Six contains a list of the participants in the research process.

Appendix Seven outlines the research brief.

Appendix Eight illustrates the spread of primary schools that participated in the programme by way of a map of County Sligo.

Appendix One

The Guth⁶⁰ project with Colm O'Donnell

1.1. A comparative approach

This brief exploration of the Guth project focuses on the similarities and contrasts with the Vogler primary curriculum support programme.

1.2. Background

The Guth project arose as a direct consequence of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency. It was initiated by traditional singer and musician Colm O'Donnell in collaboration with two teachers from the Vogler primary curriculum support programme who were keen to explore a similar approach to traditional music in the primary classroom. Following conversations with these teachers, Colm approached Sligo County Council Arts Office for support and the Guth project was devised using structures and learning from the Vogler experience. The facilitator from the primary curriculum support programme contributed to the planning process and advised the Colm with regard to classroom practice and the development of appropriate resources. With support from Sligo County Council Arts Office, a successful application was made for Arts Council funding and a twenty-week traditional music programme was implemented in eight schools around the county in the academic year 2003/2004.

The Guth project was notable for the way in which it incorporated many of the successful features of the Vogler programme in a traditional music context, focussing particularly on voice work and bodhrán/ percussion and using traditional songs and folklore as resource material. It retained the curriculum support programme structure with teachers delivering elements of the programme between visits by the musician.

While the Vogler primary curriculum support facilitator contributed to the programme, she did not have a central role and the traditional music project did not incorporate formal training for teachers or the provision of resource packs. The projects also differed in terms of duration and frequency of the artists' visits. The Guth project took place over one academic year with children participating in artist-led workshops every week over a single ten-week period. In comparison, the Vogler primary curriculum support programme took place over a five-year period⁶¹ with the children participating in artist-led workshops just twice a year, and teachers delivering the programme in between times.

1.3. The impact of the Guth project on the children

In terms of attitudes, the children enjoyed the exposure to live music and song in the classroom and built very positive relationships with the musician. Teachers described how the children felt 'safe, confident and free' to express themselves

⁶⁰ Guth is the Irish word for 'voice'.

⁶¹ While some children took part in the programme every year over the five year period, others participated for shorter periods

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and contribute to the workshops. They found the material funny and enjoyable, and rich for interpretation. The project appeared to have a particularly powerful impact on a small number of children with special needs, some of whom were wary of participation at first, but who gained significant levels of confidence and pride in their musical abilities.

In terms of knowledge and skills, the children learned songs in English and Irish and improved their skills and confidence in performance. They learned to lilt and to play the bodhrán and the spoons. They composed a group song with other schools, and developed an understanding of rhythm and scansion. They also studied the historical and social contexts in which the songs were written and developed, exploring additional elements of geography, art, and environmental studies. Some children, who discovered abilities in areas such as lyric writing and lilt, have successfully maintained and developed these interests beyond the Guth project.

1.4. The impact on the teachers

Teachers from the Vogler residency built on their experience and applied their prior learning during the Guth project. For those already familiar with traditional music, it was an opportunity to be more adventurous and creative, as they could apply the ideas with more confidence. Some were involved in the planning process. They felt their experience in the Vogler programme had

brought them to a point where they were confident and assured in collaborating with a professional musician in this way.

1.5. The impact on the musician

In terms of attitudes, Colm enjoyed the contact with the children and the teachers. He particularly enjoyed the creativity exhibited by the children and grew more confident in his ability to facilitate that creativity. He became more aware of the importance of pedagogical skills and more enthusiastic about developing such skills. Over the course of the project, he grew to value two-way communication and collaboration with teachers. Colm's interest in working with children increase as a result of his experience. He is due to take up a new role as Composer-in-residence in the Coleman Irish Music Centre in Gurteen where he will work with children attending music classes in a programme that will be informed by Guth.

In terms of knowledge and skills, Colm discovered the importance of identifying suitable repertoire and adapting it where necessary. His ability to select songs that were rich in educational potential increased over the year. Songs that employed imagery and symbolism to tell their stories were found to be particularly effective in stimulating the interpretive powers of the children. He developed a greater understanding of children and their reactions to different musical stimuli, and his classroom management and

practice improved. He gained a greater awareness of different learning styles and the importance of setting an appropriate and inclusive pace. With support from the teachers and the facilitator, he gained skills in adapting performance to the needs of the music curriculum and expanding its reference to a range of other subjects.

1.6. Key factors influencing the success of the project

In terms of content and structure:

- ideas from the Vogler programme, particularly the use of themes and cross-curricular approaches, which were easily and effectively applied
- the principle of inclusion of all children regardless of musical ability
- collaborative planning between teachers and musician which gave rise to additional ideas for enhancing the educational potential of traditional performance
- the wide-ranging repertoire of songs and stories

In terms of delivery:

- the regularity of contact between the children/ teachers and the musician who visited weekly over a ten week period
- the musician's 'gentle and easy manner', which created a positive learning atmosphere
- the musician's ability to elicit

- contributions and responses from all children regardless of musical or learning abilities
- strong, positive relationships between the teachers and the musician
- the shared delivery of the programme, which gave teachers responsibility for the preparation of material between visits
- the support and advice of the teachers and their sharing of appropriate pedagogical approaches with the musician
- the advice of the facilitator and her support in recording the resource CD

In terms of resources:

- The production of a CD with songs from the programme
- Sheets of music and words drawn up by the musician, with suggestions for variations, accompaniments etc.

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1.7. Future actions:

Incorporate more structured R+ D time for musicians - Increased attention to research and development could have contributed further to the success of the Guth programme. The musician did not recognise the importance of this until after the residency ended. If planning a similar programme in the future, for example, he would schedule in a visit to the National Traditional Music Archive in order to research repertoire.

Incorporate the advantages of working by ear - Children with literacy difficulties can be facilitated to participate in workshops where the focus is on listening and repeating, rather than on written lyrics or notation, and Colm believed that all of the children would better remember the songs in this way.

The inclusion of voice work and bodhrán/ percussion - Voice work and bodhrán/ percussion provide flexible, effective and enjoyable entry points to the traditional arts, and can be easily supplemented by the introduction of other instruments.

The need for commitment from participating schools - The musical experience was more positive for children in schools where there was a clear commitment to the programme.

Some element of agreement with the school would provide clarification of the support and resources expected during the residency.

Documentation of the artist's experience - Again, in hindsight, Colm regretted the lack of documentation of his experience. In future projects, documentation should be prioritised in order to contribute to dialogue with other traditional singers and musicians interested in working with schools.

Attention to budget/ numbers of schools - Due to the commitment of the Arts Office to address educational needs across a wide spectrum including geographical spread, there was a lot of travelling from school to school. The actual level of budget and the time required for such projects could be recorded and used to inform future interventions.

Opportunities for networking among musicians involved in education - Learning could be shared if musicians were facilitated to come together to pool ideas and experiences, and explore the development of resources. However, networking events are more likely to be effective in the context of employment opportunities, otherwise musicians will not have time to participate.

Networking at organisational level - Links are needed between performance related agencies and those involved in education. Music organisations should be involved in order to

promote music education work as an option for traditional musicians as well as for musicians from other genres.

1.7. Research commentary:

It is interesting to note that the same key factors of good relationships, shared delivery and clear, appropriate communications underpinned the success of the Guth project, within the framework of a well structured programme featuring high quality music performance linked directly to the curriculum and backed up with user-friendly resources.

It is also worth noting a small number of significant differences, some of which added to the experience, some of which lessened the impact and some of which were equally valid, just different.

Issues of nationality and culture - It is interesting to note the many successes of both programmes, despite the differences in musical genres, cultures and traditions. Each brought distinct points of interest and educational potential for the children. Their interest in the Vogler Quartet, stemmed partly from their curiosity about life in Germany, and the life of professional touring musicians who played in

cities around the world. They learned elements of German history and geography and were exposed to a new musical culture. In contrast, Colm O'Donnell connected them to the history, geography and musical culture that was all around them, but which often went unnoticed. It would appear that nationality and culture are issues of central importance, but only insofar as they are integrated into the learning process, regardless of their particularities.

Regularity of visits - A system of weekly visits to participating schools was effective in strengthening the positive relationships between musician, the children and teachers, and facilitating communication. It also provided focus and continuity. While all of these positive effects were present in the Vogler programme, they could have been stronger with more frequent direct contact between the musicians and the schools.⁶²

Working by ear vs. notation - There were differences of opinion with regard to the advantages and disadvantages of working by

⁶² In general, the Vogler Quartet visited schools twice in the year.

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ear as opposed to incorporating notation. Perhaps the only conclusion that can be drawn is that there is room for both and neither should be neglected. The Guth project was particularly strong in terms of inclusion, and the focus on aural work contributed to this. However, the project missed out on opportunities to link with notation, as proposed in the music curriculum. It could be done creatively, putting the experience of music making first, then extrapolating the notation from the experience. The full support of a facilitator may be needed in this regard.

Back-up resources - While the music sheets and CD were found to be useful, the Guth project suffered from the lack of an organised music pack. This would have supported teachers more in their planning and delivery of the programme between visits, and which would have encouraged them to sustain the work after the residency finished.

The level of contact with a facilitator - There was significantly less input with the facilitator in the Guth project, which limited the application of all of the areas of learning from the Vogler programme.

Appendix Two

The Vogler Second Level School Programme

2.1. A comparative approach

This is a brief exploration of the Vogler programme at second level and the key factors underpinning its more successful elements. It focuses mainly on the similarities and contrasts with the programme at primary level. For this reason, it is relevant to acknowledge from the outset that the secondary programme did not provide as positive an experience, and that levels of energy and enthusiasm were lower among the teachers, musicians and facilitator interviewed, despite the positive outcomes for students. Issues of communications, time, skills, environment and the sharing of responsibilities underpinned many of the difficulties experienced.

2.2. An evolving programme

The first striking similarity with the primary programme was the flexibility of the structure, which incorporated a number of changes in direction and delivery, on the basis of ongoing evaluation. After three years of focusing on transition year students, the programme shifted its attention to students at either end of the junior and senior cycles, and for a number of reasons⁶³ the programme delivery team welcomed this change. The impact, as outlined below, refers to the effects of the programme in final two years.

2.3. The context

The teachers who were interviewed described their schools as being 'musically starved' before the residency. They had no tradition of having musicians or composers in residence and very little priority was given to music. The very fact of being included in the Vogler Residency was important for this reason. It created more of a focus on music in the school and provided parents with an opportunity to see their children performing alongside the quartet in the final year.

2.4. The impact on the children⁶⁴

In terms of attitudes, the students enjoyed the contact with the members of the quartet and the facilitator who designed and helped deliver the programme. They enjoyed the performances in the classroom and were exposed a range of music they would not normally hear, including many 19th and 20th century works that were not on the curriculum. In terms of relationships, they particularly enjoyed the interaction with the facilitator, whom they perceived as '*a bit different*' and '*a bit funky*'. Their enthusiasm for music in general was increased. I spoke to two teachers, who worked with first year classes on the programme and both reported '*a dramatic change*' in the numbers wanting to do music in second year. In one school, they found themselves in the unusual position of having to curb the numbers for music due to a lack of space.⁶⁵

⁶³ See *Vogler Quartet in Sligo - Evaluation Report (2003)* - interactions

⁶⁴ No direct meetings took place with second level school students. Findings relating to the experiences of the students are based on observations made by teachers.

⁶⁵ The Vogler programme can claim a significant contribution to this phenomenon but not exclusive credit. There may be a multitude of factors including the pre-existing interests of the individual children involved.

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In terms of knowledge and skills development, the programme impacted positively on the students' knowledge of composers and recognition of repertoire and their ability to differentiate between stringed instruments in a piece of music. It also contributed to an improvement in their performance skills. At Leaving Certificate level, it contributed to their understanding of particular performance techniques, which were on the curriculum but which were merely theoretical before being demonstrated by the quartet.

2.5. The impact on the delivery team (the teachers, the facilitator and the musicians)

In contrast with the team at primary level, it was difficult for the teachers, the facilitator or the musicians to identify the impact of the programme on their own attitudes, skills or approaches. The second level teachers commented that they had been exposed to more live music in the classroom and beyond as a result of the programme. At least one teacher attended some Vogler concerts in the model::iland arts centre in Sligo town with her students. Teachers also played more string quartet repertoire in the classroom. However, the main impact on them (and on all members of the delivery team) was the learning of lessons that would impact on their practice in the future.

2.6. Key factors underpinning the more successful elements of the programme

The structure and content of the programme, which included:

- Exposure to live music by professional musicians in the classroom setting
- Opportunities for collaborative performance between musicians and students
- Encouragement of the students' creativity
- Links with the curriculum (where they occurred)⁶⁶
- Engaging content
- A non-competitive focus

The delivery of the programme, which included:

- The combined delivery of the programme by the facilitator and the teachers in advance of visits by the quartet
- The employment of a skilled educationalist to act as facilitator
- The development of a good relationship between the facilitator and the students
- The focus on collaborative performance in the final year

The design and provision of relevant resources including:

- A resource pack with a CD, programme notes etc.

2.7. Learning from the experience

The scope of this research does not allow for a detailed analysis of the key factors underpinning the second level programme. However, some valuable points of learning were recorded that could inform practice and provision in the future. Members of the second level delivery team observed the following areas that should be addressed in future interventions in secondary schools. It is interesting to note that many of the learning outcomes reflect practices that were implemented at primary level.

The point of introduction - It is very late to introduce students to a new genre of music for the first time at second level. Live music should be introduced as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of primary school, and work its way up into the secondary school system.

Skills in communication and pedagogy - The focus on interaction is just as important at second level as it is at primary, but may be more difficult to achieve. The students themselves may be at a point in their lives where they feel awkward about active participation, and the emphasis on exam results may also limit opportunities. As a result, the comparative value of artistic skills, communication skills and educational skills should be weighed carefully when selecting musicians. Musicians require advanced communication skills, a genuine liking for working with teenagers, and an understanding of appropriate pedagogical

approaches. The final requirement may not be necessary if working closely with a facilitator who is also a skilled educationalist, however their collaboration will only be effective if the musicians fully understand and value that role, and establish an agreed working method.

Flexibility of repertoire - Musicians need to be flexible with regard to repertoire. Many students at second level will require diversity if they are to stay interested, while the facilitator will require music that can be linked to specific elements of the curriculum, around which they can plan exercises or activities.

Diversity of instrumentation - While focussing on one particular musical form or arrangement, a programme should have the flexibility to introduce other instruments or genres at different points and in different ways.

The quality of relationships within the delivery team - The development of friendly, positive working relationships between teachers, facilitators and musicians cannot be taken for granted. Structured opportunities are required to build such relationships, without which effective collaboration is difficult.

Communications - Effective internal communications are essential within the delivery team, and mechanisms are needed to ensure clarity and shared understandings from the outset. Mechanisms are also required to deal with

⁶⁶ Links to the curriculum were more tenuous than in the primary programme. There was some disagreement regarding the degree of importance of the link to the curriculum as opposed to the importance of providing the students with a positive musical experience

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communication breakdown or instances of conflicting expectations. This need may be obvious in relation to teachers and musicians, but it is equally important that the role of the facilitator is fully understood and agreed and that responsibilities are clearly articulated and shared out among the team.

The level of commitment from the school - Schools need to make a commitment to ensure the necessary level of resources is supplied and maintained throughout long term programmes. While turnover of staff may be inevitable, the school should commit to identifying and briefing alternative staff members, honouring agreements around time-tabling, providing musical and other resources as required, and ensuring an appropriately hospitable environment for music making. The point was made that young people will not consider music as something valuable, special or beautiful if they are uncomfortable or cold during workshops.



Participant, Vogler Quartet, Master Class Programme, Sligo Academy of Music, Model and Niland, 2002.

2.8. Future Actions

Overall, the members of the delivery team would like to see:

A progressive programme of live music in schools that would start in primary schools and work its way up through the system into secondary schools over a number of years. In the interim, however, second level schools should not be ignored. Proposals for interim measures include:

Structured links to existing music resources -

Connections with local individuals, groups and organisations such as Con Brio, the Model and Niland arts centre, other music promoters, Sligo Academy of Music and local musicians could create opportunities for second level students to experience live music in the classroom and other suitable venues. Such interventions need to be structured specifically around the needs of the second level students and should incorporate the elements of learning outlined in Section Four.

Some practical suggestions for structure and delivery include:

- A follow up to the Vogler programme incorporating wood wind and brass
- Additional modules incorporating a range of genres and styles, especially less accessible forms such as opera, gospel and jazz
- Performance events with elements of discussion and opportunities for students to interact musically with the performers
- Performance programmes that offer the schools good value for money

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2.9. Research commentary:

While some similarities existed between the Vogler programme at second level and its primary counterpart, a number of fundamental differences contributed to the difficulties experienced by teachers, musicians and by the facilitator. At second level, these included:

- A focus on programme delivery rather than on enabling
- Poorer communications and a lack of shared understandings between teachers, musicians and facilitator
- Less developed relationships between all stakeholders
- A tenuous link to the curriculum
- A lack of scope for cross-curricular work
- Pressure from the second level timetable
- A lack of priority on music at second level (except as a potential source of points)
- The point of entry at which students were encountering unfamiliar music
- The musicians' lack of affinity with teenagers⁶⁷



Stephan Forck (cello) Vogler Quartet, performing for children in St. Brendan's National School, 2000.

⁶⁷ The lack of pedagogical skills was mentioned in relation to the second level programme. However the same factors applied in the primary level programme initially but any difficulties were overcome. The lack of mutual affinity between the musicians and the teenagers in the second level programme is one possible reason why these skills were not developed to the same degree at this level.

Appendix Three

A Brief Look at the Instrumental Tuition Strand of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency

3.1. Impact

A full account of the tuition strand can be found in the Evaluation Report (2003)⁶⁸. In this short overview, there is an emphasis on the current state of classical instrumental tuition in Sligo with particular reference to the Sligo Academy of Music (S.A.M.), rather than any detailed retrospective. The purpose of this is to provide an indication of the music infrastructure that has been built in Sligo over the last six years, the significant contribution made by the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency in this regard, and the opportunities that now exist for further development.

In brief, S.A.M. put forward proposals for the provision of locally-based instrumental tuition during the period in which the Arts Office was considering the establishment of a long-term music residency for the county. The ensuing Vogler Quartet in Sligo residency contributed to a range of positive outcomes in relation to changes in **attitude, perception, knowledge and skills** among the organisers, children and parents involved in S.A.M.

- The founder of the Academy was facilitated to research best practice in Ireland and beyond and as a result the vision

for S.A.M. altered and expanded; initiatives such as pre-instrumental courses, master classes and the development of an instrument bank were given greater priority.

- Parents and children developed a greater level of interest and enthusiasm for classical/ chamber music due to the input of the Vogler Quartet. As a result, S.A.M.'s role in providing instrumental tuition was accorded greater value. Some of the ongoing benefits⁶⁹ in this regard include:
 - Increased levels of interest in instrumental tuition (particularly strings); S.A.M. now caters for three hundred and fifty students.
 - Increased levels of interest and ability in ensemble playing; ten young quartets and an orchestra involving fifty-three children have been established with children from nine years of age upwards.
 - A greater sense of community has developed within S.A.M. Parents have grown to value the social side of music-making as much as the learning of an instrument. They are now more enthusiastic, supportive and willing to bring children to practice on Sundays, pay fees and attend concerts as required
 - Increased performance opportunities have emerged for the students as the profile of S.A.M. has grown

⁶⁸ *Vogler Quartet in Sligo - Evaluation Report (2003)* - interactions

⁶⁹ Based on research carried out in May/ June 2005

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- S.A.M. has also put more sustainable structures in place. It is now a registered charity with a board. It has developed a vision of itself as a locally owned regional resource rather than a private business concern
- S.A.M. has built valuable links not only with the members of the Vogler Quartet, but also

with the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras (IAYO). The IAYO ran summer schools in Sligo during the Vogler Spring Festival for two years running. It also runs bi-annual orchestral workshops in the North-West and has discussed possibilities with S.A.M. for the establishment of a North-West Youth Orchestra.



Niamh Crowley conducting the Junior Orchestra, Sligo Academy of Music, Sligo County Hall, 2002.

3.2. Future actions

Continued contact between S.A.M. and the Vogler Quartet

Opportunities to create effective linkages with members of the Vogler Quartet will continue to increase as the skills and abilities of the young quartets develop over time. In the short term, S.A.M. would like to incorporate a specially designed workshop and/ or performance by the Vogler Quartet into future Sligo summer schools (in collaboration with the IAYO) during upcoming Vogler Spring Festivals. The establishment of open master-classes would also benefit the children and would represent an effective marriage of tuition and performance.

Links between S.A.M. and the education programme

S.A.M. would like to be integrated into any future curriculum support programmes in the schools. It currently employs thirteen trained musicians who could be utilised in providing:

- Instrumental tuition
- Performance (both by tutors and by students)
- Curriculum support
- Live music programme development (based on specific needs of schools, teachers and students and including elements of training and resource development)

Links between S.A.M. and the performance programme

As demand for music tuition expands, so too does the need to attract and maintain high-quality music teachers in Sligo, and performance opportunities for locally based musicians would provide an additional incentive for teachers to settle in the area. Stronger links with Con Brio would be particularly useful in this regard and could give rise to a mutually beneficial relationship as S.A.M. could tap into the increasing number of parents who have a growing interest in chamber/ classical music and who represent a potential music audience.

Advanced tuition

Sligo Early Music Ensemble (SEME) would also like to see advanced music tuition and master-classes developed in conjunction with local promoters.

Networking

Facilitated networking opportunities are needed to support groups and organisations involved in tuition and performance to share information and explore possibilities for further collaboration. While the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency broke down some barriers in this regard, difficulties still exist and support is required.

Appendix Four

A Brief Look at the Performance Strand of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency

4.1. The impact

A full account of the performance strand can be found in the interactions evaluation report (2003)⁷⁰. This appendix presents a brief overview of the current situation rather than any detailed retrospective. It looks at the Vogler Spring Festival and presents feedback from other local promoters and performance based organisations such as Con Brio, the Sligo Early Music Ensemble and the model::niland arts centre.

In brief, the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency provided **increased exposure to chamber/classical music**, resulting in **increased awareness, enthusiasm and expectations of artistic quality**.

- The residency gave rise to a **new annual chamber music festival**, The Vogler Spring Festival, which takes place in Drumcliffe. Over the five years of the residency, the festival became well established as part of the national and international chamber music calendar, attracting high quality performers and composers and ever-increasing audiences from Ireland and abroad. It helped to **establish Sligo as a recognised location for classical/ chamber music** and contributed to the audience building work of Con Brio.

- With the support of the residency, Con Brio harnessed the growing awareness and enthusiasm for chamber/ classical music, **building an audience** who are described as *'educated and sophisticated'* by the promoter. Based on the observations of a key member of Con Brio, Sligo audiences generally compare favourably with audiences elsewhere for chamber/ classical music, both in terms of numbers and levels of music appreciation.
- The residency provided Con Brio with **access to musicians of exceptional quality** over a five-year period, putting positive pressure on the promoter to sustain a high level of musical quality throughout its annual programme and so meet the **raised expectations** of its audiences.
- The residency also gave Con Brio an opportunity to develop a more **professional approach** to promotion with the benefits of practical and artistic advice from Sligo County Council Arts Office, Music Network, and the Vogler Quartet. The group also received financial support, which helped to keep ticket prices reasonably low. A representative of the group described Con Brio as a *'slick operation'* that has developed considerable knowledge and skill in the area of music promotion.

- Since the conclusion of the residency, **linkages between local organisations** with an interest in promotion have been further developed through a series of informal music events that were initiated by SEME in collaboration with Con Brio and the model::niland. S.A.M. has also been involved as performers. These events have taken place in the afternoon and have targeted parents and children very successfully.

4.2. Future Actions

Continued contact with the Vogler Quartet

Local promoters would like to continue working with the Vogler Quartet through the annual Spring Festival and possibly a second annual visit in collaboration with Con Brio

Further audience-building measures

Local promoter groups would like to see further measures taken to maintain and further build audiences for chamber/ classical music and other non-commercial genres. These include:

- More opportunities for well-designed educational inputs related to high-quality musical performances, aimed at deepening the musical experience of the audience across a range of non-commercial genres⁷¹
- Clear strategies for reaching young people including support for informal music afternoons (as initiated by SEME), targeting

family groups, and incorporating performances by local professional, semi-professional and amateur musicians including teacher and student ensembles from S.A.M.

- More research into existing audiences for chamber music/ classical music, in order to explore issues of sustainability and possibilities for crossover to other genres

long-term collaborative music plan

The drawing up of a long-term music plan for Sligo would enable all musicians, music organisations and teachers to contribute to local music development in different ways and would give each individual/ organisation a set of clear, shared aims and objectives towards which they could work.

⁷⁰ Vogler Quartet in Sligo - Evaluation Report (2003) - interactions

⁷¹ One interviewee suggested that it would be beneficial to focus on a particular genre for a period of time in order to maximise the impact (as happened in the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency)

Appendix Five

Research literature

1. *Vogler Quartet in Sligo - Evaluation Report; interactions* (June 2003)
2. *The Brightening Air - County Sligo Arts Plan 2002 - 2005*; Sligo County Council (2002)
3. *A report on the evaluation of the pilot public art programme **Placing Art** by the Public Art Steering Group*; Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council (2002)
4. *A report by the Public Art Strategy Group on the future application of the Per Cent for Art Scheme by the Sligo Local Authorities*; Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council (2002)
5. *Art Best Placed - Sligo Local Authorities Public Art Plan*; Sligo County Council (2004)
6. *A National System of Local Music Education Services - Report of a Feasibility Study*; Music Network (2003)
7. *Bringing Live Music to the Classroom: Exploring the Benefits to Teachers, Musicians and Students. A report on findings of a comparative study of music initiatives*; Aileen Donagher McGowan for Sligo County Council Arts Office (2004)
8. *Data from research in progress into the impact of the Vogler primary curriculum programme*; Aileen Donagher McGowan for Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick (2005)
9. *Primary Music Curriculum*; Government of Ireland (1999)
10. *The MEND Report - A review of Music Education in Ireland, incorporating the Final Report of the Music Education National Debate (MEND phase III)*; Frank Heneghan (2001)
11. *Deaf Ears? A Report on the Provision of Music Education in Irish Schools*; Donald Herron/ The Arts Council (1985)
12. *Partnership for the Arts - Draft Strategy*; The Arts Council (2005)
13. *A Review of the Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools Scheme*; Anne Gallagher (2004)
14. *Red Lines Between The Fingers - A Review of the IMMA Breaking the Cycle Project (2002)*; Eibhlin Campbell and Anne Gallagher
15. *the arts-education interface: a mutual learning triangle?*; Harland, Lord, Stott, Kinder, Lamont and Ashworth/ the National Federation of Educational Research (2005)

Appendix Six

Participants in the research process

Primary school teachers:

Anne-Marie Breheny, Ardkeerin NS, Riverstown
 Heather Norris, Carbury NS, Sligo town
 Martin Enright, Coolbock NS, Riverstown
 Suzanne Donnelly, Coolbock NS, Riverstown
 Philomena O'Connor, SN Molaise, Grange
 Mary Mullaney, Owenbeg NS
 Catherine Murphy, SN Realt na Mara, Rossespoint
 Marie Lavin, St. Joseph's NS, Kilmactranny
 Sinead Gallagher, St. Patrick's NS, Calry
 Grace Mulligan, Scoil Christí Rí Enniscrone
 Seamus McCormack, Scoil Naomh Treasa, Ballintogher
 Elaine McHugh, Sooeey NS

Primary school children

Children from a range of classes in Ardkeerin NS
 Riverstown, Carbury NS, Sligo town, Coolbock
 NS Riverstown and Scoil Christí Rí, Enniscrone

Members of the support team who worked with teachers and musicians at primary and secondary level

Aileen Donagher McGowan (facilitator, primary level)
 Elaine Agnew (composer)
 Caroline Wynne (facilitator at secondary level)

Musicians

Members of the *Vogler Quartet*

- Stefan Fehlandt
- Stephan Forck

- Frank Reinecke
- Tim Vogler

Musician - The Guth Project

Colm O'Donnell - Traditional musician/ singer

Second level school teachers

Rosario Heaney McGriell, Ballymote Coláiste Mhuire
 Fiona McQuillan, Sligo Ursuline College

Education Resource Organisations

Lorna Gault, Sligo Education Centre

Promoters, music performance groups/ arts resource organisations

Luisa McConville, Con Brio
 Aoife Flynn, model::niland
 Rod Alston, Sligo Early Music Ensemble

Representatives of partner organisations at steering group level

Sarah Bannan, Arts Council
 Lorraine Comer, Arts Council
 Jan Hinde, Arts Council
 Dr. John O'Flynn, Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick
 Deirdre McCrea, Music Network
 Mary McAuliffe, Sligo County Council Arts Office
 Rhona Feely, Sligo County Council Arts Office

Martin Drury - Consultant to the Vogler Partner Steering Group

Appendix Seven

Research Brief

Introduction

The Vogler Partners Steering Group (VPSG)⁷² wishes to engage a researcher to undertake a study of key aspects of the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency Programme (1999-2004). The researcher will be guided during the research process by the VPSG which has retained the services of an independent facilitator to further support the research process. The research is funded by a grant from the Research and Development Committee of the Department of Education. A central but not exclusive focus of the research will be the education strand of the Vogler Quartet Residency (VQR), particularly that pertaining to curriculum support at primary school level.

Purpose of research

VQR represented a sustained investment by a range of partners, national and local, who remain committed to learning from the residency so as to inform their own policy and provision and to promote good practice generally in local arts development and arts education work, especially in the discipline of music. Accordingly the governing spirit of this research is one of genuine enquiry: what does VQR have to teach us?

The main purpose of the research is to undertake a detailed analysis of aspects of VQR that, without being prescriptive, offers clear insights designed to inform policy and practice.

The research will examine the **characteristics, practice and outcomes** of the residency, with particular focus on the music curriculum support programme, leading to an analysis of its achievements and shortcomings, with such findings offered in a fashion that would assist planning and provision by key agencies, local and national, with particular reference to the fields of music education initiatives involving professional musicians and of music development in a local arts context.

VQR was conceived as an action research project and the researcher can be confident of a responsiveness to the research discipline.

Background

The researcher will have access to a range of documentary and evaluation⁷³ materials that exist already and that provide a detailed sense of the purpose, nature and actuality of the Vogler Quartet Residency (VQR). The residency was distinguished by a number of features, most especially by its being planned and organised to address three related strands of activity: *performance; music education; and instrumental tuition*. In addition, the residency needs to be understood as having distinctive organisational characteristics: the result of a significant inter-agency partnership, replicated at local level by considerable interaction by a range of interested parties.

While the research will give precedence to the

Curriculum Support aspect of VQR, the researcher will be expected to examine aspects of all three strands as discrete areas of activity and especially their inter-relation, taking account of both *programme actions* in the three strands and *organisational actions* by all partners.

The researcher will be expected to examine all existing materials (a document archive exists) and to undertake new independent research as outlined below. As part of or parallel to the research, the VQR project will need to be contextualised by positioning it within the wider landscape of local arts development and arts / music education initiatives.

Research Task

1. Examine all aspects of VQR through existing and new research.⁷⁴
2. Establish VQR within a wider context both nationally and internationally.⁷⁵
3. Undertake a detailed review and analysis of the education strand of VQR, concentrating especially (but not exclusively) on the Curriculum Support programme.
4. Undertake a detailed review and analysis of the intersections between the three strands of the VQR programme, most especially of the intersections between the education strand and those in performance and instrumental tuition.
5. Drawing on the research and analysis outlined in 1 - 4 above, offer a series of observations and insights that are designed to be

instructive for future practice. Such observations to be informed by analysis of VQR as well as by research and evaluations undertaken around similar projects and programmes elsewhere (see item 2 above).

Research Focus

A central element of VQR was the Curriculum Support programme, designed to engage the Quartet as a resource and catalyst for music curriculum support in a number of Sligo primary schools. The VPSG is interested in a detailed examination of this area of VQR, consistent with the research task outlined above, and with due cognisance of the inter-relationship between the Curriculum Support programme and the Instrumental Tuition and Performance aspects of the residency. It is to be noted that the primary education aspect of VQR has been already the focus of research.

⁷² The partners are the Arts Council; Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick; Music Network; Sligo Arts Office / Sligo County Council.

⁷³ *Vogler Quartet in Sligo: Evaluation Report* (interactions, June 2003)

⁷⁴ A formal evaluation and a number of pieces of research pertaining to VQR are in existence. Such work and indeed this new piece of research are considered by VPSG as constituent elements of the VQR Programme which was always conceived of as an action research project.

⁷⁵ The scope of this contextualising is a matter yet to be determined. The VPSG will provide advice and assistance in this regard.

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While what follows is not intended to be exhaustive, the VPSG has identified as potential research issues:

- (1) the place of music in the participating schools during 2004-05, the first year after the residency and how that place differs (if at all) from the place of music prior to or during VQR
- (2) the experience of participant-teachers in terms of their confidence and competence as teachers of the (new) music curriculum
- (3) the experience of participant-teachers in respect of PCSP (Music) - the official Department of Education in-service training programme designed to equip teachers to deliver the new primary (music) curriculum. (The experience of VQR participants might usefully be contrasted with the experience of teachers who did not participate in the VQR Curriculum Support programme)
- (4) the observations (general and specific to their own professional development needs) of participant-teachers in relation to the impact of VQR, inclusive of their observations / recommendations concerning future similar initiatives in terms of design, delivery, resources and general 'capacity building'
- (5) the observations of secondary school teachers who had direct contact with VQR and / or whose class intake included students from primary schools where VQR education work occurred
- (6) tracking (albeit retrospectively) the Vogler Quartet's attitude, understanding and behaviour vis a vis such work in schools prior to, during and subsequent to the residency, inclusive of their analysis of achievements / shortcomings and observations about future needs. Attention should be paid to the influence of the education work on the artists' (changing) perceptions of themselves as artists and of the nature of their work
- (7) the nature and significance of the role of the various 'intermediaries' facilitating contact between teachers, children and the Vogler Quartet
- (8) the nature of the musical experiences offered in terms of musical genre and range of 'participation' and the value / significance / 'appropriateness' of the exceptional (by international standards) quality of the musicianship of VQ
- (9) the nature and range of teaching and learning styles, broadly defined
- (10) the training / professional development needs of musicians and teachers so as to work as fellow-professionals in a collaborative fashion, with possible particular observations on the implications for classically-trained musicians of working in school and other community settings
- (11) outcomes [across a range of criteria] for the school and wider community (as indicated, for example by the principal / non-participating teachers / the parents' council)
- (12) the characteristics, good and bad, of VQR [e.g. issues of musical quality; of genre; of teaching-mediation-communication capacity; of timeframe; of nationality] and the implications as to the qualities critical to any future musical resource or programme that might be central to a sustained curriculum support intervention
- (13) the interaction of VQR Education with Instrumental Tuition and Performance programmes: achievements, shortcomings, opportunities
- (14) observations concerning the congruent and competing claims and needs of 'education' work and broader 'local arts development' work and the implications for future policy and provision
- (15) the investment of resources (money, time, administrative support, space, training allocations) made by the various partners in the education aspect of VQR and the sustainability of such investment on an ongoing basis
- (16) the observations of other potential partners (e.g. Sligo Education Centre; Co. Sligo VEC) concerning VQR and any future such programmes with an education dimension
- (17) the resource (widely-defined) and inter-organisational implications, at both local and national level, of sustained and widespread provision of such curriculum support programmes
- (18) the observations of key music and arts providers in Sligo concerning the impact and value of VQR, inclusive of any changes to ongoing provision of music or for music in Sligo resulting from the residency
- (19) an 'organisational analysis' (roles; responsibilities; resourcing; implementation) of VQR, at both strategic partnership level and on-the-ground, inclusive of characteristics and behaviours that were successful and on shortcomings and how these might inform the planning of any future such initiatives

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Research Fields

In addition to the desk-based research of the extant VQR materials and the wider literature review referred to above, the researcher will be expected to undertake field research exploring the issues outlined above. As the numbers of people involved are relatively small, and all concerned are committed to the process, it is expected that the field research will be conducted via face-to-face interviews and addressed to:

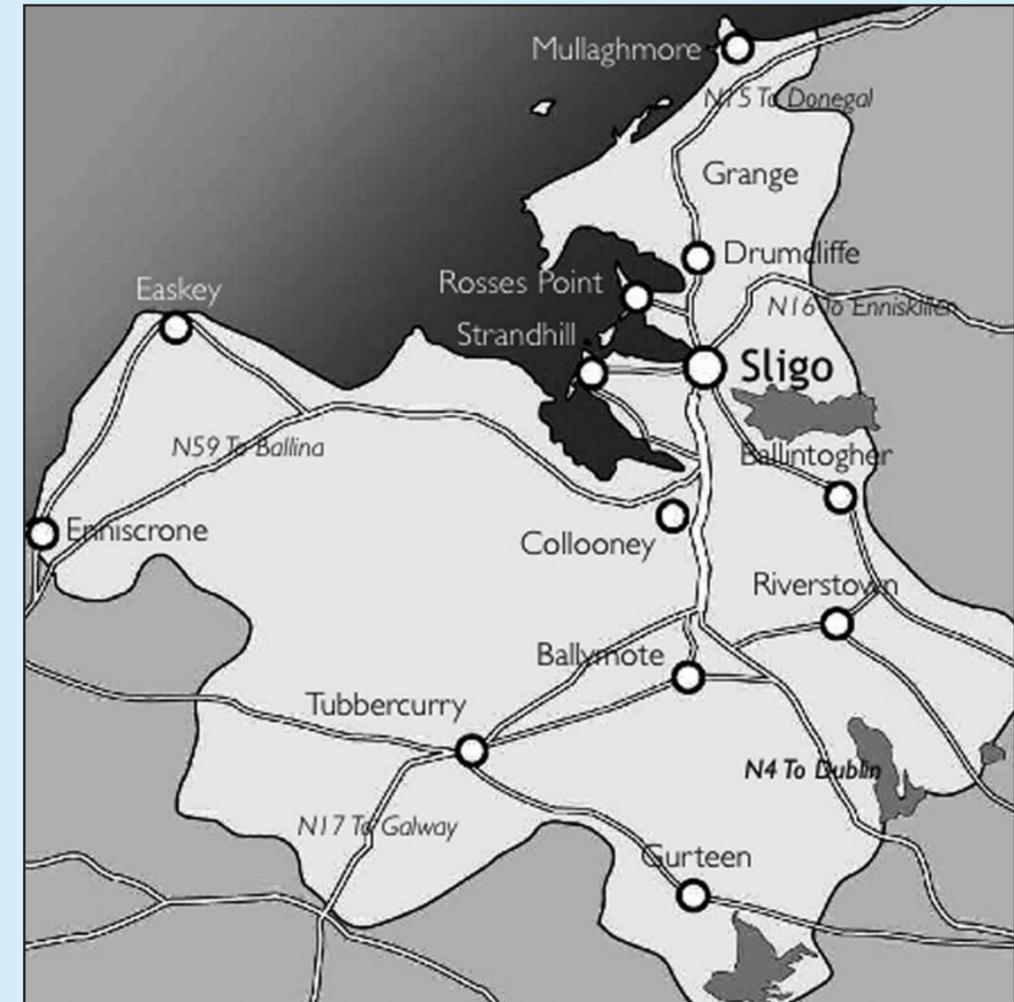
- (i) **artists** (principally the Vogler Quartet members)
- (ii) **primary schools** (participating teachers; other staff; principals; parents; secondary music teachers whose intake has included children from primary schools involved in the VQR)
- (iii) **facilitators** (curriculum co-ordinator and trainers incl. PCSP)
- (iv) **Sligo Academy of Music**
- (v) **key local music partners** (Con Brio; Sligo Early Music Ensemble)
- (vi) **Sligo Arts Office**
- (vii) **Key Personnel** in related projects or programmes
- (viii) **Vogler Partners Steering Group**



Thumbs up from one of the children arriving for a Vogler Quartet, Music Education Workshop, Riverstown, 2003.

Appendix Eight

Map of County Sligo with listing of participating schools



NORTH SLIGO

- S. N. Molaise, Grange, Co. Sligo
- Rathcormack N.S. Co. Sligo
- S.N. Realt Na Mara, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo

SOUTH SLIGO

- Moylough N.S., Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- Castlerock N.S., Aclare, Co. Sligo
- Carn N.S., Gurteen, Co. Sligo
- Sooley N.S., Sooley, Via Boyle, Co. Sligo
- St Michael's N.S., Cloonacool, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- St Joseph's N.S., Kilmactranny, Via Boyle, Co. Sligo
- Convent N.S., Ballymote, Co. Sligo
- Colaiste Mhuire, Ballymote, Post Primary, Co. Sligo
- St. Mary's College, Ballisodare, Post Primary, Co. Sligo
- St. Attracta's Community School, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo

EAST SLIGO

- Scoil Naomh Treasa, Ballintogher, Co. Sligo
- Coolbock N.S., Riverstown, Via Boyle, Co. Sligo
- Ardkeerin N.S., Riverstown, Co. Sligo

WEST SLIGO

- S. N. Asicus., Strandhill, Co. Sligo
- Enniscrone N.S., Enniscrone, Co. Sligo
- Killeenduff N.S., Easkey, Co. Sligo
- Leaffoney N.S., Kilglass, Co. Sligo
- Owenbeg N.S., Culleens P.O., Via Ballina, Sligo
- Convent of Jesus & Mary, Enniscrone, Post Primary, Co. Sligo

SLIGO TOWN

- Carbury N.S., The Mall, Sligo
- St. Brendan's, N.S., Cartron, Sligo
- Gael Scoil, Chnoc na Ri, Sligeach
- Calry N.S., Sligo
- Convent of Mercy, Post Primary, Sligo
- Ursuline Convent, Post Primary, Sligo
- Grammar School, Post Primary, Sligo

Appendix Nine

Sligo Arts Office wishes to acknowledge the commitment and support of all the teachers who participated in the Vogler Quartet, Music Education Residency Programme at Primary and Post Primary Levels.

List of Participating Teachers:

Primary

Evelyn Brady: Killeenduff NS, Easkey
 Lavinna Bray: Owenbeg NS
 Anne Marie Breheny: Ardkeerin NS, Riverstown
 Brian Cahill: Moylough NS, Tubbercurry
 Doris Clement: Leaffoney NS, Kilglass
 Suzanne Donnelly & Martin Enright:
 Coolbock NS, Riverstown
 Catherine Forde: Killeenduff NS, Easky
 Anne Gallagher: Gael Scoil, Chnoc na Ri
 Sinead Gallagher: Calry NS, Sligo
 Patricia Gawley: Castlerock, Aclare
 Dearbhla Gill: SN Realt Na Mara, Rosses Point
 Maura Gilligan: Calry NS, Sligo
 Camilla Harvey: SN Molaise, Grange
 Marie Lavin: St Joseph's NS, Kilmactranny;
 Seamus McCormack: Scoil Naomh Treasa, Ballintogher
 Elaine McHugh: Soeey NS
 Ann McIntyre: St Michael's NS, Cloonacool
 Francis Moran: Ardkeerin NS, Riverstown;
 Mary Mullaney: Owenbeg NS, Culleens P.O.
 Grace Mulligan: Enniscrone NS
 Catherine Murphy: SN Realt Na Mara, Rosses Point
 Myrtle Nairn: Leaffoney NS, Kilglass
 Gina Ní Loinsigh: Gael Scoil, Chnoc na Ri
 Heather Norris: Carbury NS, The Mall
 Philomena O'Connor: SN Molaise, Grange
 Shane O'Meara: Carn NS, Gurteen
 Margaret Prior: Rathcormac, NS
 Sr. Mary Richardson: Tubbercurry Convent NS
 Anne Ruane: SN Asicus, Strandhill
 Yvonne Sheils: Gael Scoil, Chnoc na Ri
 Ruth Sweeney: Scoil Naomh Treasa, Ballintogher

Post Primary

Rosario Heaney McGriel, Music Teacher,
 Colaiste Mhuire, Ballymote, Co. Sligo
 Taryn Smith, Head of Transition,
 St Mary's College, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo
 Fiona McQuillan, Music Teacher; Ursuline College, Sligo
 Siobhan Hall, Music Teacher; Mercy College, Sligo
 Keith O'Donnell, Music Teacher; Grammar School, Sligo
 Miriam McDonald, Music Teacher; St Attracta's
 Community School, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
 Marie Johnson, Music Teacher; Colaiste Mhuire,
 Ballymote, Co. Sligo
 Margo Henry, Music Teacher; Grammar School, Sligo
 Marie Moore, Music Teacher; Convent of Jesus & Mary,
 Enniscrone, Co. Sligo