

# **Musical Futures: An Australian Perspective**

Findings from a Victorian Pilot study.



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## Musical Futures: An Australian Perspective Executive Summary

*You know how you go to school on Monday and you think, “No, another school week again”, but then, I hold out until Friday and then I really enjoy it, cos Friday’s my Musical Futures day...*

**Musical Futures** is an approach to music education in the classroom that has the capacity to involve all students in performing and composing. Numerous academics, reports and teachers have noted that music in secondary schools as a school subject is not a popular and stimulating element of the curriculum. **Musical Futures** aims to make secondary classroom music more relevant by engaging young people in the practices of real world musicians. It recognises that the way in which popular musicians learn is quite different from the structure of the traditional music classroom. The **Musical Futures** approach was implemented in 10 Victorian government schools in terms 2 and 3 in 2010 and the research shows evidence of a powerful impact on 11 music teachers and over 1,200 of their students.

The teachers are more confident about facilitating student learning in a range of musical genres, teaching instrumental skills and teaching music in general. Ten of the eleven felt they had become more effective teachers and all eleven were enjoying teaching more. The Musical Futures program had only been running in all but one of the schools for two terms but the teacher perceptions of the student outcomes were overwhelmingly positive. They felt there was a positive impact on:

- students’ attitudes towards music,
- self-esteem in relation to music,
- love of music,
- group work,
- on-task behaviour, and
- general behaviour in class.

Students create better musical performances than previously, have developed a greater range of musical skills, are able to demonstrate higher levels of attainment than previously, have enhanced listening skills, instrumental skills and strategies for composition, as well as developing a better understanding of a range of musical genres. Overall, the teachers indicated that the improvement in musical skills of their students had exceeded their expectations.

What the teachers thought about themselves:	Agree	The teachers thought their students:	Agree
Musical Futures helped me to improve my music teaching.	100%	have more positive attitudes towards music.	100%
I am more confident about teaching music.	90%	are generally better behaved in music lessons.	90%
I enjoy teaching music more than previously.	100%	are better able to stay on task.	90%
I have adapted Musical Futures to meet the individual needs of my students.	100%	work together more effectively in music tasks.	100%
		generally have improved levels of self-esteem in relation to music.	80%
Musical Futures would be able to be implemented successfully in other schools.	100%	have learnt to play at least one musical instrument.	100%
		have developed a greater range of strategies for composing.	80%
Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of Musical Futures.	100%	demonstrate higher levels of musical attainment than they did previously	90%

The two case studies reinforced the survey findings with evidence of impact in three main areas: engagement, social learning and the development of musical knowledge and skills.

Engagement	Social Learning	Musical Knowledge & Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students positive about coming to class &amp; keen to learn</li> <li>• very good behaviour in MF classes</li> <li>• previously reluctant children now positive about music</li> <li>• increased uptake of extra-curricula instrumental tuition</li> <li>• many students prefer music over other subjects</li> <li>• students look forward to school generally</li> <li>• students engage in music at home</li> <li>• some students feel MF contributes to well-being</li> <li>• strong interest in further music study – after school, lunchtimes</li> <li>• students desire to improve music skills and knowledge</li> <li>• students report a sense of accomplishment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved peer-peer mentoring, sharing of resources &amp; information</li> <li>• report learning new things about friends/classmates</li> <li>• self-moderated behaviour and choices</li> <li>• express &amp; understand team participation &amp; cooperation can lead to increased productivity &amp; improved outcomes</li> <li>• opportunities to help others boost self-confidence</li> <li>• acknowledge teamwork &amp; problem solving transfers to other learning areas</li> <li>• new friendships formed through music – music “connects” people</li> <li>• peers are reportedly very supportive of each other</li> <li>• development of leadership skills</li> <li>• students who generally ‘clash’ on a personal level, work cooperatively in mf classes</li> <li>• learned strategies to deal with difficult team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skills on a range of instruments</li> <li>• acknowledge ensemble playing aids development</li> <li>• learned how to read “sheet music”</li> <li>• ability to improvise</li> <li>• new songs are easier to learn indicating development</li> <li>• students are able to articulate technical difficulties</li> <li>• awareness of strategies to overcome difficulties in learning new music</li> <li>• students report an improvement in their ability to hear and identify all of the components in new recorded music</li> <li>• understanding that practice = improvement</li> <li>• comfortable use of “metalanguage” i.e. the language associated with the discipline</li> <li>• highly articulate students demonstrated a well-developed capacity to reflect on and discuss music &amp; musical futures</li> </ul>

The **Musical Futures** approach is a music pedagogy that clearly and demonstrably engages and empowers students in music and benefits other areas of learning in schools. It is a cost-efficient as well as an effective pedagogy for engaging all students in learning about music and developing performance skills. The evidence reported here also shows this approach can contribute to the ten Australian Curriculum capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT, thinking skills, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and social competence.

# Musical Futures: An Australian Perspective

## Background

Numerous academics, reports and teachers have noted that music in secondary schools as a school subject is frequently not a popular and stimulating element of the curriculum: in fact, it seems to be of little interest or relevance to many students (for example, Ross, 1995; Plummeridge, 1997; Green, 2002; National Review of School Music Education, 2005; St George, 2010). On the other hand, numerous teenagers have their own bands; invest in mp3 players and their current chart favourites; and they go to local gigs like The Big Day Out, as well as dances and parties where music features. There seems to be no problem with involvement in music outside of school but there has long been a disconnect between school music and what happens outside the formal school environment.

**Musical Futures** is a classroom music learning program that reflects the research of Lucy Green (2005, 2006, 2008a, 2008b) and the pathfinder projects (Price, 2005) that was established in the UK in 2003. It aims to make secondary classroom music more relevant to young people through engaging them in the practices of real world musicians and recognises that the way in which popular musicians learn is quite different from the pedagogy of the traditional music classroom. The foundational premise of **Musical Futures** is that “music learning is most effective when young people are engaged in making music, and when their existing passion for music is acknowledged, reflected on and built-upon in the classroom” (Musical Futures, 2010). At the heart of this approach is a commitment to:

- finding ways of engaging all young people in the 11-18 age range in meaningful, sustainable musical activities,
- making music learning relevant to young people, and connect their in-school and out-of school interests and experiences, and
- enabling young people to experience practical music making, to understand the processes of music making, and for music making to contribute to their overall social, educational and personal development.

It should be noted that this approach was initially intended for classes of students in what Australians would term “non-elective” music. It is not an instrumental tuition program of the type that some education systems support in this country, but an integration of performing, composing and listening that is organised in such a way that students gain knowledge in all areas of music, including the acquisition of instrumental skills. This kind of integration is not new. In fact, this approach to music education has long been supported in curriculum documents and frameworks in all the states and territories. What *is* new for some teachers and schools is the very practical way in which whole cohorts and classes of students can be involved in learning about and making music with relatively little professional learning and financial investment.

**Musical Futures** has been operating in a number of UK schools for over seven years and research from the Institute of Education, University of London (Hallam, Creech & McQueen, 2010) has reported favourably on the impact of the program. With the support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (which has funded the Musical Futures Project in the UK) and the NAMM (*National Association of Music Merchants*) Foundation (USA), the Australian Music Association (AMA), in collaboration with the Soundhouse and the DEECD, has piloted the program in 10 Victorian state schools in 2010. The main aim of this research was to investigate the impact of the Musical Futures approach on the music teachers in the ten Victorian pilot schools.

This report also includes feedback from Melbourne Graduate School of Education preservice music students about a Musical Futures all day workshop conducted in October, 2010.

## Research questions

1. Has Musical Futures had an impact on teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction?
2. What impact has the Musical Futures approach had on students?

## Methodology

The research methodology replicates aspects of the Hallam, Creech and McQueen (2010) research with teacher questionnaires for each of the ten pilot schools. The questionnaires were adapted slightly for the Victorian context with items related to the following areas:

- background information about the teachers;
- how Musical Futures has been implemented;
- the impact on teaching;
- the impact on students;
- the integration of Musical Futures with the VELs and the e5 instructional model;
- difficulties and constraints relating to the use of Musical Futures;
- the level of support from Senior Management Teams;
- the impact on take-up of elective music; and
- the impact on take-up of extra-curricular instrumental and vocal activities.

Two schools, Trafalgar Primary School and Carranballac College were selected as case study schools in consultation with the Soundhouse. Two members of the research team visited these schools to undertake recorded interviews with the music teachers, a focus group interview with students, and two class observations. The case study schools were also measured against an adaptation of the National Review of School Music Education's success factors for school music programs used to examine best practice music education in Victorian primary schools in 2009.

Table 1: School information (November, 2010)

Region	School	School Population	Location	Survey	Musical Futures						
					Started	Duration	Years involved	Students Involved	% of school population	Equipment Cost	Cost per student
Northern Metropolitan	Lalor North Secondary College 7 - 12	597	metropolitan	X	2010	2 terms	7-12	260	43.55	\$2,243	\$8.62
	Mill Park Secondary College 7 - 12	1713	metropolitan	X	2010	1 term	8/9	175	10.21	\$14,972	\$85.55
	The Lakes South Morang School P - 12	711	metropolitan	X	2010	2 terms	8	75	10.55	\$5,689	\$75.85
				X							
X											
Southern Metropolitan	McClelland Secondary College 7 - 12	910	metropolitan	X	2010	2 terms	8/9	180	19.78	\$15,441	\$85.78
Western Metropolitan	Carranballac College (Pt Cook) P – 9	1577	metropolitan	X	2009	2 terms	7/8	250	15.85	0	0
	Debney Park Secondary College 7 - 12	266	metropolitan		2010			-		\$899	-
Gippsland	Trafalgar Primary School P - 6	316	provincial	X	2010	2 terms	5/6	102	32.28	\$12,651	\$124.03
Loddon Mallee	Chaffey Secondary College 7- 10	567	provincial		2010			-		\$5,080	-
	Red Cliffs Secondary College 7 - 12	597	provincial	X	2010	2 terms	9/10	45	7.54	\$5,633	\$125.18
	Crusoe Secondary College 7 - 10	890	provincial	X	2010	2 terms	7 - 10	200	22.48	\$14,051	\$70.56
				<b>11</b>				<b>1287</b>		<b>\$76,659</b>	

## Findings from the survey

Eleven teachers completed the questionnaires. The majority of the schools had been implementing Musical Futures for two terms at the time of the data collection and over 1,200 students had been involved in the program. The investment in the equipment varied from nil to \$15,000 depending on what already existed in the school. Table 1 on the previous page provides a summary of information about the schools and teachers involved.

### Planning and implementation

Musical Futures was used most with Year 8 groups and the majority of teachers favoured the Informal Music Learning model followed by The Whole Curriculum Approach (Table 2). With the exception of Carranballac College that started with Musical Futures in 2009, all the schools had run the course over Terms 2 and 3 in 2010.

Table 2: Models favoured by the teachers

Model	%	n
The Whole Curriculum Approach	54.5	6
Informal Music Learning	90.0	10
Numu	36.4	4
Personalised Extra-Curricular Music	45.5	5

The teachers were largely well qualified in education and many of them have formal qualifications in contemporary popular music and jazz as well as professional performing experience in the same.

### VELS and the e5 Instructional Model

The teachers were very positive about how well Musical Futures integrated with the VELS, mainly commenting that creating, making, exploring and responding were facilitated easily by the approach (Table 3). Three teachers noted that personal learning and communication were supported. Five teachers also made comments about connections made between Musical Futures and the e5 instructional model, especially noting student involvement in engaging and exploring (Table 4).

Table 3: Teacher comments about the integration of VELS and Musical Futures

Teacher	Comments
1	Musical Futures incorporates performing, creating, listening and analysis for preparation of learning a song. It is very easy to work within VELS. It may provide opportunity for some students to more easily show levels of learning about "C".
2	The Musical Futures approach fits in very well with VELS. Allowing students to create, work in an informal approach and allowing performances to be seen, heard, evaluated
3	Creating, making, exploring, responding are the main features of VELS and Musical Futures.
4	Creating, making, exploring are the main features of VELS and Musical Futures correlates with this well
5	The creating and making/exploring and responding areas of the VELS music stream tie in with Musical Futures because the curriculum is solely about creating, making, exploring and responding to music
6	Fits in very well for all levels as it allows students to learn songs by ear. The main dimensions in music (ARB) are creating and making and exploring and responding. Musical Futures, due to its informal learning approach, creates lots of opportunities for students.
7	Music Futures integrates with VELS incredibly well. VELS in the Middle Years area of learning focuses on Creating and Making and Exploring and Responding to the Arts. For Year 7 and 8, students are required to take a more in depth approach to learning music by developing ideas to emphasise aspects of selected styles of music which are refined to enable performances. Musical Futures is a very practical approach to music with an emphasis on performance and therefore integrates with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.
8	It complements it by allowing students to work at their pace and being able to access to a structured guide. It rewards everyone by allowing them to show their improvement in an academic as well as

	musical way.
9	Very well - creating and making and exploring and responding in music plus personal learning and communication
10	Musical Futures easily fits with VELs due to the 'open ended' non-prescriptive nature of VELs. Musical Futures also tends itself to assessment in other areas of VELs such as: Personal Learning and Communication.
11	VELs can be a very flexible document in terms of The Arts so it hasn't been too difficult to use musical futures approaches and asses based on the VELs levels, especially creating and making. It also offers the opportunity to assess against some of the other domains such as Interpersonal Development and Personal Learning.

Table 4: Teacher comments about the links between Musical Futures and the e5 instructional model

Teacher	Comments
3	Engaging and Exploring are hits with students
6	The main link between MF and the e5 instructional model is in the engaging and exploring area. MF engages students mainly by allowing them the freedom to choose the songs they will be learning.
7	The e5 instructional model works well for a Musical Futures lesson. For students to be interested in Music Education, they need to be engaged. To enable this, the teacher fosters positive relations with and between students and develops shared expectations for learning and interacting. Once students are engaged, the class begins exploring the music futures concepts. This is achieved as a whole class investigation where the students explore the concepts and take ownership of the lesson. The teacher then provides meaningful explanations of the concepts using different methods to engage and then continuously elaborates on these concepts when students ask for further direction. Finally, students then communicate these concepts through performance, where effective evaluation is then conducted with students completing self-evaluations and peer evaluations.
8	Engages students passion, lets them explore their style of learning, teaches them how to explain processes to others, they are able to evaluate themselves, performances and each other.
9	Musical futures also fits very well with e5 - musical futures engages students with relevant, individualised context, explores music in a self directed manner, explain - teachers and students assist each other, elaboration is possible as students build their practical skills, evaluation of performance and recording as well as individualised progress.
10	Haven't looked at e5 with regard to Musical Future as yet...next year!

### Difficulties

There were few difficulties encountered by the teachers in implementing the program and where problems arose, they were different in each school (Table 5). While one teacher found reluctance in the instrumental staff to become involved, another teacher found the program ran smoothly thanks to the support from the instrumental staff. Another teacher noted that he would be looking for ways to offset the costs in the future.

Table 5: Difficulties in implementing Musical Futures

Teacher	Comments
1	Staffing - loss of one classroom music teacher - unskilled/untrained teachers in other music classes - reluctance from Instrumental teachers to get involved in classes
2	Limited musical knowledge in our students seemed to be our major problem. Not a great deal was done by our students who lacked basic chord/melodic knowledge - we therefore found that we had to keep on rehashing the same chords which became boring.
3	No
4	No
5	No
6	Because of Instrumental staffing support it ran smoothly
7	The school was very supportive of Musical Futures. This includes senior management to classroom teachers who are all very supportive and excited to have Musical Futures at the school. Last year, I conducted a Musical Futures lesson for all the teachers and management of the school. This gave the teachers a first hand experience of the program and an understanding of how it would operate throughout the year. Due to this,

	we have had nothing but support from senior management, teachers and the community of Point Cook.
8	Costings - cleared out the budgets and are looking at ways of offsetting costs in the future.
9	Building student capacity to work independently and in teams; developing activities to build basic skills on unfamiliar instruments.
11	Managing large groups of kids on instruments and on jam hubs - Some help from IMTs from time to time. Teaching kids to use the equipment. Getting access to resources and instrument, to name a few. We have just persevered and used trial and error to overcome difficulties.

There were only minor adjustments and adaptations to the program model that appear to be minor tailoring to the individual needs of classes and students (Table 6).

Table 6: Adaptations of the Musical Futures model.

Teacher	Comments
1	"In the Deep" - first step offer a song with parts and experience learning/group rehearsal. Then get students to research and learn a song independently.
2	Generally speaking no, I have found that students will setup accordingly to their needs and experiences. I found that if students had written good lyrics then they would ultimately set the agenda, if a guitar riff had been created then the song would change according to the riff that was being performed.
4	Not yet. No changes implemented
5	Changes are minimal. An example could be giving students roles when working in groups (band leader, session musicians) to help the group work more efficiently and effectively.
6	The main adaptation is to highlight the "Going into the deep end approach" as a basis to all the other methods.
7	I have adapted some of the MF models for my classroom. When beginning this new approach, I was concerned that the students did not have the skill set to be able to play music with their peers without developing some practical skills first (In The Deep End). Due to this, I created a new unit called 'In the Shallow End', where I chose 10 songs that were relatively easy to play. I then provided the students with chord structures and charts and they were then able to choose one song to focus on. This taught the students some of the basic elements to playing music in a band setting and familiarised them with their instrument and playing music together as a band.
8	In the process. Looking ahead to junior classes (7 & 8) and looking at primary involvement with surrounding schools.
9	I have adapted it to still include theory lessons but only as they come across the need in their MF sessions, e.g. teaching the element of texture, tone colour incl. balance after they have started playing together and struggle to hear each other and understand the roles of each musician.
10	Running with the original Musical Futures book.
11	We have adapted the approach to work with our junior band this year starting of with the "instrumental work" unit playing Toca Bonito and Tequila as well as some other pop tunes such as use somebody.

### Impact on teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction

The teachers reported that since implementing Musical Futures, they felt more confident about facilitating student learning in a range of musical genres, teaching instrumental skills and teaching music in general (Table 7). The least change in confidence was reported in relation to facilitating singing that mirrors the UK findings. Ten of the eleven respondents felt they had become more effective teachers and all the teachers were enjoying teaching more as a result of implementing Music Futures. It was agreed unanimously that they had been able to fit Musical Futures with their own approach to teaching and learning as well as being able to adapt Musical Futures to meet the individual needs of students.



Table 7: Impact of implementing Musical Futures on teachers

<b>MY TEACHING</b>						
Since implementing Musical Futures:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
I am a more effective teacher.	54.5% (6)	36.4% (4)	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
I am more confident about teaching music.	54.5% (6)	36.4% (4)	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
I enjoy teaching music more than previously.	63.6% (7)	36.4% (4)	0	0	0	11
I am more confident about facilitating singing.	36.4% (4)	18.2% (2)	36.4% (4)	9.1% (1)	0	11
I am more confident about teaching instrumental skills.	40.0% (4)	30.0% (3)	10.0% (1)	10.0% (1)	0	10
I have become more aware of the music that students engage in outside of school.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
I am more confident about facilitating student learning in a range of musical genres.	18.2% (2)	63.6% (7)	9.1% (1)	9.1% (1)	0	11
I have adapted Musical Futures to fit with my personal approach to teaching and learning.	40.0% (4)	60.0% (6)	0	0	0	11
I have adapted Musical Futures to meet the individual needs of my students.	45.5% (5)	54.5% (6)	0	0	0	11

There were a number of statements that generated unanimous agreement on the part of the teachers (Table 8). They all felt that Musical Futures was useful, had changed and improved their teaching, had changed music teaching in the school, integrated successfully with the VELs and helped students demonstrate their musical potential. They also agreed that Musical Futures helped integrate students' informal music learning with classroom activities and could be implemented successfully in other schools. There was also very strong agreement that they had observed a positive response from students and an engagement of previously disinterested students.

Table 8: Musical Futures statements

<b>MUSICAL FUTURES</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
Musical Futures helped me to improve my music teaching.	45.5% (5)	54.5% (6)	0	0	0	11
Musical Futures was very useful.	63.6% (7)	36.4% (4)	0	0	0	11
Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of Musical Futures.	45.5% (5)	54.5% (6)	0	0	0	11
Musical Futures has been integrated with previous musical activity in the school.	36.4% (4)	54.5% (6)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
Musical Futures has successfully complemented the VELs	45.5% (5)	54.5% (6)	0	0	0	11
Musical Futures has changed the way that I teach music.	45.5% (5)	45.5% (5)	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
Musical Futures will have a long-term impact on my music teaching.	72.7% (8)	18.2% (2)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
The impact of Musical Futures on my music teaching is sustainable in the long term.	54.5% (6)	36.4% (4)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
Musical Futures would be able to be implemented successfully in other schools.	63.6% (7)	36.4% (4)	0	0	0	11
I would welcome further support for implementing Musical Futures.	45.5% (5)	45.5% (5)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
I found Musical Futures difficult to use in my school.	0	18.2% (2)	0	45.5% (5)	36.4% (4)	11
The students in my classes responded well to Musical Futures.	45.5% (5)	45.5% (5)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
Musical Futures was more suitable for some groups of students than for others.	27.3% (3)	45.5% (5)	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	0	11
Musical Futures helped to integrate students' informal	27.3% (3)	72.7% (8)	0	0	0	11

music learning with classroom music activities.						
I found the Musical Futures initiative challenging to use.	0	<b>36.4% (4)</b>	18.2% (2)	27.3% (3)	18.2% (2)	11
Musical Futures is innovative.	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	27.3% (3)	9.1% (1)	9.1% (1)	0	11
Musical Futures has helped students to demonstrate their musical potential.	36.4% (4)	<b>63.6% (7)</b>	0	0	0	11
Musical Futures has helped to engage previously disinterested students.	36.4% (4)	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	18.2% (2)	0	0	11
Musical Futures supports student progression in music.	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	9.1% (1)	0	0	11

All the teachers reported that Musical Futures would have a long-term impact on their music teaching (Table 9). They commented that the approach was more engaging for students and that working and learning alongside the students was an important aspect. Noting the positive impact of the approach on students, one teacher is looking for ways to implement the pedagogy throughout his teaching.

Table 9: Teacher comments about the long-term impact of Musical Futures on their teaching.

Teacher	Comments
1	More students are engaged creating positive environment to work. Need to regularly find new resources for songs - could be time consuming.
2	We as a faculty believe that the program will support our current practices as we see this program as a vehicle to integrate all students to be involved in a band setup.
3	Musical Futures allows for self-realisation and more intense engagement on the students' behalf. This facilitates greater enjoyment
4	It seems to me that Musical Futures is the (emphasised) way to teach music - engaging more students and giving them the experience of playing (emphasised) music, and without proper tuition
5	It will impact because I am finally teaching music in a way that works for myself and the students.
6	Falls in line with what we have done previously and will continue to do so
7	Musical Futures will definitely have a long-term effect on my teaching. I have learnt many skills throughout the last year of delivering these classes. When beginning Musical Futures, I had previously been using an 18 century model of teaching, which was teacher driven and directed. By undertaking Musical Futures I have discovered that by relinquishing responsibility to the student to determine individual learning goals, powerful and relevant learning occurs. Students seem more inspired as they have more control over what they learn and how they learn it. My teaching has also developed due to learning alongside the students to achieve common goals. I have previously believed that the teacher was in the position to know everything in the classroom about the content being taught. This year, I have spent much of my time learning alongside the students where students become teachers and teachers become students.
8	It is more a natural way of teaching. This is really the way I learnt and feel it is the best way to learn
9	Seeing how students have responded positively to the program encourages me to find ways of implementing the pedagogy throughout my teaching.
10	Yes, it will have a sustainable long-term impact to teach kids informally in an engaging, hands on way.
11	It will definitely have an integral place in the long term delivery of music. There are some really strong points about the approach that engage students, such as working with friends, student choice. The hands on approach and focus on music making is really a strength of it also.

### Impact on Students and Program Benefits

Given the Musical Futures program had only been running in all but one of the schools for two terms, the teacher perceptions of the student outcomes were overwhelmingly positive (Table 10). The teachers indicated that Musical Futures had a positive impact on students' attitudes towards music, self-esteem in relation to music, love of music, group work, on-task behaviour, and general behaviour in class. Students created better musical performances than previously, had developed a greater range of musical skills, were able to demonstrate higher levels of attainment than previously, had enhanced listening skills, instrumental skills and strategies for composition, as well as developing a better understanding of a range of musical genres. Overall, teachers indicated that the improvement in musical skills of their students had exceeded their expectations and that students

had a better chance of fulfilling their musical potential. It should be noted that one teacher added the comment that she responded to a number of the items listed with either “Don’t Know” or “Disagree” “because these criteria were already working quite well and it's difficult at this stage to assess further development”.

Table 10: Teacher perceptions of student outcomes

STUDENT OUTCOMES Since implementing Musical Futures, my students:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
enjoy their music lessons more.	40.0% (4)	<b>50.0% (5)</b>	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
enjoy singing more.	27.3% (3)	<b>36.3% (4)</b>	18.2% (2)	18.2% (2)	0	11
have learnt to play at least one musical instrument.	45.5% (5)	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	0	0	0	11
are more confident in their music lessons.	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
take part in more extra-curricular musical activities.	30.0 (3)	<b>44.4% (4)</b>	20.0% (2)	11.1% (1)	0	10
have developed a greater range of musical skills.	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	36.4% (4)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
have developed a greater range of strategies for composing.	9.1% (1)	<b>72.7% (8)</b>	18.2% (2)	0	0	11
have developed a better understanding of a range of musical genres.	10.0% (1)	<b>60.0% (6)</b>	20.0% (2)	10.0% (1)	0	10
create better musical performances	36.4% (4)	<b>54.5% (5)</b>	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
demonstrate improved listening skills.	27.3% (3)	<b>63.6% (7)</b>	9.1% (1)	0	0	10
have more positive attitudes towards music.	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	45.5% (5)	0	0	0	11
are generally better behaved in music lessons.	36.4% (4)	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
are better able to stay on task.	27.3% (3)	<b>63.6% (7)</b>	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
work together more effectively in music tasks.	27.3% (3)	<b>72.7% (8)</b>	0	0	0	11
attend music lessons more regularly.	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	27.3% (3)	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	0	11
have improved their musical skills more than I would have expected.	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	36.4% (4)	18.2% (2)	0	0	11
seem to be more motivated in music lessons.	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	<b>45.5% (5)</b>	0	9.1% (1)	0	11
generally have improved levels of self-esteem in relation to music.	27.3% (3)	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	18.2% (2)	0	0	11
demonstrate higher levels of musical attainment than they did previously	36.4% (4)	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
are more likely to fulfil their musical potential.	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	27.3% (3)	9.1% (1)	0	0	11
are more likely to demonstrate that they love music.	<b>54.5% (6)</b>	27.3% (3)	18.2% (2)	0	0	11

The teacher mentioned above was again cautious about commenting on the benefits of Musical Futures, feeling it was too early to assess but all the other teachers noted a variety of benefits that included greater engagement, improved motivation, independent learning skills, greater task focus, better behaviour and greater enthusiasm (Table 11). Most notable was Teacher 9’s comment that all “the behaviour issues are gone”.

Table 11: Teacher perceptions of the benefits of Musical Futures

Teacher	Comments
1	We hope to see positive improvements in all of these areas but it is too early to assess.
2	Independent learning skills certainly improved and students that generally 'goofed around' were proactive in groups. Musical students had an opportunity to liaise with students that struggled and were on occasions able to assist them with arrangements.
3	Yes
4	Students focus more on tasks at hand, engaged in music that they enjoy etc
5	A close to 100% participation level in all of my classes. Students experiencing Musical Futures forming bands, buying instruments and becoming involved in music outside the classroom.
6	They all learn their parts. They are enthusiastic about songs they pick and we have very good attendance and

	motivation across all year levels. This leads to many performances.
7	My school is located in the Western Suburbs of Victoria. It is a middle-low socio economic area where previous to this year, had no practical music lessons offered to the Middle Years students. Musical Futures has been life changing for the students. Some of these students had never had the opportunity to play any instrument before, let alone playing contemporary rock instruments like the drums, guitar, bass and keys. Due to this, I have noted that students are better behaved in class and are focused on the tasks they need to achieve and are more motivated to learn. Evidence to support this is that on Musical Futures days, attendance is far stronger than any other day throughout the week.
8	Students are excited and more passion is shown, they are wanting to do more in class and externally as well.
9	Behaviour issues are gone, only difficulty is keeping students motivated, not just chatting in groups; allows students to develop skills in areas they have chosen; huge improvement in attitude towards music - massive increase in elective enrolments.
10	Improved attitude toward music; increase in extra-curricular music activities; improved teamwork skills; improved awareness of learning styles in students; independent learning skills and motivation to learn independently.
11	Probably the biggest impact has been on student engagement and music making. But it has certainly had an impact in the areas of attitude towards music, motivation for music and behaviour. It has also helped make music more accessible for kids and help them realise that they can play songs that they know and like.

The teacher responses to the question *Has Musical Futures been more successful with some groups of students than with others?* varied (Table 12). On the one hand, a number of teachers felt there were no notable differences between students while others felt that a lack of musical knowledge was a hindrance for some students. One teacher noted gender differences and another felt that students with lower independent skills struggle a little with the emphasis on self-directed learning. Another commented that there were some difficulties with students who lacked social skills, in particular, those with Asperger's syndrome.

Table 12: Has Musical Futures been more successful with some groups of students than with others?

Teacher	Comments
1	SEAL and Extension (academically extended classes) and classes with well developed 'self learning or independent learning' skills are doing well. Classes with poor/weak work ethics - lower independent skills struggle with the emphasis on self-learning.
2	Definitely - it wasn't so much about gender but more to do with overall ability musically. Students with limited musical knowledge really struggled and didn't excel with the program
3	No all students seem to more engaged than usual
4	No, not that I've seen
5	I have had success with a range of students. Due to Musical Futures being a gradual process, it enables different groups to succeed in their own time.
6	It's great for all levels (ability, gender, cultural etc). It brings in those students who play mainly by ear.
7	I have found that at times that Musical Futures is more successful with some groups then others. With some of my classes, I have found that the female students of the class are more willing and innovative when playing in a band setting. It seems that the female students are at times more focussed and more on task and utilise their time more effectively. However I must state that this is not always the case. I teach 12 classes Musical Futures and out of those 12, there might be 3 classes where this is the case.
8	Both groups (9 & 10) have been successful although year 10 has shown a little more resistance to some of the technology used (jamhubs) and the scope of the course and songs.
9	Year 9s Those with some (even very little) music experience
10	Yes. Musical Futures has been very successful with about 90% of all students, however, I have noticed differences with children lacking social skills/understanding especially Aspergers. They often struggle in bands.
11	I think it has been equally successful for both boys and girls, but students who have prior musical knowledge and skills it has been beneficial in keeping them motivated as well as hem being able to help out other kids.

There were a variety of responses when the teachers were asked about whether there was an increase in students taking instrumental music and/or electing more classroom music (Tables 13 and 14). Some were cautious, saying it was too early to comment while others have noticed a dramatic increase.

Table 13: Responses to *Has implementing Musical Futures had an impact on take-up of instrumental or vocal lessons amongst students in your school?*

Teacher	Comments
1	Not at this stage. Too early to tell. Only had it in classes for term 3.
2	We found some students decided to take up instrumental practices or I found that many year 8 students came and jammed at lunchtimes, which had never happened before. Many students formed friendships and enjoyed the "jam-sessions"
4	Don't know, not able to see results yet
5	Yes it has. Our guitar, drums and vocal lists are full and we have students on waiting lists for instrumental lessons
6	Huge increase across all year levels
7	Musical Futures has had an impact on the enrolments of instrumental music at the school. Over the last year, the Middle Years enrolments have increased by approx 30 students. These enrolments have been on the drums, guitar, bass, keys and voice. The instrumental program previous to this had very poor enrolment numbers, so this has dramatically increased the instrumental music program at the school for the Middle Years Students.
8	We are currently evaluating this.
9	Definitely increased interest but we currently do not have enough teachers to meet the need.
10	Yes. We have a marked increase in students taking on extra curricular music lessons in guitar, bass, drums, keyboard and ukulele.
11	It has sparked some interest in our instrumental music program especially in terms of drums and guitar.

Table 14: Are more students choosing to elect music? When and which courses?

Teacher	Comments
1	Not at this stage. Too early to assess any flow on effects.
2	Numbers seemed to be the same whilst the interest was there initially students preferred to jam rather than take lessons.
3	Yes, song writing
4	Yes, song writing
5	Yes! Year 9 electives have been very successful. My year nine class is full and twenty-five students strong.
6	Yes. Year 9-12 is elective choice. Very strong numbers over last 2 years. The year 11 and 12 component is VCE VET music
7	We are very lucky at Carranballac College. Music is a compulsory subject for all students Grade 5 - Year 9. Each student receives 1 hour of classroom lessons throughout their Middle Years Education.
8	Yes. Intake (projected) is higher into year 9 & 10.
9	Definitely - huge increase at years 9 & 10.
10	N/A in primary school.
11	It has definitely helped to encourage students who are not in our instrumental music program and kids who have lessons outside of school, to take up the music elective.

### Support

The teachers reported that there was nothing but positive support from the school leadership (Table 15) that manifested itself as time for Professional Learning, provision of funds and improved facilities. When asked what support in the future would be most useful (Table 16), further professional learning and networking as well as more new resources and resource sharing featured in the responses.

Table 15: Support for adopting Musical Futures from the school leadership.

Teacher	Comments
1	Additional funding to improve facilities and equipment. For the first time in over 10 years, we have the room just for music classes. Previously it was shared with non-music subjects. However, this was a hard fought battle - not easily achieved!
2	By senior management our Principal was most encouraged by the faculties response to setup Musical Futures.

3	Yes very
4	Yes
5	The support was fantastic and has enabled the majority of the music staff to become trained in Musical Futures
6	Yes. Main support was staff but the challenge is to maintain this
7	The school was very supportive of Musical Futures. This includes senior management to classroom teachers who are all very supportive and excited to have Musical Futures at the school. Last year, I conducted a Musical Futures lesson for all the teachers and management of the school. This gave the teachers a firsthand experience of the program and an understanding of how it would operate throughout the year. Due to this, we have had nothing but support from senior management, teachers and the community of Point Cook.
8	Yes. Admin are very pro music and support all we do.
9	A loan to buy additional equipment and free reign to implement the program
10	Yes. Excellent support. Music is valued highly and financial support was provided to get it off the ground.
11	Our school has been extremely supportive in terms of finance and keeping up with what has been happening. Principal continues to pop in from time to time to have a look at the classes and has been bringing visitors through as well. This support has made it easy to have a go and try out the new approaches.

Table 16: Responses to *Would you welcome further support for using Musical Futures? If so, what kinds of support would be most useful?*

Teacher	Comment
1	Yes. Teacher networking. Resource sharing. PD on "workshopping" techniques. PD on assisting large numbers of students with skill development.
2	This must continue without question. We need to witness first hand the way that schools, teachers and students prepare novice students as well as setup basic chord charts, visual aids and anything else that would better model the program.
4	Yes
6	Providing information to principals about the importance of having adequate inst. teachers to support program.
7	Due to receiving initial training in the U.K in January for 3 weeks and also all the training days throughout the year I am satisfied with how the program is operating at the school. The only further support that would be very useful is for all MF teachers to upload their developed resources to the SOUNHOUSE.ORG website. This would help all MF teachers in their planning time and enables new ideas to be conveyed to all teachers who are delivering the program.
8	Yes, resources, on site and off site consultation, more of what is being done.
9	Songs with chord charts, drum tabs, guitar tabs; A list of basic songs that are good to build skills for beginners.
10	Yes. Continued industry support through Soundhouse as this is invaluable and greatly appreciated.
11	I would definitely welcome continued support for Musical Futures. Would be good to stay connected and share what others have done and what they plan to do over the course of the year.

### Additional Comments

Four teachers took the opportunity to make further comments, two of them noting the benefits of visiting other Musical Futures schools.

#### Teacher 1:

1. I found visiting other "Music Futures" schools highly beneficial and would strongly recommend this to any schools currently involved or considering taking this on.
2. Senior management need to be actively involved in PD, school visits, learning about the approach, as a lack of understanding about the teaching approach, need for appropriate teaching spaces has caused problems.

#### Teacher 2:

It would be most beneficial to attend schools that have successfully set up the whole curriculum method, list their resources - check the IT components - studio set ups, age groups and other teacher are supporting the program (e.g. 2 to 3 teachers team teaching); Songs that have been used to

engage students. We need to see real life experiences.

*Teacher 10:*

This should happen in ALL schools!

*Teacher 11:*

It's been a great experience for us so far and will continue to implement and adapt the approach to form and engaging and educational program for the kids.

## Case Studies

The purpose of the case study school visits was to explore the impact of Musical Futures on the students beyond the teacher perceptions elicited by the surveys.

**Caranballac College** is situated in Point Cook, 22 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD. It is a co-educational, P – 9 school with an enrolment of approximately 1700 students. It has a well-resourced and supported music program and partnership with the Soundhouse, which offers guitar, keyboard and singing lessons. The College director and principal of this campus strongly support the arts and Musical Futures on all levels. The director had invested in a small bus to transport the students and their equipment to community performances and appointed a Creative Arts Manager (a senior management position) to oversee and support arts education in the school. The school emphasizes personal development and leadership capacity, and Individual Learning Plans are prepared each term for all students. Musical Futures was implemented in 2009 with Year 7 and in 2010 extended to Year 8. With the success of the program, the intention is to broaden the program in 2011 to include Years 5, 6 and 9.

**Trafalgar Primary School** is 112 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD in the south Gippsland area and has an enrolment of approximately 320 children. The school has an affiliation with the Soundhouse and strongly supports the performing arts. Trafalgar is the only primary school in Australia and the United Kingdom to implement the Musical Futures program and “we hope to be joined by a number of other primary and secondary schools in Gippsland during 2011. As we continue to expand and build on our current program in 2011, Musical Futures will continue to be a very exciting opportunity for not only our school and our students but also for the Trafalgar community” (Trafalgar PS website).

## Findings

Three major themes emerged from the analysis of the case study data. The implementation of the Musical Futures program has had an impact on **student engagement, social learning** and the development of **musical knowledge and skills**. While it was important to evidence the impact of the Musical Futures program on student outcomes, it was also important to examine what it is about the this approach that creates the conditions to support such outcomes. One of the most striking aspects of the school visits was the high level of enthusiasm shown by the staff and students alike for Musical Futures. Everyone was eager to share their experiences and observations with the researchers and there was an unmistakably positive “buzz” in the classrooms observed. These visits brought to life and reinforced the information provided by the teachers in the surveys.

**Engagement** (involvement in learning, persistence and pride in work, willingness to accept challenges, display of positive attitudes to learning<sup>1</sup>)

Both the teachers and the students reported on improved levels of engagement and that the student-centred nature of the approach contributed to this improvement.

*It's not necessarily all about sitting around your desk and making sure everyone's being compliant and looking at the teacher, it's much more student driven which is good. And I think that can't be a bad thing no matter which way you look at it. Honestly, if the students want to learn and they want to learn what they want to learn and they get the chance to learn that, you're going to have engagement and with engagement you're going to have learning. It's a natural progression<sup>2</sup>...*

The positive relationship between the teacher and the students also had an important part to play in the engagement of the students.

*You bond with your teacher a lot more than any of your other teachers and you're allowed to express yourself, more than you can in, say, English. And there's no real answer<sup>3</sup>.*

*For students to be interested in Music Education, they need to be engaged. To enable this, the teacher fosters positive relations with and between students and develops shared expectations for learning and interacting. Once students are engaged, the class begins exploring the music futures concepts. This is achieved as a whole class investigation where the students explore the concepts and take ownership of the lesson. The teacher then provides meaningful explanations of the concepts using different methods to engage and then continuously elaborates on these concepts when students ask for further direction<sup>4</sup>.*

The students were very keen to attending music classes and looked forward to coming to schools, especially on music days.

*I always, you know how you go to school on Monday and you think, "No, another school week again", but then I keep, I hold out until Friday and then I really enjoy it, cos Friday's my Musical Futures day...<sup>5</sup>.*

The Creative Arts Manager and teacher at Caranballac reported that there was an obvious increased attendance on music days. Teachers also reported that the general behaviour in class was very good and both teachers and students commented that previously reluctant students were now positive about music.

*I have noted that students are better behaved in class and are focused on the tasks they need to achieve and are more motivated to learn. Evidence to support this is that on Musical Futures days, attendance is far stronger than any other day throughout the week.<sup>6</sup>*

Students spoke of their sense of accomplishment and increased confidence in themselves as musicians:

*I enjoy that well, you're actually getting to play the music that you hear on the radio, so it's I'm thinking, hmm I can actually play that now<sup>7</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> The definitions of "engagement", "social learning", and "musical knowledge and skills" are taken from the recently completed MGSE arts partnership research for Arts Victoria and the DEECD.

<sup>2</sup> Teacher, Trafalgar

<sup>3</sup> Student, Caranballac

<sup>4</sup> Teacher, Caranballac

<sup>5</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>6</sup> Teacher, Caranballac

<sup>7</sup> Student, Trafalgar



*The enjoyment, more, it progresses. Like, when you first play in a concert type thing, you're really, really nervous but you like it and you're like, "Oh, yeah. I can't believe we just did that. That was awesome." And you do it again and it turns out even better. You're like, "I didn't even know I could do it that better." Then you do it again and again and you can't believe it because each time you enjoy it more and more<sup>8</sup>.*

There was strong interest displayed in more music study (for example, in the future, after school, lunchtimes) and a desire to improve music skills and knowledge.

*You might accomplish something, whereas Literature or Maths, you might be able to answer an equation or finish an essay but you never actually get that pure feeling of, "Wow, I did something really good."*

*One of the best things about Music Tech is it actually ... in some subjects, you're just like, "Oh, yeah. That's okay. That's a piece of work. That's all right." But with Music Futures, you're sort of ... you always want to improve on it because you love it that much that you actually care about your work and you care about how well it turns out, and stuff<sup>9</sup>.*

It was also obvious that many of the students worked on their music at home:

*I: Do you go on Numu at home or around school to see what the other bands are doing around the world?*

*S1: Yeah at home.*

*S2: Yup<sup>10</sup>.*

*You hear a song sometimes and you think, oh, that sounds cool. And you go home or come to class and you try it out<sup>11</sup>.*

Further evidence showed that students are demonstrating and expressing an interest in learning other (new) instruments and there has been an increase in the uptake of extra-curricula instrumental tuition.

*I: Any particular instruments that you'd like to do ...*

*S1: Drums.*

*S2: Violin.*

*S3: Piano. Like, I play drums now but I think piano would be nice to learn.*

*S4: I'd love to have a shot at the saxophone<sup>12</sup>.*

*Musical Futures has had an impact on the enrolments of instrumental music at the school. Over the last year, the Middle Years enrolments have increased by approx 30 students. These enrolments have been on the drums, guitar, bass, keys and voice. The instrumental program previous to this had very poor enrolment numbers, so this has dramatically increased the instrumental music program at the school for the Middle Years Students<sup>13</sup>.*

Students and teachers constantly referred to how enjoyable music lessons were and many of the students classed music as either their favourite subject or one of their favourites. One student talked of how music at school contributed to their general well being

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<sup>8</sup> Student, Carranballac

<sup>9</sup> Students, Carranballac

<sup>10</sup> Students, Trafalgar

<sup>11</sup> Student, Carranballac

<sup>12</sup> Students, Carranballac

<sup>13</sup> Teacher, Carranballac

*It can help get things that worry you off your mind... .. it just cheers you up<sup>14</sup>.*

It should also be noted the impact that Musical Futures has had on the parent and general community. The Creative Arts Manager at Carranballac spoke Musical Futures creating a performance culture in the community and educating the community about performance etiquette. She noted that few in the community generally attend live performances until the advent of regular student performances on and off campus.

Table 18: Conditions for and impact on engagement

Conditions created by Musical Futures	Evidence of impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working towards a goal</li> <li>• Student-driven learning</li> <li>• Learn and play music that is relevant (often what they listen to outside of school)</li> <li>• Positive student-teacher relationships</li> <li>• Student choice of content</li> <li>• Student choice of instruments</li> <li>• Challenging</li> <li>• Students feel a sense of “freedom”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both teachers and students report engagement</li> <li>• Turning up to class</li> <li>• Positive about coming to class</li> <li>• Keen to learn</li> <li>• Very good behaviour in MF classes</li> <li>• Previously reluctant children now positive about music (reported by teacher and students)</li> <li>• An increase in the uptake of extra-curricula instrumental tuition</li> <li>• Students show and express and interest in learning other (new) instruments</li> <li>• Most students prefer music over other subjects – “Everyone’s favourite”</li> <li>• Fun, enjoyable</li> <li>• Look forward to school, generally</li> <li>• Look forward to school, on music day</li> <li>• Engage in music at home</li> <li>• Helps students deal with worries, issues, “cheers you up”</li> <li>• Strong interest in further music study – in future, after school, lunchtimes</li> <li>• Desire to improve music skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Reported sense of accomplishment</li> <li>• Students show confidence in themselves as musicians – discussion of future music careers, being famous</li> <li>• Only disappointment with MF is that they can’t do more!</li> </ul>

**Social learning** (*working in teams, building social relationships, seeking contact with and mirroring behaviours of adult role models and/or capable peers*)

There was strong evidence of Musical Futures having a significant impact on social learning in both schools. The students often choose to work with new people who shared musical interests or ability, rather than by gender or friendship.

*if we see that they’ve got a bit of extra talent in one instrument, we might sort of say hey you should try this or generally they start to realise, then the other kids start to realise, so they’re like no, we need him in our group or, you know, oh he should be able to go on drums because he can keep the beat better<sup>15</sup>.*

They reported learning new things about friends/classmates, the value of peer sharing of resources and information, and the new friendships that had been formed through music. The social networking afforded by NUMU was also important.

*Sometimes learning a new instrument that you haven’t learnt before can be quite hard, but you get used to it and Mr X and the other classmates help you heaps<sup>16</sup>.*

<sup>14</sup> Student, Carranballac

<sup>15</sup> Student, Trafalgar

*You find some of your friends have talents that you didn't even know that was there, it's quite amazing<sup>17</sup>.*

*Numu, the website that you can put your recordings up for the whole world to see which is quite interesting cos it kinda makes you feel like you're famous, well the kids are famous cos people are coming down to listen to what you're played<sup>18</sup>.*

The teachers observed that students, who sometimes 'clash' on a personal level, worked co-operatively in Musical Futures classes and the students expressed and understood that team participation and cooperation can lead to increased productivity and improved outcomes.

*I find that they're a lot, they're starting to problem solve, they're starting to work together as a team much better, they're mentoring, so students going to other students for help rather than relying on the teachers, the full source of knowledge, which is the whole point of it as well<sup>19</sup>.*

*It really helps you work together, as a team, because when we're in our own little bands, an stuff, things don't always go as easy because we have to listen to the songs and do our own interpretation. But we have to learn how to cooperate with our band, so everybody's happy. Because if one of them isn't, then the whole band gets messed up<sup>20</sup>.*

There was improved peer-peer mentoring and the students are very supportive of each other, taking opportunities to help others boost their self-confidence.

*It's different because it's a more relaxed environment. You don't feel pressured to ... not that you feel pressured, anyway, but it's just really relaxed and people enjoy themselves more because they're like, "Oh, I missed this. No, it's all right. Do it again."<sup>21</sup>*

They also appeared to be conscious of the teamwork and problem solving transferring to other learning areas.

*S: And even though it's music, like it helps you like, it helps you in other like maths and like it helps you in other subjects, you know what I mean?*

*I: In what way?*

*S: Like working as a team, like cos you come to music and you do all the teamwork and stuff, you get out and like maybe if you had a problem working with a team, and the teacher would ask you, can you work with a team, and you'll be like fine with it cos you've done it like so many times with music<sup>22</sup>.*

There was a development of leadership skills and strategies to deal with difficult team members, as well as self-moderated behaviour and choices (e.g. "appropriate" choice of song content).

*In our band, they nominated me as the leader, the little ... things. And it's just, you have to listen to what people want. Like, if one's not happy with it, you can tell and you're just like, "Well, what do you think?" You have to always ask for their opinion. Because, in the end, you do have to finalise it but you also have to make sure everybody can live with it<sup>23</sup>.*

*I: And how do you deal with that, when people aren't cooperating?*

*S1: We'll kind of just say, "Everybody else is doing it, so can you just try it?"*

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<sup>16</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>17</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>18</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>19</sup> Teacher, Trafalgar

<sup>20</sup> Student, Carranballac

<sup>21</sup> Student, Carranballac

<sup>22</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>23</sup> Student, Carranballac

S2: *Stop giving up*<sup>24</sup>.

Table 19: Conditions for and impact on social learning

Conditions created by Musical Futures	Evidence of impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular involvement of other classes (as audience for performances)</li> <li>Group work</li> <li>Opportunities to jam with students from other schools</li> <li>Social networking through NUMU</li> <li>Freedom to work in groups of choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved peer-peer mentoring</li> <li>Peer sharing of resources and information</li> <li>Report learning new things about friends/classmates</li> <li>Self-moderated behaviour and choices (e.g. “appropriate” choice of song content)</li> <li>Express and understanding that team participation and cooperation can lead to increased productivity and improved outcomes</li> <li>Opportunities to help others boost self-confidence</li> <li>The teamwork and problem solving transfers to other learning areas</li> <li>New friendships formed through music – music “connects” people</li> <li>Peers are reportedly very supportive of each other</li> <li>Development of leadership skills</li> <li>Students who generally ‘clash’ on a personal level, work cooperatively in MF classes</li> <li>Have learned strategies to deal with difficult team members</li> </ul>

**Musical Knowledge and Skills** (*applying music conventions, developing and using music skills techniques and processes, reflecting on compositions and performances, refinement of compositions and performances, making judgements, critiquing and evaluating own and other’s works*).

The best evidence that learning had taken place in these classrooms was to observe the lessons where the students were obviously able to demonstrate their developing musical skills and knowledge in the ensembles. Students had clearly developed skills on a range of instruments such as lead, rhythm and bass guitars; keyboards; ukulele; voice and percussion (drum kit, bongos, congas) and learned how to read “sheet music”, as well as improvise. They were comfortable setting themselves up at the beginning of the lesson and all the lessons ran smoothly with the students demonstrating an extraordinary level of engagement in the tasks at hand. Recent research (Imms, Jeanneret & Ballenger, 2010) about the arts in schools has shown that students simply aren’t very good at being able to articulate what they have learned in the arts when asked, whereas their ability to produce artistic works as a result of instruction demonstrates that learning has taken place. The students interviewed for this study were considerably more articulate about their learning than previously encountered.

*I: When you leave the lesson, what do you think that you’ve learnt at the end of it?*

*S: We’ve learnt new chords and how to get along with new people and ...*

*S: Maybe a new song.*

*S: A new instrument*<sup>25</sup>.

*Well you can improvise on your work but in maths you can’t, well you can, but it’s not fun*<sup>26</sup>.

*I have a friend that has absolutely nothing to do with music but then when he started Musical Futures he actually got into it and now he actually appreciates music a bit more than he used to*<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Students, Carranballac

<sup>25</sup> Students, Carranballac

<sup>26</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>27</sup> Student, Trafalgar

*They've performed nearly every week, like the first two terms of running, so term 2 and term 3 this year, after every lesson they had to perform. No matter what it was. If they learnt one note, they had to perform that one note. If they learnt how to hold a guitar correctly and get their fingers into a chord position and play that one chord, then so be it, you know. They had to perform what they learnt. So they're accountable for their learning<sup>28</sup>.*

*How to keep in time with the drumbeat so you're not all over the place<sup>29</sup>.*

*How to read sheet music<sup>30</sup>.*

Ensemble playing has aided their development of rhythmic skills, a sense of beat and their aural skills. The students reported that they could see an improvement over time and that new songs are easier to learn, indicating developing knowledge and skills.

*you learn it for a fair bit of time and then like at the stage now that we've learnt it for like a year now, that like you will, say you get a task to learn a song in two hours, you can do it like real easy like just get in there and yeah just start playing it, and yeah get real good at it so that's the easy part now.*

They also reported an improvement in their ability to hear and identify all of the components in new, recorded music (for example, they can recognise the different instruments, rhythmic patterns, and even chord structure) and feel they are learning a lot in these classes.

*Now I actually pick out the different instruments in the song.*

*And it's not just like you learn chords. You learn how to figure out the chords. Like, you can listen to a song and you can thing, that's B chord or A chord. And then you can go off and play it<sup>31</sup>.*

The students are able to articulate technical difficulties they encountered (for example, strumming, playing rhythms, fingering) and they demonstrate metacognitive abilities in their awareness of strategies to overcome difficulties in learning new music such as perseverance, teamwork and regular practice and rehearsal.

*I: How do you think that you get to be like that?*

*S: Lots of practice, pretty much<sup>32</sup>.*

They are very comfortable using “metalanguage” (i.e. the language associated with the discipline) and the highly articulate students in the interviews demonstrated a well-developed capacity to reflect on and discuss Musical Futures as a learning program and the impact it has

Table 20: Conditions for and impact on musical knowledge and skills

Conditions created by Musical Futures	Evidence of impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance from teacher (when needed), in terms of instrument selection, material selection, simplification of material, instrumental techniques</li> <li>Performance expectation provides a goal</li> <li>Freedom to access technology support, such as</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students have developed skills on a range of instruments (guitar – lead, rhythm, bass; keyboards; drums – kit, bongos, congas; ukulele; vocals)</li> <li>Ensemble playing aids rhythm/beat/aural skills</li> <li>Learned how to read “sheet music”</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> Teacher, Trafalgar

<sup>29</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>30</sup> Student, Trafalgar

<sup>31</sup> Students, Trafalgar

<sup>32</sup> Student, Carranballac

<p>YouTube, Jam Hubs, NUMU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realistic expectation from teacher - “just do the best you can do”</li> <li>• Teacher’s belief in this learning approach</li> <li>• Constant reflection and discussion of performances and learning</li> <li>• Exposure and access to a range of instruments</li> <li>• Opportunities to play instruments regularly (developing skills on the instruments) aids future musical learning</li> <li>• Peer-peer assistance when facing musical problems</li> <li>• Playing music that they like and know makes learning easier for the students (several reports of this)</li> <li>• Teacher support for out of class rehearsals</li> <li>• NUMU offers a challenge. Students want to improve to make their way up the charts</li> <li>• Access to the online resources assists problem solving</li> <li>• Teacher modelling of music skills</li> <li>• Listening skills required to “work out” the music – especially when thrown In the Deep End</li> <li>• Opportunities to record performances (when ready or at the completion of the task) provides a goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to improvise</li> <li>• Report that they can see an improvement over time</li> <li>• New songs are easier to learn indicating development</li> <li>• Students are able to articulate technical difficulties – in strumming, playing rhythms, fingering</li> <li>• Awareness of the difficulties in learning new music</li> <li>• Awareness of strategies to overcome difficulties in learning new music – perseverance, teamwork, regular rehearsal</li> <li>• Students report an improvement in their ability to hear and identify all of the components in new recorded music (for example, they can recognise the different instruments, rhythmic patterns, and even chord structure)</li> <li>• Evidence of skill level – second in the world NUMU charts</li> <li>• Students themselves feel that they are learning a lot</li> <li>• Understanding that practice = improvement</li> <li>• Comfortable use of “metalanguage” i.e. the language associated with the discipline</li> <li>• Highly articulate students in the interviews demonstrated a well-developed capacity to reflect on and discuss Musical Futures</li> </ul>
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By way of a summary of the site visits, Table 21 shows how the two schools measure against the adaptation for DEECD primary schools best practice research (Jeanneret, 2009) of success factors identified by the National Review of School Music Education (2005). The nature of the Musical Futures program and its implementation marry very well with what was identified as a national and state benchmarking standard.

Table 21: Adaptation for DEECD Primary school best practice research (2009) of success factors identified by the National Review of School Music Education (2005).

<b>Success Factors Identified at Trafalgar and Carranballac</b>			
<b>Staff factors</b>		<b>Teaching practices and programme factors</b>	
Dedication and commitment	☐	Diversity of musical repertoire	☐
Passion for music	☐	Practical based	☐
Enthusiasm	☐	Integration of listening, performing & composing	☐
Warmth/rapport	☐	Integration class & co-curricular music	☐
Vision	☐	Integration music & other curriculum areas	☐
Musical expertise	☐	Recognition of diversity	☐
Continuity	☐	Music used to enhance other learning	☐
Collegiality	☐	Support for students with identified needs	☐
Mutual respect between staff and students	☐	Adherence to VELS	☐
Trust of students	☐	Pedagogy and method of delivery	☐
Mentoring of new staff & teaching students	☐	Provision of performance opportunities	☐
Provision of Professional Learning to others	☐	Popular music focus	☐
Work in community music ed programmes	N/A	<b>School culture factors</b>	
Specialist staff	☐	Music as normal part of school life	☐
Expectations of musical excellence	☐	<b>Collaboration factors</b>	
Organisational skills	☐	Between staff members	☐
Teaching partnerships with the community	N/A	Between principal & staff	☐
<b>Student factors</b>		Between schools	☐
Responsibility	☐	Between primary & secondary school	☐
Respect	☐	Between school & community	☐
Enthusiasm	☐	Between school & tertiary institutions	x
<b>Community factors</b>		Between school & external providers	☐
Availability studio teachers	N/A	<b>Professional Learning factors</b>	
Valuing of music	☐	For teachers	☐
High expectations	☐	<b>Resource factors</b>	
Provision of funding	x	System support	☐
Performance and enrichment opportunities	☐	Space	☐
<b>Parent factors</b>		Equipment	☐
Parental valuing of music	☐	Technology	☐
Financial assistance or fund-raising	☐	Development over time	☐
Participation in music activities	☐	External providers (Soundhouse)	☐
Payment of music tuition fees	☐	<b>Timetable factors</b>	
<b>School principal &amp; executive factors</b>		Flexibility (music in school time)	☐
Endorsement of music in school	☐	<b>ICT (from primary best practice research)</b>	
Vision & passion for music	☐	Availability	☐
Support through staffing, timetabling, relief	☐	Equipment	☐
Continuity of support	☐	Software	☐
Budget	☐	Integration into teaching program	☐

## PreService Teacher Education

The Universities of Cambridge and Sydney are both including Musical Futures as part of their preservice music education courses. Academics from both these institutions are reporting that the approach is having an impact on these beginning teachers' philosophy and pedagogy (Finney, 2010; Webb, 2009). On October 2, 2010, the Melbourne Graduate School of Education hosted an all day workshop for the Master of Teaching music cohort with David Price. The student evaluations were extremely positive. 87% agreed with the statement, *This workshop gave me some new ideas to try in the classroom*, and 86.9% with the statement, *The workshop activities stimulated my learning* (Table 22).

Table 22: Student evaluation of Musical Futures Workshop

Musical Futures Workshop						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
This workshop gave me some new ideas to try in the classroom.	52.2% (12)	34.8% (8)	4.3% (1)	8.7% (2)	0	23
The workshop activities stimulated my learning.	65.2% (15)	21.7% (5)	4.3% (1)	8.7% (2)	0	23
The difficulty level of this workshop was appropriate.	69.6% (16)	13.0% (3)	17.4% (4)	0	0	23
The pace of this workshop was appropriate.	60.9% (14)	34.8% (8)	4.3% (1)	0	0	23
The instructor was well prepared	82.6% (19)	17.4% (4)	0	0	0	23
The instructor was helpful	68.2% (15)	22.7 (5)	4.5% (1)	4.5% (1)	0	22

The students also provided interesting comments about what they found most valuable about the workshop, most of which related to the practical nature of the presentation and how they could understand the application of the approach in the classroom (Table 23). There were very few responses to the question about what was least valuable, with the majority of those who chose to comment saying there was nothing in the workshop that wasn't valuable.

Table 23: Selected responses to What was **most** valuable about this workshop?

Student	Comment
3	As a trombonist I found the learning of the pop song most valuable as it is not something I have done frequently
4	Having to form an ensemble playing an instrument that was unfamiliar.
7	Seeing the ideas in action. Prac not just theory
8	The demonstrations of the activities. It was all extremely valuable and really enjoyable!
10	The idea of copying music as a classroom activity was very useful and seeing the process to achieve the final outcome was interesting, in terms of group dynamics.
11	Listening to song and recreating it on instruments in groups. I found it stimulating.
13	Realising how easy it is to get kids making music aurally.
15	Workable ideas that can easily be incorporated into classroom practice. Really good for classes of mixed level ability. Great for a range of your levels from Primary through to secondary.
20	I can see the validity of the last activity as they are being creative with guidelines, and I can see this being used when the class is learning about rhythm, scales or world music.

The new 2011 cohort will participate in a workshop with David Price in April. Through an application to the University's Learning and Teaching Initiatives fund, Dr Jeanneret was awarded \$20,000 in December, 2010 to further develop the inclusion of Musical Futures pedagogy and research into a number of arts education subjects both at the undergraduate and post graduate levels during 2011 and examine ways in which some students could do their teaching rounds in current Musical Futures



schools.

## Conclusions

In response to the first research question, *Has Musical Futures had an impact on teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction?*, there is considerable evidence to support that Musical Futures and its implementation has had a powerful impact on the teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction. The teachers have referred this program and the associated Professional Learning as having changed their approach to teaching music in the classroom and they are witnessing a positive change in the school after only two terms (in most cases). It is also obvious from the small preservice teacher research that there is considerable potential for including Musical Futures components in preservice courses for music teachers, both primary and secondary.

The second research question, *What impact has the Musical Futures approach had on students?*, has drawn quite extraordinary evidence of a profound impact on students' engagement, social learning and development of musical knowledge and skills in a relatively short time based on the teachers' observations and discussion with the students themselves. These young students are well on the way to becoming very competent musicians with well-developed aural and research skills, as well as a strong sense of their own learning and productive team-work. Although not part of the research brief, it is obvious how the Musical Futures approach can contribute to the ten Australian Curriculum capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT, thinking skills, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and social competence.

This is a relatively small study and there is obvious potential in examining the longer term outcomes of the program over a number of years. It would be especially useful to explore the impact the Musical Futures approach has on other learning areas, given that David Price is currently developing Learning Futures, which uses the principles of the Musical Futures pedagogy across learning areas.

To end, there is a critical feature to be noted about this trial. This approach to music in the classroom provides all students with the opportunity to learn not one, but a number of instruments (if they choose) and to engage in authentic music making, including composition. For a relatively small, initial investment by the school (and at no cost to the students), over 1200 students in ten schools have had access to meaningful music education they might not have had otherwise. The National Review of School Music (2005) noted in its key messages that "While there are examples of excellent music education in schools, many Australian students miss out on effective music education because of the lack of equity of access; lack of quality of provision; and, the poor status of music in many schools" (p. iii). Musical Futures could, indeed, go some way to addressing this deficiency in many schools.

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## Appendix

**The Australian Music Association** is the trade body for the music products industry, representing wholesalers, manufacturers, retailers and associated services for musical instruments, pro audio, print music, lighting and computer music products. The AMA has a Secretariat office, headed by Executive Officer Ian Harvey, who administers all of the above programmes.

**Affiliates**The AMA is a member of the International Coalition of Music Products Associations and has developed valuable affiliations with many music products industry associations around the world including:

### NAMM

The AMA is proud to have an excellent working relationship with the NAMM - the International Music Products Association, based in the US. NAMM is the organiser of the highly successful Winter NAMM and Summer NAMM product shows, which attract many thousands of visitors from around the world. It is also the driver behind highly successful market development programs, several of which they have facilitated for Australia.

### MIA

The Music Industries Association is a UK trade association, the only one servicing and representing the interests of all UK businesses selling musical instruments and associated products.

### MIAC

The Music Industries Association of Canada (MIAC) is a national, non-profit trade association representing Canadian manufacturers, distributors and retailers of musical instruments and accessories, keyboards, sound reinforcement products and published music.

### BDMH

National Association of German Musical Instruments Manufacturers, representing German manufacturers of bowed, woodwind, brass, reed, fretted and percussion instruments, and accessories.

### AMRA

AMRA - the Australian Music Retailers Association - currently represents over 600 recorded music retail stores.

### ***The Soundhouse***<sup>®</sup>

The first Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> was established in 1986 at the Victorian Arts Centre and was the brainchild of the Brash Foundation. The founders, Geoff Brash, AM and Martin Carlson, OAM, saw the potential for young people to integrate their music with emerging technologies. Since the beginning, successful ventures and partnerships enabled new Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> facilities to be established. The first were in Victoria but soon afterwards, other Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> facilities were created interstate and overseas. In 2010 a committed Board of Directors continues to focus on ensuring modern music making is a lively component of the modern educational landscape. The Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> Music Alliance is a Registered Charitable Foundation. Soundhouse<sup>®</sup>.com.au is part of a larger network of affiliated organisations and Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> partners and exists in a range of public institutions and education facilities. Each has a memorandum of understanding with the Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> Music Alliance. Soundhouse<sup>®</sup> is also involved in a wide range of philanthropic projects, an example of which is the Special Access Kit™ (often referred to as the "banana keyboard"). Soundhouse<sup>®</sup>.com.au is a key provider of professional learning workshops for teachers and students in Victorian Schools and specialises in the integration of technology into the curriculum, with a strong emphasis on video, music and web design.

**The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM)**, commonly called NAMM in reference to the organization's popular NAMM trade shows, is the not-for-profit association. Founded in 1901,

NAMM has been closely working with the music products industry and has more than 9,000 Members in the United States and 100+ other countries.

***The Paul Hamlyn Foundation*** is one of the larger independent grant-making foundations in the UK which makes grants to organisations which aim to maximise opportunities for individuals to experience a full quality of life, both now and in the future. In particular we are concerned with children and young people, and others who are disadvantaged and they have a particular focus on the arts, education and learning, and social justice.