

**THE ICELANDIC
NATIONAL CURRICULUM
GUIDE FOR MUSIC SCHOOLS
GENERAL SECTION
2000**

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Advertisement of the Entry into Force of the National Curriculum Guide for Music Schools

Article 1

With reference to Article 1 and 12 of Act No. 75/1985 on financial support for music schools with later amendments, the Minister of Education, Science and Culture has confirmed the entry into force of a new National Curriculum Guide for Music Schools, as of 1 June 2000. The new curriculum shall take effect in music schools to the extent possible in the academic year 2000-2001 and shall be fully implemented no later than three years after entry into force. At the same time previous curriculum guides shall be rescinded.

Article 2

The National Curriculum Guide is published in ten parts: a general section, and nine separate subject area guides. The general section describes, among other things, the role and objectives of music schools, long-term organization of musical studies, subject curricula, and school curriculum guides. This section also discusses teaching approaches, components of instrumental and theory learning, exams and assessment, connections between home and school, and cooperation with other schools and institutions. The general section ends with discussing facilities, equipment, and evaluation of school operations.

The curriculum guides for subject areas, published as nine separate booklets, outline objectives, contents and organization of the various areas of study. Furthermore, the guides detail exam requirements and offer suggestions for study materials. Titles of the subject guides are:

- Percussion Instruments
- Solo Singing
- Guitar and Harp
- Keyboard Instruments
- Brass Instruments
- Jazz and Popular Music
- Bowed Strings
- Theory and Aural Training
- Woodwind Instruments

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has published the booklets and distributed them to all the country's music schools.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture 31 May 2000


Björn Bjarrason


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The Icelandic National Curriculum Guide
for Music Schools
General Section
2000

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INTRODUCTION

Through the ages, music, the queen of arts, has played a major role in peoples' lives and labour, in moments of joy as well as sadness. Music is a vital part of the cultural heritage of all nations.

The values of music education are wide-ranging. Purposeful education in music provides for students' all-around development by sharpening their intellect and capacity for self-expression. Moreover, it enriches students' lives and has numerous social benefits.

Community music schools play a key-role in disseminating musical skills and in developing a music life. The schools serve a broad clientele, ranging from music lovers and participants of all ages to future professionals in music. The motivational impact of music education is of utmost importance. It must encourage students to sing, play, and enjoy music.

School climate and group spirit are unique within specialized music schools where music and music making play a central role. It is strongly recommended that music students, particularly as they advance in their studies, be given an opportunity to study within such an environment.

Work on the National Curriculum Guide for music schools began in 1992. In June that year, the Minister of Education appointed a five-person task force to compile a first draft. The task force handed in a manuscript in May 1993. The manuscript was published shortly afterwards and sent for review to all the country's music schools and to selected professional societies, institutions and individuals.

In February 1994, a three-person writing committee was formed to process review comments and review the document's text. This committee returned a reviewed manuscript a year later. A preliminary version of the National Curriculum Guide was released in March 1996 and again sent for review for the purpose of consensus building.

In the beginning of 1996 a preparation of individual subject guides commenced with work on a curriculum guide for music theory at Elementary and Intermediate levels. In the spring of 1998 a preliminary version of this guide was released. In the autumn of 1996 work began on guides for individual instruments. A two-person editorial board was appointed to oversee the making of the curriculum as a whole and its individual parts and to secure co-ordination between subject areas.

The National Curriculum Guide presents a policy statement for teaching and learning in music schools in the nearest future. The following are among its main emphases and modifications:

- Define the role and objectives of music schools.
- Structure the course of study in music schools into three key stages: Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels.
- Emphasize the autonomy of schools and flexibility of school activities. Encourage school curriculum guides and self-evaluation of schools.
- Establish objectives for all subjects at each key level of study.
- Define the standards to be reached at each level of study and regulate the procedures of exams and assessment criteria.
- Emphasize creative projects in instrumental and theory subjects.

Approximately 80 music educators and other specialists have contributed to this undertaking. All of them deserve sincere thanks upon its conclusion.

This new National Curriculum Guide is issued with a wish for a positive impact on teaching and learning in the country's music schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Björn Bjarnason". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Björn Bjarnason

Minister of Education, Science and Culture

BASIS AND SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM GUIDE

The Music Schools' National Curriculum Guide is issued in accordance with mandates in Act no. 75/1985 on financial support for music schools with later amendments. The third paragraph of article 1, chapter 1, states that music schools receiving financial support shall teach according to guidelines prescribed in a curriculum guide published by the Ministry of Education.

The National Curriculum Guide is published in ten parts: a general part along with nine subject guides for instruments and other subject areas.

Role of the National Curriculum Guide

The National Curriculum Guide describes the goals and objectives for the teaching and learning in music schools, ranging from elementary to university levels. Its major purpose is to standardize major components of music learning between and within individual schools.

The Ministry of Education acknowledges the autonomy of individual music schools. For that reason, the National Curriculum Guide urges music schools to draw up school curriculum guides so that the idiosyncratic objectives and activities of each school are laid down. In its school curriculum guide a school shall maintain the important goals and objectives of the National Curriculum Guide as well as stating its specialized and localized emphases.

Another purpose of the National Curriculum Guide is to instigate broad-minded and flexible approaches to music teaching, and to encourage critical debate among teachers on objectives and ways in music education. The National Guide should influence study offerings, methods of instruction, and assessment in music schools.

Furthermore, the National Curriculum Guide serves as a source of information about music schools for parents/guardians, for local authorities, and for other educational institutions. It is also expected that the National Curriculum Guide will bring about changes in future training of music teachers.

Contents of the General Section

The general section of the National Curriculum Guide falls into three main parts. The first section presents the role and objectives of music schools, long term organization of musical studies, the structure of subject and school curriculum guides, and the main components of instrumental¹ and music theory² learning. Next follows an outline of assessment methods and exams at Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels³, and expectations for graded exams at the end of grades I, II, IV and VI. The third section discusses school and students' rights and obligations, handling of individual

¹ In the General Curriculum Guide the term instrumental study refers to vocal studies as well as to instrumental learning. Similarly, the word playing (instruments) also implies vocal performances of singing pupils.

² The terms music theory and music theory subjects are used as collective terms to include various subjects, such as rudiments of music, harmony, aural training, music history, form, and counterpoint.

³ Three key levels of the course of study in music schools. See pp. 11-13.

cases and personal data, co-operation between schools, facilities, and evaluation of school operations. At the end of the general section are appendices offering advice on various aspects of music learning as well as on facilities and equipment in music schools.

ROLE AND OBJECTIVES OF MUSIC SCHOOLS

The principal role of music schools is to increase pupils' skills, knowledge and development, as well as facilitate dynamic musical life in the country.

In order to serve all students, music schools must structure their work to account for the varying abilities, interests and development of pupils. Teaching methods and student activities must be diverse and flexible.

Role of the Music School

The role of the music school is to

strengthen students' abilities to perform, analyze and create music, and to listen to and enjoy music, e.g. by improving their aural, vocal and instrumental skills and their attention, and by providing them with theoretical and background knowledge about music.

prepare students for making music independently, e.g. by teaching fundamental skills and knowledge, training students in disciplined, independent working practices, and encouraging them to make music alone and with others.

prepare students for higher education in music and related subjects at the university level, e.g. by providing them with solid technical grounding in instrumental and vocal performance, effective training in music theory, and opportunities to perform for others.

promote the musical life of community and nation, e.g. by encouraging students and teachers to participate in community music life, and by co-operating with other educational and cultural institutions and artists.

Main Objectives of Music Schools

The main objectives are presented in three categories: developmental and nurturing, skills and comprehension, and social objectives.

Developmental and nurturing objectives foster emotional maturity, artistic development, positive attitudes, co-operation, and discipline.

Skills- and comprehension objectives aim for increased musical skills and formal knowledge.

Social objectives lead to participation in varied educational and cultural activities.

Developmental and nurturing objectives

- Interest and participation** Students will acquire active interest in music and music making by
- singing and playing instruments
 - listening to music of various kinds in different situations
 - creating their own music
 - playing and singing in groups
 - performing in concerts
- Enjoying and experiencing** Students will learn to enjoy music and experience it as
- listeners
 - participants
- Strengthening self-image** Studying music should strengthen pupils' self-image by providing them opportunities to
- display their own abilities
 - evaluate their own performance and progress
 - participate in creative projects alone and with others
- Concentration, excellence, discipline** Studying music should increase pupils' ability to concentrate as well as their
- commitment to do well
 - disciplined working habits
- Cooperation** Studying music should increase pupils' ability to
- cooperate under teacher's guidance
 - cooperate in a groups
 - lead others

Skills- and comprehension objectives

- Musical independence** Students will
- acquire skills in playing music from notation, both rehearsed and at sight
 - acquire skills in playing music by ear and from memory
- Listening and comprehension** Students will
- perceive and comprehend structural and interpretive elements of music⁴
 - describe and distinguish between different music genres, styles and historic periods

⁴ Structural- and interpretive elements of music are rhythm, melody, tone colour, dynamics, tempo, form, harmonic content, and phrasing.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Creating own music | Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none">- acquire skills in presenting their own musical ideas, both notated and improvised- acquire skills in creating short musical compositions, conventional or unconventional- acquire improvising skills by continuing from a given phrase, over chord progressions, or by other means |
| Performance and interpretation | Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none">- perform with stylistically appropriate interpretation in terms of period and style- analyze, perform and interpret a musical composition convincingly- perform music appropriately in consideration of its emotional content |
| Musical attributes and affect | Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none">- use professional vocabulary appropriately to describe form, structural and interpretive elements of music- use experiential vocabulary to express their emotional reaction to music- articulate their opinions about the role and affect of music |
| Evaluating performances | Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none">- discriminate and articulate their opinions with respect to quality and characteristics of musical performances in terms of stylistic appropriateness- justify their evaluation of musical performances with reference to structural and interpretive elements of music- appreciate different types of music (e.g. popular vs. classical) without prejudice |

Social objectives

The educational and cultural role of music schools are to

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Opportunity for all | - give all interested persons a chance to test their abilities at musical studies |
| Chance to perform | - provide pupils with opportunities to perform music, in and out of school situation |
| Active participation | - increase the participation of amateurs in community music life |
| Music related jobs | - provide a solid groundwork for training in various music related vocations |

Music in society - generally strengthen the musical life of society

Cultural heritage - enrich Icelandic music culture and encourage the conservation of the country's musical heritage

STRUCTURE OF MUSIC SCHOOL STUDY

The study program in music schools is arranged in three key levels: Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced. Belonging to the Elementary level is also a preparatory stage in the form of integrated class instruction for beginning students.

The three key levels are independent of the organization of the public school system in grades. Nevertheless, certain parallels can be found. Thus, the music schools' Elementary level corresponds roughly to the lower and middle grades of the compulsory school, the Intermediate level to the upper grades, and the Advanced level corresponds to the upper secondary school, that is, extending to university level. This parallel, though, is by no means decisive because pupils in music schools commence their studies at variable age and may also advance at an uneven pace.

Conclusion of music school studies, therefore, cannot be stated in terms of a specific age. The duration of a course of study is, among other things, restricted by instructional hours that pupils receive as mandated in the Act on financial support for music schools with later amendments (article 1, no. 75/1985). See also the comments in the Appendix on page 41-42.

Key levels and examinations

Each of the three key levels shall be concluded by examinations, that is, Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced examinations. All three exams are in two sections: an instrumental/vocal section, and a music theory section. Music schools may at their own discretion decide to divide their studies into smaller units or grades.

University level
Advanced level examination Advanced level (Grades VI-VII)
Intermediate level examination Intermediate level (Grades IV-V)
Elementary level examination Elementary level (Grades I-III)

The examinations at the conclusion of each level of study are intended to ensure that certain minimal requirements are met, as well as provide

stability and discipline. Pupils must successfully complete both sections of a key level examination before they enter for the next. To successfully complete Advanced level examinations, pupils are also required to give a solo recital.

The duration of each level of study can differ depending for example on pupil's age, maturity, effort, and rate of progress. As a rule, most pupils starting instrumental studies at 8–9 years of age will complete the Elementary level in three years. Older students can be expected to progress at a faster pace. At the Intermediate and Advanced levels the scope of the studies increases and likewise the average time it takes to complete each level. On completion of the Advanced level, students are considered ready to pursue musical studies at university level.

Music schools are free to align the three key levels with grade levels (as used to be the norm). Thus, the Elementary level would correspond to preparatory stage along with grades I-III, the Intermediate level with grades IV-V, and the Advanced level with VI-VII grades. Schools can, at their own discretion, require their pupils to take graded examinations in between key level examinations. The latter shall, however, replace graded exams at the respective levels. See page 32 for further explanation.

The individual schools that decide to hold graded examinations are totally responsible for their content, implementation, and assessment. These exams are not discussed in the subject curriculum guides. If graded exams are held, it can be estimated that the pupils will finish approximately one grade a year at the Elementary level, but the time between grades will lengthen as students advance.

SUBJECT GUIDES

The guides for individual subjects and subject areas in music schools are road maps for pupils and teachers. The intent is to assure variety as well as to regulate those main components of music education prescribed in the National Curriculum Guide, both within and between individual music schools.

The structure of the subject guides

The subject guides are arranged according to the structure of musical studies described in the previous section (pp. 11-13). The instrumental guides are published in seven separate booklets for related instruments and there are separate guides for music theory, and for jazz and popular music.

Instrumental studies

The instrumental guides present the major objectives and requirements for each key level of study: Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced. These guides also contain lists of suggested pieces and study materials for each level. The lists are not intended to be exhaustive or compulsory but rather provide reference for pupils and teachers. Such lists tend to encourage unity and variety in instrumental studies as well as provide useful criteria for comparing and grading new materials.

The subject guides display examples of examination pieces at each level. The examples are chosen from the standard repertoire for each instrument to

indicate the requirements for the particular exam. Each subject guide also contains lists of chamber music pieces for the instrument concerned. Furthermore, a list of useful books about each instrument is given at the end of each guide.

Music theory subjects

The Music Theory Guide defines objectives, contents, and requirements for Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced levels. Integrated instruction of the sub-components of music theory⁵ at lower levels is explained, as well as the need for their specialized instruction at more advanced levels. The connection of music theory with instrumental studies is discussed. The guide also presents directives on organizing the study of music theory, and discusses assessment and examinations.

Jazz and popular music

Jazz and popular music is an umbrella-term for jazz, rock music, and other musical styles of Afro-American origin. The study of jazz and popular music has a somewhat unique position within music schools because of differences in instrumental technique, aspects of music theory, and playing in jazz and rock ensembles. Although, the organization of jazz studies resembles those of regular instrumental studies, and makes comparable demands on students, assignments and tasks differ considerably from traditional music studies.

The subject guide for jazz and popular music represents fundamental knowledge and skills, objectives, and assessment, within the area. The study components that are common to all instruments within the area of jazz and popular music, such as scales and repertoire, are discussed. Otherwise, the regular instrumental study guides apply for instruction in the area.

In the subject guide for jazz and popular music there are also special chapters on music theory, playing in jazz and rock ensembles, and on electric guitar, bass, keyboards and singing. These chapters explain, among other things, common requirements within jazz and popular music, particularly, concerning scales and chords. Study of the drum set, however, is included in the subject guide for percussion instruments.

⁵ The sub-components of music theory are rudiments of music, harmony, aural skills, music history, form, and counterpoint.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE

It is important that all music schools define their scope and objectives in their own school curriculum guide and familiarize pupils and their parents/guardians with its content.

Basis and role of school curriculum guides

The role of a school curriculum guide is to contribute to successful school operations by providing information and an overview, to facilitate revision of plans and to put them to use for more effective music education.

In compiling a school curriculum guide, music schools are obliged to consider policy statements and objectives set by the National Curriculum Guide, while at the same time adapting them to their specific situations and specialized objectives. A school curriculum guide must take the local situation and environment into account, providing principals and teachers with considerable freedom and scope in school operations.

The role and objectives of music schools are presented on pp. 10-13. Ways in which these objectives may be achieved are many, and instructional methods diverse. It is the role of principals and teachers, preferably after consulting with parents/guardians and students, to decide which of these objectives to pursue and which instructional means to use, given the staffing and facilities of the school.

The subject guides define objectives and specify minimum requirements demanded of students to pass Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced level exams. In its school curriculum guide, a school shall detail how it will organize teaching and learning to provide their students with sufficient preparation to fulfil these requirements.

Composition of the school curriculum guide

The school curriculum guide is simultaneously a school's working plan, information booklet, and description of school operations. The school curriculum guide is based on the National Curriculum Guide and shall be a detailed implementation of it, considering the local conditions and idiosyncrasies of each school.

The main components of the school curriculum guide shall be:

Outline of study opportunities offered by the school; including special studies that individual schools may offer beyond those required in the National Curriculum Guide.

Objectives, scope and sequence; first, a detailed implementation of objectives in the National Curriculum Guide with their adaptation to the school's staffing and facilities; and, second, specialized local objectives and ways to carry them out.

Planning and working methods, such as the annual operational plan and school calendar, teaching staff and subjects taught, administrative staff, date of school concerts and examinations.

Evaluation, clear explanations of the school's assessment methods, the type of reporting system or grade scale used, and the criteria upon which the assessment is based.

Other information, such as on equipment and facilities, office hours, connection between home and school, co-operation between parties inside and outside the school, special projects, and school rules.

The school curriculum guide needs to be revised regularly. If such revision does not take place annually, schools should publish leaflets to announce annual changes such as on school session and school calendar, concerts and examination dates.

INSTRUCTION AND TEACHING METHODS

Instruction assists pupils in acquiring knowledge and understanding, developing their own opinions and attitudes and acquiring skills in specific areas. Instruction seeks to have students achieve planned objectives.

School operations should include a wide variety of approaches and teaching methods. Teachers bear the professional responsibility for selecting the most favourable and effective routes to achieve the objectives of the National Curriculum Guide and school curriculum guides. Selection of teaching methods and approaches should consider the objectives aimed at, the age, developmental level and ability of the pupils concerned in each instance and the nature of the subject matter. Carefully conceived instruction, adapted to objectives and pupils, increases the likelihood of success.

The school's instructional methods and approaches have to serve the objectives aimed at in each case. The objectives of music schools vary; some concern specific aspects of knowledge, skills and attitudes while others are long-term objectives. The selection of instructional methods and the organization of school operations should provide each pupil with optimal opportunities to learn and to develop. Instruction should consider individual pupils' needs and experiences and encourage their will to learn and their work satisfaction. The methods may not discriminate between pupils based on gender, residence, origin, race, handicap, religion or social status.

The teacher's professional knowledge and skills are of utmost importance—their instrumental skills as well as solid grounding in music theory and general musicianship. Equally important are his or her ability to select appropriate teaching methods and motivating assignments for pupils to work at in school lessons and for home study. These teaching skills can play a key role in stimulating and maintaining pupils' interest in music education. Teachers' communications skills and their empathy with students may also play a crucial role in inspiring pupils' interest and progress in music. Studying music is an elective, non-compulsory activity, making encouragement from teachers and parents all the more important for pupils. Last, but not least, teachers and parents shape pupils' attitudes toward the study of music, the school, and to music in general.

ELEMENTS OF INSTRUMENTAL AND MUSIC THEORY LEARNING

The main educational activities in music schools are the teaching and learning of instruments, solo singing, and music theory. The National Curriculum Guide defines standards in these areas that pupils must master to satisfy certain key levels of accomplishment. At the same time, it advises

music schools to include a variety of approaches and options in their school operations to account for individual differences in pupils' interests, ability and development.

Instrumental study

Instrumental teaching should emphasize diversity, taking pupils' needs and expectations into account. It is essential that students get the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways. Playing and singing with others in different sorts of performance groups has great educational value. As many pupils as possible should be given that opportunity. Appearing regularly in school concerts is also a valuable experience for students.

Different instruments require mastery of different skills. Practice tasks, repertoire, and instructional materials also differ in extent and traditions from one instrument to another. Nevertheless, the study of all instruments has certain common elements that will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Pieces

Teachers select pieces for study in collaboration with their pupils. Teachers should select a varied repertoire of music to acquaint students with diverse musical styles. In addition to pieces that pupils practice meticulously, it is commendable to introduce them to many other compositions as well. It is important that students cover sufficient amount of repertoire during each level of study before moving on to the next.

Studies

Good studies (etudes) help to build a solid technique in a systematic way as well as provide training in performing interpretive elements, such as phrasing, dynamics and nuances. Teachers should carefully select studies of appropriate level of difficulty for the pupil's current ability.

Scales and arpeggios

Many elements of performance develop by systematic study of scales, for instance, technique, tone production, intonation, and range. The subject guides list the scales and chords that pupils are to master on specific instruments during each level of study. Additionally, details are provided with regard to speed, range and articulation.

Playing from memory

By memorizing music, pupils will come to know it in a qualitatively different way. Playing pieces from memory should be trained on a regular basis. It is also recommended that students memorize scales from the outset.

Sight-reading

Systematic training of music reading is a foundational component of music study. Among the obvious benefits is the pupil's ability to learn new music quickly and to participate in ensembles. It is important for pupils to realize that good music reading also involves understanding and appropriate performance of interpretative words and signs.

Unprepared performance at sight should be practiced regularly during lessons and at home. Materials for that purpose ought to be carefully matched with the ability of each student. A good rule of thumb is to use sight-reading materials comparable to those mastered two or three years earlier in the pupil's studies. Transposition should be trained, likewise, if so required by the subject guide in question.

Creative work

All pupils learning to play instruments should be encouraged and given opportunities, to create, improvise and arrange music for their own enjoyment and development. All pupils at the Elementary level should participate in creative activities of this kind.

Pupils at the Intermediate and Advanced levels elect whether, and to what extent, they tackle the creative component. To encourage this, however, interested pupils should be offered special lessons and ensemble classes where composing and improvising are the focus. Integrated studies, that is, integrating music theory and ensemble classes, can also be a fruitful approach to creative work.

Creative work in instrumental music education could, among other things, consist of pupils' own performance of an original composition, or an improvisation from a given opening phrase, harmonic progression, or melody. Activities of this kind develop pupils cognitively as well as technically, increase their understanding of the building blocks of music, and provide them with opportunities to use already learned materials, such as scales and chords, in a variety of ways.

Computers, and other recent technical developments, play an increasingly important role in present-day composition and music making. Students in music schools should have the opportunity to use computers for various creative purposes, including their original work. Creative work in music schools is discussed in further detail in an Appendix on pages 42-43.

Playing by ear

Learning music by ear develops aural acuity more than most other activities. Students should be encouraged and guided to learn music in this way, familiar songs, for instance, or tunes learned from recordings. Playing by ear is one way to make pupils into more independent musicians, who are, for instance, able to play their instruments on various occasions with minimal time spent in preparation.

Overall impression

An integral part of music study is learning to perform music with confidence and conviction and to select and prepare a suitable programme. It is also necessary to guide pupils on appropriate appearance and etiquette in concert and examination situations. These aspects of performance need to be regularly rehearsed. Guidance in these areas will be useful to all pupils, whether they are destined to become musicians or will pursue other occupations.

Music Theory Studies

In the National Curriculum Guide music theory is used as a collective term for various sub-components, such as rudiments of music, harmony, aural skills, music history, form, and counterpoint. It also embraces music related computer studies, such as using the computer for composing, notation, for generating sounds, or as a recording device. The Music Theory Guide discusses the use of computers in music theory in more detail.

When music theory is taught in an integrated manner, these sub-components become linked with multiple activities, such as, playing instruments, singing, movement, reading, writing, listening, analyzing, and creating music. It is important, at any age level, to make use of familiar and suitable music in music theory classes, especially, pieces that pupils know from their instrumental lessons, or music that is familiar to them from other situations.

Students usually attend music theory classes concurrently with their instrumental studies. Schools are expected to offer integrated music theory teaching at Elementary and Intermediate levels. At the Advanced level, however, schools can decide for themselves whether they teach the sub-components of music theory as integrated or separate subjects. The Music Theory Guide discusses contents and aspects of music theory.

Students specializing in jazz and popular music need to follow a specialized course in music theory. The separate curriculum guide defines the content and elements of music theory for studies in jazz and popular music.

Connections between Theory and Instrumental Studies

It is essential to have close ties between theory and instrumental studies to provide pupils with holistic and maximally useful music education. In general, music theory will be taught in classes. At the same time, it should be an integrated factor in the teaching and learning of all instruments and closely related to pupil's work in instrumental lessons at any given time. Ideally, teachers should capitalize on pupils' instrumental skills and have them use their instruments in theory class. Teachers of instruments and music theory must plan their work and collaborate to make students realize the connections between playing music and knowing music theory.

Instrumental and Vocal Ensembles

Playing and singing together is a vital ingredient of music education. It adds important dimensions to musical training, broadens pupils' horizons, develops musical tastes, and increases knowledge of a varied repertoire of music beyond what can be taught in other subjects of the school.

Playing and singing with others is of unquestionable social value. It strengthens empathy and consideration, develops pupils' ability to communicate and cooperate, as well as their self-image and responsible behaviour. The enjoyment of making music in groups also provides each participant with a strong motivation to improve his or her musical skills.

It is vital to provide pupils with opportunities to participate in various kinds of ensembles, both large and small, e.g. chamber groups of various sizes, orchestras, choirs, pop, rock, and jazz bands.

EVALUATION AND EXAMINATIONS

The next three chapters will deal with evaluation in music schools. The present chapter contains a general discussion. The second chapter describes examinations that pupils are required to pass upon concluding Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels of study. The third chapter discusses graded exams that individual music schools are free to hold at their own discretion.

Evaluation includes all endeavours to obtain as reliable information as possible about the success of school efforts and how well students have managed to achieve the objectives. The main purpose of evaluation is to improve teaching and learning and to gather information to assist pupils in their study, stimulate them and encourage them.

Evaluation should, among other things, provide pupils, their parents/guardians and teachers with information on pupils' study progress, especially their achievement, progress, efforts and aspirations to obtain established objectives. Evaluation should also provide some indications whether the objectives are realistic and the instructional methods are appropriate. Moreover, it is important to be able to conclude from evaluation efforts whether schoolwork is aligned with curriculum guides and the objectives set by individual schools.

Evaluation – General Discussion

Evaluation of the outcomes of teaching and pupil progress should be a permanent aspect of school operations. Evaluating pupils' status at the beginning of a period of study can provide useful information that will, among other things, facilitate the planning of instruction and lead to more effective study.

Evaluation must be objective, honest and fair. All aspects of study, such as interest, effort, comprehension, knowledge, and skills must be evaluated on a regular basis and weighted in accordance with their emphases in instruction. The objectives of music education are varied, and various routes can be followed to achieve them. Therefore, it is important to employ a variety of evaluation methods, and they must suit the nature of the established objectives.

The principal and teachers are responsible for evaluation methods within each school, including the content and the procedures.

Some aspects of learning can best be measured by formal tests or examinations. Test results indicate how a pupil managed to solve a particular problem, at a given time, according to specified objectives and standards stated in a curriculum guide. For other aspects of learning different evaluation methods are more appropriate. To report on long-term student progress, written comments or journal entries can be suitable techniques. Checklists⁶, written comments and other subjective approaches are also appropriate for evaluating students' creative projects, vocal or instrumental ensemble participation, and recital performance, as well as the

⁶ A list of study aspects or tasks to be checked if properly mastered by a pupil. On checklists with rating scales a teacher records his/her assessment of a pupil's mastery of a specific task according to a predetermined criterion.

amount and range of learned repertoire. Various technological devices can be employed as evaluation tools. Audio and video tape recorders, for instance, are useful in many types of assessment. They can be used to collect data on students' involvement and cooperation in group activities, their technical skills, and their processes and products in creative work. Recordings can also be beneficially used for students' self-evaluation. Concerning the handling of data collected in this way, the same regulations apply as for other evaluation data, including those laws and regulations that relate to the protection of privacy and processing of personal data at any given time.

Formal evaluation of achievement takes the form of examinations. On the one hand, there are criterion-referenced examinations at three key levels about which specific regulations apply, as further detailed on pp. 23-32. On the other hand, there are examinations that are left to the discretion of individual schools, such as graded exams (see p. 32), diagnostic tests, and annual examinations. A pupil's self-evaluation, based on critical listening and knowledge, is an integral part of music learning. Conversations between teacher and pupil, either on individual projects or his/her studies in general, can also be seen as part of evaluation.

Music schools are obliged to inform pupils and their guardians carefully about the school's evaluation policy at least once during each academic year.

Upon a pupil's or their guardians' request, a music school is obliged to provide pupils with a written statement about their academic standing.

Written comments and other ratings of results⁷ must be stated clearly and unambiguously so that no doubt exists about their meaning. If figures are used to report grades it is necessary to explain what they mean and how they were derived. The same applies if letter grades are used.

Schools are free to decide by what means they report the outcome of evaluation to pupils and their parents/guardians. Each school should use a consistent presentation of results.

If a pupil moves from one music school to another it is the responsibility of the receiving school to assess the pupil's academic standing. This applies when pupils are at an interim stage in their studies, i.e. between the recognized key level examinations.

KEY LEVEL EXAMINATIONS

Upon completing Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels, pupils are required to take examinations in two sections: an instrumental/vocal assessment and a test in music theory. It is not essential that pupils successfully complete both sections of the examination during the same year. Pupils are not, however, permitted to attempt either section of the Intermediate level examination until they have satisfied requirements for both sections of the Elementary level examination. Similarly, pupils are not permitted to attempt either section of the Advanced level examination before they have passed both sections at Intermediate level. Furthermore, to successfully complete the Advanced level examination pupils are required to give a solo recital (in or outside his/her own music school) as well as

⁷ This applies to grading in the widest sense, for example, in the form of figures, letters or words.

satisfying examination requirements in both the practical and theoretical sections of the exam.

Organization and Purpose

Examinations at these three key levels of music education serve several purposes. They are to determine whether and to what extent pupils have fulfilled a required level of skills in accordance with curriculum requirements. They are also to provide information about specific areas of teaching and learning in music schools, assessing pupils' attainment in relation to the objectives and standards of the National Curriculum Guide, and informing pupils about their achievements in various elements of the examinations.

The instrumental/vocal examinations may be held at any time during the school year. As a rule pupils should be assessed at the music school where they study, although two or more schools are allowed to assemble their candidates at one school should that be more efficient.

Standardized Assessment Procedures and Examiner Expertise

In an effort to ensure consistency, unbiased assessment, and, consequently, the most reliable evaluation of instrumental performance possible, trained external examiners shall be employed for judging all key level examinations.⁸ It is acknowledged that the same examiner is qualified to examine all Elementary examinations on all instruments/voices. At Intermediate level, examiners will only examine their own specialist instrument and related instruments according to the following groupings: a) Woodwind instruments, b) brass instruments, c) bowed stringed instruments, d) keyboard instruments including accordion, e) jazz and rock instruments, i.e. all instruments in accordance with the subject guide for jazz and popular music, including electric guitar, bass, keyboard and vocals, f) guitar, g) harp, h) solo singing, i) percussion. At the advanced level, examiners are only allowed to examine their own specialist instruments.

Grading and Minimum Marks

At key level instrumental/vocal examinations, examiners are to give both written comments and marks for each element of the examinations.⁹ Pupils are awarded marks reflecting their level of attainment in individual elements of the examination, up to the maximum available marks for each of those elements. The total maximum for all elements of the examination are 100 marks. Only whole marks are permissible. Final grades ranging from 1 - 10, shall be awarded, obtained by dividing the total marks by 10 to the first decimal point (e.g. a total of 79 marks = 7,9). The weights of individual elements of the examinations are given on pp. 26-29 where each examination is discussed in detail. To pass examinations, students must obtain at least 60

⁸ Detailed implementation of the standardization of assessment and examining procedures is in the hands of the newly founded Icelandic Music Schools' Examinations Board. See <http://www.profanefnd.is/english.htm>.

⁹ In music schools the word mark is used to evaluate student achievement and for computing average grade points on instrumental/vocal examinations.

marks in instrumental/vocal assessments, giving a grade of 6,0 and obtain a grade of at least 6,0 in theory assessments. See pp. 25-29 for details.

Certificates

Two kinds of certification are used: First, comments/marks sheets, with marks and comments for individual elements of the examination are issued to students after the completion of the instrumental/vocal section. Second, a certificate, without comments or marks, will be issued, on completion of both sections of the examination; theory and instrumental/vocal.

Examination Timings

To ensure that duration of examinations does not exceed sensible limits the following maximums are allowed: Elementary instrumental/vocal examinations should not take more than 30 minutes, Intermediate level examinations should not exceed 45 minutes, and Advanced level examinations should last no more than an hour. In all cases, these apply to total examination times, including the playing of scales and arpeggios, elective/option, and sight-reading, as well as short rests between elements of the examination.

General Regulations – Instrumental/Vocal and Theory Examinations

1. Teachers are responsible for preparing their pupils and for assessing their readiness to enter for instrumental/vocal and theory examinations.
2. A pass depends on the final grade received on the examination overall. For a pass, pupils must obtain a total of 60 marks on instrumental/vocal exams, equivalent to a grade of 6,0. The same minimum is required for a pass in music theory¹⁰.
3. Teachers are obliged to explain to pupils and their parents/guardians the meaning of examination results of instrumental/vocal and music theory examinations.
4. If disputes arise over grades, pupils and their parents/guardians are entitled to comprehensive clarifications of examination results and the assessment criteria they are based on, this applies to instrumental/vocal and music theory examinations alike.

Regulations for Instrumental/Vocal Examinations

1. In choosing pieces for examinations, teachers should ensure that the length of programmes is consistent with the time allocated to examinations in this guide. Pieces should be played in their entirety.
2. In choosing pieces for examinations, teachers are responsible for ensuring that pieces presented for assessment are at a level of difficulty consistent with requirements in the relevant subject guide.

¹⁰ To pass the Advanced level examination in music theory, pupils must obtain a minimum grade of 6,0 in each individual music theory subject (harmony, aural etc.). See the Music theory guide for details.

3. All subject guide requirements concerning the number, contents and nature of different elements of the examination must be strictly followed. One longer piece for example, is not acceptable in place of two shorter pieces and individual movements of the same piece are not acceptable as separate elements of the examination.
4. All subject guide requirements regarding scales, arpeggios and other technical exercises must be strictly followed. Pupils perform scales, arpeggios and other technical exercises selected by the examiner, during the examination itself, from requirements in the relevant subject guide.
5. Pupils decide the order in which they perform individual elements of the examination.
6. Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced level examinations may only be assessed by external examiners.
7. The same examiner should not examine at the same location for many years in succession.
8. Teachers must submit examination programmes to examiners before exams commence. The examination proceeds only on the basis that this programme is assessed, by the examiner, as being consistent with requirements in curriculum guides.
9. The examiner is responsible for providing appropriate sight-reading (transposition) material.
10. Teachers are allowed to be present during examinations since they have no influence on the examiner's assessment.
11. Examiners assess pupils' performance without taking into consideration any comments or explanations.
12. Examiners must provide pupils with assessment in the form of both marks and comments for each and every element of the examination. Comments should indicate both positive aspects of the pupils' performance and point to areas for improvement.
13. Examiners should be present at Advanced level examination recitals and give written assessment of the performance. Where possible this should be the same examiner that examined the pupil for the respective Advanced level examination.

Further regulations for music theory examinations are given in the special subject guide.

Elementary Level Examination

The Elementary examination is in two sections: instrumental/vocal and music theory. For a pass on the instrumental/vocal section, 60 marks are required of the total 100 available, i.e. a grade of 6,0 is the minimum. A pass on individual elements is not required. The same minimum grade is required to pass music theory. Theory and instrumental sections need not to be completed in the same year.

Instrumental/Vocal Section

The total duration of the Elementary instrumental/vocal examination should not exceed 30 minutes. Pupils are required to perform from memory

at least one of the pieces according to element 1 of the examination, or a study according to element 2.

Examination elements:

1. **Three contrasting pieces** (15 marks each) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
2. **Study** (15 marks) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
3. **Scales and arpeggios** (15 marks) as specified in the respective subject guide.
4. **Elective/Option** (10 marks). Pupils select one of the following options:
 - a) Improvise from a given opening phrase, harmonic progression or melody, with or without accompaniment.
 - b) Perform an original composition or arrangement.
 - c) Harmonize a short melody *ad hoc*.
 - d) Perform a short popular or folk piece, which the pupil has learned by ear. Song candidates must perform without accompaniment.
5. **Unprepared performance at sight (Sight-reading)** (10 marks).
6. **Overall impression** (5 marks).

Examinations in solo singing, percussion, and jazz and popular music, do not adhere completely to these examination elements. The structure of these examinations is further detailed in the respective subject guides.

Music Theory Section

Requirements for the Elementary examination in music theory are based on the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to possess upon completing their Elementary level studies. The Music Theory Guide gives further details on the content and structure of the theory papers and how the examinations are carried out.

Intermediate Level Examination

To enter for the Intermediate level examination pupils must already have passed the Elementary examination completely. The Intermediate examination is in two sections: instrumental/vocal and music theory. For a pass on the instrumental/vocal section, 60 marks are required of the total 100 available, i.e. a grade of 6,0 is the minimum. A pass on individual elements is not required. The same minimum grade is required to pass music theory. Theory and instrumental sections need not to be completed in the same year.

Instrumental/Vocal Section

The total duration of the Intermediate instrumental/vocal examination should not exceed 45 minutes. Pupils are required to perform from memory at least one of the pieces according to element 1 of the examination, or a study according to element 2.

Examination Elements:

1. **Three contrasting pieces** (15 marks each) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
2. **Study** (15 marks) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
3. **Scales and arpeggios** (15 marks) as specified in the respective subject guide.
4. **Elective/Option** (10 marks). Pupils select one of the following options:
 - a) Perform a piece of their own choice of a similar level of difficulty as others required for Intermediate examinations.
 - b) Improvise from a given opening phrase, harmonic progression or melody, with or without accompaniment.
 - c) Perform an original composition or arrangement.
 - d) Harmonize a short melody *ad hoc*.
5. **Unprepared performance at sight (Sight-reading)** (10 marks).
6. **Overall impression** (5 marks).

Examinations in solo singing, percussion, and jazz and popular music, do not adhere completely to these examination elements. The structure of these examinations is further detailed in the respective subject guides.

Music Theory Section

Requirements for the Intermediate Examination in music theory are based on the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to possess upon completing their Intermediate level studies. The Music Theory Guide gives further details on the content and structure of the theory papers and how the examinations are carried out.

Advanced Level Examination

The Advanced level examination is the matriculation examination from music schools. To enter for the Advanced level examination pupils must already have passed the Intermediate examination completely.

The Advanced level examination is in three sections: instrumental/vocal, music theory, and solo recital. For a pass on the instrumental/vocal section, 60 marks are required of the total 100 available, i.e. a grade of 6,0 is the minimum. The same minimum grade is required to pass the music theory section. All three sections need not to be completed in the same year but matriculation only takes place when they have all been successfully completed. Certain subject guides require pupils to pass specified levels on a second instrument before they can enter for the Advanced examination on their first instrument.

The instrumental section takes on two forms: Scheme I – orchestral instruments, or Scheme II – other instruments. However, examinations in solo singing, percussion, and jazz and popular music, do not adhere completely to these schemes. The structure of these examinations is further detailed in the respective subject guides.

Instrumental/Vocal Section

The total duration of the Advanced instrumental/vocal examination should not exceed 60 minutes. Pupils are required to perform from memory at least one of the pieces according to element 1 of the examination, or a study according to element 2.

Scheme I – Orchestral Instruments

Examination Elements:

1. **Three contrasting pieces** (12 marks each) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
2. **Study** (12 marks) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
3. **Orchestral excerpts** (12 marks) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
4. **Scales and arpeggios** (15 marks) as specified in the respective subject guide.
5. **Elective/Option** (10 marks). Pupils select one of the following options:
 - a. Perform a piece of their own choice of a similar level of difficulty as others required for Advanced examinations.
 - b. Perform a leading role in an ensemble piece consistent in terms of difficulty with Advanced level requirements.
 - c. Where individual subject guides allow, students may perform a piece on a related instrument from the same instrumental group as their main instrument.
6. **Unprepared performance at sight** (Sight-reading) (10 marks).
7. **Overall impression** (5 marks).

Scheme II – other instruments

Examination Elements:

1. **Three contrasting pieces** (15 marks each) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
2. **Study** (15 marks) consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in the respective subject guide.
3. **Scales and arpeggios** (15 marks) as specified in the respective subject guide.
4. **Elective/Option** (10 marks). Pupils select one of the following options:
 - a) Perform a piece of their own choice of a similar level of difficulty as others required for Advanced Examinations.
 - b) Perform a leading role in an ensemble piece consistent in terms of difficulty with Advanced Level Requirements.
 - c) Where individual subject guides allow, students may perform a piece on a related instrument from the same instrumental group as their main instrument.
5. **Unprepared performance at sight (Sight-reading)** (10 marks).
6. **Overall impression** (5 marks).

Music Theory Section

The subject guide for Music Theory details the requirements pupils must meet to pass Advanced examinations in music theory subjects. The guide also describes the content and structure of the theory papers, minimum grades, and how the examinations are carried out. A separate grade shall be given for each individual subject (harmony, aurals etc.) at the Advanced level. The required pass mark is 60 marks in each subject.

Solo Recital

Upon completing the instrumental/vocal section of the Advanced level examination, pupils are required to hold a solo recital of 30–60 minutes duration, in or outside their respective music school. The performance will not be graded but a written assessment given. The recital need not be given in the same academic year as when the examination is passed. However, should the recital and the examination take place within the same academic year pupils are allowed to use all their examination pieces for the recital. If the recital is given later, at least half of the examination pieces must be replaced with new pieces. Students should present a varied and well-constructed programme.

Matriculation

In order to pass the Advanced Level Examination pupils must pass an instrumental/vocal section and a music theory section according to respective curriculum guides, as well as giving an Advanced level examination recital.

Explanations of Individual Elements of Key Level Examinations

What follows are short descriptions of the common elements comprising the Instrumental/vocal examinations. These are worth bearing in mind when preparing for the examinations.

Pieces and studies

Pieces and studies selected for the examination must be consistent in level of difficulty with the requirements indicated in individual subject guides. Students should present a varied programme with pieces from differing musical periods.

Scales and arpeggios

Individual subject guides specify which scales and arpeggios pupils are to prepare for particular examinations. In addition, details are provided with regard to tempo, range and articulation. In the examination room the examiner selects scales and arpeggios for the candidate to play. Given the different nature and traditions of various instruments, requirements for scales and arpeggios are not identical between instrumental groups, nor can they be.

Orchestral Excerpts

Where individual instrumental guides require the study of orchestral excerpts, this element must be included in the Advanced level examination

as done in Scheme I. The excerpts are orchestral passages where the instrument in question plays a leading role. At least three excerpts must be prepared from which the examiner selects in the examination itself.

Elective/Option - Elementary level examination

For Elementary instrumental/vocal examinations pupils select one of the following options:

- a. Improvise from a given opening phrase, simple harmonic progression or melody. Pupils may choose whether they improvise with or without accompaniment and it is expected that pupils should prepare this option in advance of the examination.
- b. Perform an original composition or arrangement. The work does not have to be notated. The work may be for more than one instrument as long as the examination candidate himself performs a major role in the piece.
- c. Harmonize a short melody. This option is only available for candidates playing instruments that can provide harmonic accompaniment.
- d. Perform a short popular or folk piece, which they have learned by ear. The range of the piece should be consistent with that expected at Elementary level. Melodies should be performed in unison, with or without accompaniment. Song candidates must perform without accompaniment.

Elective/Option - Intermediate level examination

For Intermediate instrumental/vocal examinations pupils select one of the following options:

- a. Perform a piece of their own choice. The piece should be of a similar level of difficulty as those stipulated for Intermediate examinations. This option is similar to Element 1 of the examination, but gives students the possibility of displaying their ability in the performance of a wider range of musical styles.
- b. Improvise from a given opening phrase, simple harmonic progression melody. Pupils may choose whether they improvise with or without accompaniment and it is expected that pupils should prepare this option in advance of the examination.
- c. Perform an original composition or arrangement. The work does not have to be notated. The work may be for more than one instrument as long as the examination candidate himself performs a major role in the piece.
- d. Harmonize a short melody. This option is only available for candidates playing instruments that can provide harmonic accompaniment.

Elective/Option - Advanced level examination

For Advanced Instrumental/Vocal Examinations pupils select one of the following options:

- a. Perform a piece of their own choice. The piece should be of a similar level of difficulty as those stipulated for Advanced examinations. This option gives students the possibility of displaying their ability in the performance of a wider range of musical styles.

- b. Perform a leading role in an ensemble piece consistent in terms of difficulty with Advanced Level requirements.
- c. Where individual subject guides allow, students may perform a piece on a related instrument from the same instrumental group as their main instrument.

Unprepared performance at sight (Sight-reading)

Before attempting to sight-read a short composition, the pupil is allowed one minute to examine the music. Where individual subject guides stipulate that candidates should transpose at sight, sight-reading and transposition tests are allocated half of the total available marks for this element of the examination (5 marks each/total 10). Candidates are allowed one minute to prepare in silence for transposition tests. Pieces for sight-reading and transposition are short and consistent with requirements stipulated in respective, individual subject guide.

Overall impression

At key levels Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced examinations marks are awarded for presentation and deportment, artistic interpretation, confidence and general impression.

GRADED EXAMINATIONS

Music schools can at their discretion determine to divide study materials within the three key levels into grade units as well. The schools are also free to administer other examinations than the key level examinations. What follows are recommendations for those schools deciding to hold graded examinations between the key level examinations.

Structure

Subject curriculum guides set objectives and requirements upon completing Elementary, Intermediate, and Advances levels. Individual music schools may set objectives and standards for specific grades within those key levels, but these must harmonize with those objectives and standards already set for the respective key levels. Thus, music schools are allowed to divide the Elementary level into three grades, Intermediate level into two grades, and Advanced level into two, totalling seven grades.

Schools are allowed to administer graded examinations in between key level examinations, i.e. pupils taking grades I, II, IV, and VI, but the Elementary examination will replace grade III, Intermediate examination grade V, and the Advanced examination, replacing grade VII, will round up the course of study. If pupils take graded examinations in instrumental/vocal performance, it is recommended that these exams be similarly structured as the key level examinations, particularly, in terms of number and weight of examination elements. Thus, grades I and II should be fashioned by the Elementary examination, grade IV be modelled on the Intermediate, and grade VI on the Advanced examination. Other than that, choice of pieces and study materials for graded examinations and their level of difficulty is the responsibility of each school.

Likewise, if graded examinations are held in music theory, it is recommended that they also take a similar form as key level examinations in

music theory subjects, i.e. test the same elements as further detailed in the Music theory guide.

Evaluation and Grading

Each school is responsible for the evaluation of graded examinations. Although demands on examiners assessing graded examinations are not as stringent as on those assessing key level examinations, quality in evaluation is always essential.

Should schools decide to formulate regulations regarding assessment criteria and pass marks for graded examinations, these should, preferably, be compatible with those for key level examinations.

It is essential that pupils always receive written comments on their performance on graded instrumental/vocal examinations.

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, HANDLING OF INDIVIDUAL CASES AND PERSONAL DATA

Attendance

Pupils shall attend all lessons, rehearsals and classes promptly. Individual schools' curriculum guides should specify in detail rules that exempt pupils from compulsory attendance. Included in those rules should be information about the way pupils' absences due to illnesses or other unavoidable circumstances are dealt with. It should also give information about penalties for violating attendance rules.

Handling of Personal Data

Data containing pupils' personal information, which is kept by the school, should be handled in accordance with the Act on the Processing and Handling of Personal Data no. 121/1989 and provisions in the Information Act no. 59/1996, as relevant. Music schools' personnel are bound by confidentiality. It is illegal to give out personal information about pupils from school records without their consent and the consent of their parents/guardians if the student is below the age of 18.

Obligation to Inform Parents/Guardians

Should the parents/guardians of a pupil below the age of 18 request information from a music school regarding their child's study progress, attendance, or other related information, they must be given that information by the school administration.

When pupils have reached the age of consent, only they or those they have granted power of attorney may be given information about them personally from school records.

Handling of Individual Cases

An attempt should be made to resolve all matters of conflict within the school. When disputes arise or when school regulations are violated it is important to keep records of such cases. It is recommended that music

schools formulate rules on handling disputes, including those on examination results. In handling individual cases, provisions in the Act on the Processing and Handling of Personal Data no. 121/1989 and in the Information Act no. 59/1996 should be taken into account.

Relations between Students and Staff

If a pupil, or the pupil's custodians if he or she is below the age of 18, considers that his or her rights have been violated (cf. school regulations) in such a way as to warrant a complaint, the individual or individuals in question should consult the relevant teacher. If the matter cannot be resolved on that level, the principal should decide on an appropriate resolution.

Expelling Pupils from School

Before pupils are expelled from school they must have received a warning in writing from the principal. The decision and responsibility to ultimately expel a pupil from school rests with the principal.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Three groups comprise the school community in each school: pupils, school personnel and parents. It is important for these groups to cooperate effectively in shaping this community and the rules of interaction, which should characterize relations within and outside of the school.

The pupils' education and welfare is a joint task of the home and school. This cooperation must be based on shared accountability, interactive exchange of information, mutual trust and respect. Finally, it is important to have solid cooperation between home and school concerning overall school operations. Parents are expected to participate in implementing the objectives of school operations in cooperation with school personnel.

Information Dissemination

Considering that instrumental learning is to a large degree self-study that takes place in pupils' homes, it is crucial for success to establish and maintain a close cooperation between the home and the music school.

Mutual and effective exchange of information between parents/guardians and school personnel encourages trust. As parents become more aware of the daily work routine in music schools and more involved in systematic cooperation, such as regarding pupils' home practice, the probability is that students will feel increasingly more comfortable and make good progress. It is very important for parents to pay close attention to their children's studies, their well-being in school, study achievement and progress. It is also vital that schools regularly provide clear and helpful information on school operations and plans for future activities. This can be done in various ways, such as with written messages, parents/guardians visiting the school, interviews with parents, information meetings with groups of parents, information in the school curriculum guide and on the school's website, all depending on local conditions.

Parents' Associations

Having an efficient and active parents' association in each music school is unquestionably a beneficial factor. The active participation of parents' associations can provide schools and school authorities with effective and constructive supervision and with realistic suggestions for improvements.

Parents associations and support groups have been formed within many music schools and provided important backing to the schools and individual programs within them

COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOL

Cooperation lies at the core of all school operations, embedded in the very nature of teaching and learning. Collaboration of various kinds regularly takes place within individual schools, between schools, and with other social institutions. Such cooperation can add to the variety of school activities, enrich the community and prove beneficial for schools and their collaborators alike.

Cooperation between Music schools and Pre-schools

Cooperation between a music school and a pre-school can be supportive for both. It can take on many forms depending on circumstances. This includes, for instance, pre-school children visiting the music-school and vice versa, performances of various kinds, and systematic cooperation on the early music education of pre-school children. When young children begin their study at music schools it is beneficial to build on their musical experiences from pre-school.

Cooperation between Music schools and Compulsory schools

Compulsory schools, as the name implies, provide mandatory education, which is outlined in the National Curriculum Guide for Compulsory School. Among its subjects is class teaching in general music, which is compulsory for Grades 1-8 and elective in Grades 9 and 10. Music schools, on the other hand, offer optional studies in music. The majority of pupils in music schools are of compulsory school age.

The connection and cooperation between music schools and compulsory schools take on two forms: educational on one hand, and organizational on the other.

Among the educational connections are common objectives. Some of these are broad in scope, such as guiding pupils, transmitting knowledge, and supporting children's overall development, emotional and social.

Other common objectives are more specific, concerning instruction and learning directly, providing pupils with opportunities to perform, enjoy, and create music. The schools, however, differ in the routes they follow to achieve these goals as evident from their differences in internal operations. The compulsory schools select their routes to suit the interests, tastes and development of all pupils. In these schools, class music is part of an array of subjects mandated in compulsory education. The music schools, on the other hand, travel more specialized routes focusing on individual needs. The

subject matter is one art form, music, divided into various specialized areas within instrumental/vocal performance, and music theory subjects.

Although cooperation between the two school types does take place, it varies greatly by local conditions, including school size, urban or rural settings, and geographical closeness of music schools and compulsory schools. In some communities the two share the same building, while in others they are located far apart from each other. Furthermore, the distance that pupils have to travel from home to school differs widely. Recent years have seen the scheduling of all grades in compulsory schools during morning and early afternoon, consequently, lengthening the school day from what was previously customary. This has made the scheduling of music school teaching more difficult and increased the need to accommodate this instruction, particularly for younger students, within the regular school day. It also calls for closer proximity of music studies to the pupils' homes. All this necessitates close cooperation on scheduling between music schools and compulsory schools in order to meet the interest of parents and pupils for a continuous school day. For these reasons, ways are sought to coordinate scheduling of the school day as well as other organization and facilities between the schools. In this regard, a sincere will to cooperate is essential on part of the schools, their principals and administrations. This is a prerequisite for successful cooperation, and for music schools and compulsory schools to support one another.

Cooperation between music schools and compulsory schools can take on various forms and will clearly be shaped by time and situations. The schools could join forces to work on individual projects, such as general promotion of the arts, festivals, theatrical plays, musicals, and theme weeks. Other forms might include exchanged visits, introduction of musical instruments in compulsory schools, joint chorus or orchestra, joint use of accommodation, equipment and school transport, or even teaching students from both schools in a single class. The outlets for such cooperation are primarily concerts and other cultural events where pupils of both schools contribute to performances of varied music.

A particularly close and well-organized cooperation is needed if music school teaching takes place on the premises of a compulsory school. Care must be taken that instruction, facilities, instruments and equipment match the standards set in the music schools' National Curriculum Guide. Surroundings should be quiet enough for music teaching and have adequate sound insulation. It is also important that the music education offered by music schools energize and strengthen the mandated general music program of the compulsory school. Generally, it should act as a catalyst on musical life in schools and in the community as a whole.

Attention is drawn to the fact that pupils in Grades 9 and 10 of the compulsory school can select their music school studies as electives. At the same time, it should be mentioned that pulling pupils out of classes in mandated school subjects for extra-curricular studies is not allowed, unless a written consent of their parents/guardians is presented and the lost instructional time made up for.

Cooperation between Music schools and Upper secondary schools

In the section on the role and objectives of music schools, it is emphasized that music schools serve all interested students seeking music education. It follows that pupils in upper secondary schools ought to be given the same opportunity to study in the country's music schools as the younger students. Music schools are urged to meet the needs, requests and developmental level of upper secondary students with varied study offerings of quality, whether they are beginners or more advanced musicians.

Music as Specialization in the Artistic Study Programmes

In accordance with the National Curriculum Guide for Upper Secondary Schools, schools may offer artistic study programmes totalling 105 credit units. Thereof the area of specialization in the elected artistic discipline (e.g. music) is made up of 45 credits in total. Artistic study programmes are defined as three-year courses of study.

In order to complete the music specialization area, pupils can choose between two routes. In both instances they must complete the Advanced examination in music theory according to the music school's National Curriculum Guide. The instrumental section can be completed on either one or two instruments.

Pupils specializing on one instrument must complete the Advanced level examination according to the relevant instrumental subject guide. As part of the examination, candidates are also required to give a solo recital. Alternatively, candidates can satisfy the instrumental section on two instruments. In this case, they must complete the Intermediate level examination on both instruments. Whichever route is chosen the music specialization area amounts to 45 credit units.

The former route is mainly intended for pupils who plan to become professional performers on their chosen instrument/voice. The latter is, on the other hand, conceived for those pupils who aim at music related professions other than performance. It is to be expected, in some instances, that music students will need one or two additional semesters to complete the music specialization area, beyond those three years expected by the National Curriculum Guide for Upper Secondary Schools.

The admission requirements for the artistic study programmes are detailed in the National Curriculum Guide for Upper Secondary Schools. It is recommended that pupils have finished the music schools' Intermediate level examination in music theory and are well advanced in their instrumental/vocal studies before they enroll in the programme. Only with this kind of preparation can they be expected to complete their examinations within the specified time.

It is vital that upper secondary schools, offering the music specialization area as part of the artistic study programmes, establish good relations with the music schools where the musical studies take place.

Music as Part of Academic Study Programmes

The National Curriculum Guide for Upper Secondary Schools allows students enrolled in academic study programmes (not specializing in art) to take up to 12 credits of specialized subjects in vocational or recognized

artistic training programmes, as part of their area of specialization. Additionally, they are allowed to use electives, totalling 12 credits, for the same purpose. Pupils in the academic study programmes can in that way have up to 24 credits in arts/music evaluated for a programme of study leading to matriculation.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture will later be issuing guidelines on the evaluation of musical studies that qualify for evaluation in this respect.

Cooperation between Music Schools

Cooperation between individual music schools can take on various forms, depending on their geographical location, areas of specializations and other aspects. Collaboration between schools could lead to more varied study offerings as well as to increased cost-effectiveness. Well-defined objectives and good planning are the keys to successful cooperation whether it is between individual music schools or between music schools and other social institutions. Examples of cooperation might include jointly managed orchestras, concerts, festivals, courses, and examination assessment, exchanged visits, or shared teacher employment. Administrators and personnel in music schools are encouraged to be on the alert for such possibilities.

Collaboration with Other Parties Outside the School

Music schools fulfil diverse educational and cultural roles. For these roles to be fulfilled the schools must collaborate with various external educational and cultural institutions. Possibilities for collaborations are many and varied depending on local situations. Cooperation might focus on independent projects or it could be more wide-ranging and longitudinal. Collaborators might, for instance, include other artistic schools, museums, churches, hospitals, and centres for the elderly as well as various social groups, such as athletic or theatrical clubs. Collaboration with artists in the community could also prove mutually fruitful. Music schools are also encouraged to establish collaboration with partners abroad, whenever feasible.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Facilities and environment in music schools can affect student achievement as well as the attitudes and well-being of all those working in the schools. Although the number of enrolled pupils and the variety of studies offered will largely determine a school's needs for housing, certain minimum facilities are essential in all music schools. Likewise, if music schools are to meet the teaching standards demanded by the National Curriculum Guide, a minimum collection of instruments and equipment is essential in all of them, regardless of their size.

Below is a discussion of housing and equipment in music schools.

Housing

Suitable, quality housing is fundamental in the daily operations of a music school. It is essential, therefore, that each school be provided with the best facilities possible. An Appendix on pp. 43-46 contains a description of

housing and equipment requirements for music schools, presented as guidance. Clearly, the recommendations given there will not apply equally well to all music schools and will be largely determined by their size and functions.

The instructional area in music schools may, in some instances, be used for multiple purposes. For instance, the auditorium may be used for concerts, music theory class teaching, and group rehearsals. Architectural designs for music schools must take such varied usage into account. When accommodation designed for other purposes is used for music teaching it must be adapted to the needs of music schools.

Making use of compulsory school premises, or other suitable housing, for music teaching offered by music schools may in some cases be efficient, provided these facilities fulfil the demands in the music schools' National Curriculum Guide.

Equipment

It is important that music schools possess quality instruments and equipment. Sound reproduction equipment is desirable in every teaching room. The use of computers in music is increasingly opening new possibilities. Music schools are encouraged to keep abreast in this development and offer their pupils and teachers ready access to computers and music software. Audiovisual equipment, a screen and video recorders are also useful instructional tools in music schools.

Furniture needs to be of appropriate size for pupils, designed to encourage good posture at work. It is important to maintain all instruments, equipment and furniture in good repair, and to secure adequate renewal.

A more detailed description of desirable school-owned instruments and equipment is to be found in an Appendix on pp. 45-46.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Evaluation of school operations is generally divided into internal and external evaluation. Internal evaluation refers to a school's self-evaluation, carried out by its own personnel. External evaluation refers to an evaluation of a school's activities carried out by external parties.

According to Article 12 of the Act on financial support for music schools, No. 75/1985, with later amendments, the Ministry of Education is responsible for professional supervision and inspection of music teaching. This includes professional evaluation and gathering of data on music schools' operations, e.g. with special external assessments. At the same time, music schools themselves are encouraged to carry out internal assessments comparable to that required of compulsory schools.

It is important to evaluate other aspects of school operations than pupils' progress and achievement alone. Teachers need to assess their own work habits and to review them accordingly. It is also important to evaluate regularly facilities, data, school curriculum guide and working practices within the school. Relations with parents/guardians, institutions and other parties, and, of course, between the school staff internally, must be continuously evaluated. Lastly, it is important to assess how successful the

school has been in achieving the social objectives set by the National Curriculum Guide as well as its own local objectives.

Parents/guardians should be involved in evaluating the work of the music school, for instance, by way of interviews or attitude surveys.

Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation is a way of working systematically on quality and improvements in school operations. Self-evaluation is also a way of disseminating knowledge and information about the school's work. The self-evaluation process involves a comprehensive collection of data to provide information about the extent the achievements of school operations are in accordance with its objectives. Its main purpose is to make it easier for school personnel to work towards the school's objectives, assess whether they have been met, review them, and encourage improvements. A self-evaluation report includes the school's policy and objectives, a definition of the ways in which these are to be accomplished, an analysis of the strong and weak aspects of the school's operations, and a plan for improvements.

Criteria for Self-Evaluation

If self-evaluation is carried out in music schools the Ministry of Education regards the following as important criteria.

Self-evaluation should be:

Formal. The evaluation must be based on systematic procedures. How the evaluation is carried out and by who must be clearly reported.

Comprehensive. Self-evaluation should include all the major aspects of school operations, i.e. objectives, administration, human relations, learning, teaching, student assessment, pupils, personnel, facilities and external relations.

Reliable. Self-evaluation must be based on reliable data both from school's files and through surveys of different groups, including students, personnel, parents and the general public.

Collaborative. All personnel must be involved in the self-evaluation work. In planning and preparing the evaluation, all personnel must be informed of its scope and general consensus on its implementation must be reached. The division of tasks and the direction and responsibility of each must be clear. Also, participation of pupils, parents and other interested parties in the self-evaluation should be considered.

Improvement-oriented. When the self-evaluation is over, an action plan for improvements and development in the schoolwork must be made. It must be indicated how the objectives of the improvement plan are to be accomplished and, in turn, how its success can be assessed.

Institutionally and individually oriented. The self-evaluation must be aimed at both the institution itself and at individuals within it.

Descriptive. The self-evaluation report must include a concise description of the school's operations. The description must be linked to school objectives.

Analytical. The self-evaluation report must present an analysis of strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of the school operations.

Public. A decision must be made who will have access to specific aspects of the self-evaluation. In this regard, care must be taken to comply with provisions of current legislation, including those on the treatment of personal data.

External Evaluation

The primary purpose of external evaluation of schools is to gain an overall picture of school operations, or specific aspects thereof, as they are at any given time. The focus is on various aspects of the schools' internal operations, such as administration, teaching, developmental work, cooperation and interaction within the school, pupils' achievement, and the connections between the school and the society.

APPENDICES

The following appendices are not part of the National Curriculum Guide. Nevertheless, they are presented here for guidance. Their content include:

- New study offerings
- Creative music making
- Music schools' housing and equipment

New study offerings

Music schools are to serve pupils of all ages, children as well as adults. Ideally, the schools should systematically promote and extend their services to a wider sector of the public, instead of being content to serve only those who come at their own initiative. The schools are urged to promote music education among compulsory school students, especially. What follows are some ideas on study offerings different from the customary music school lessons. These ideas for novel offerings are intended to encourage variety in Icelandic music schools.

Series of lectures and courses

There are diverse possibilities for the schools to offer a variety of lectures, specialized courses, or music appreciation classes for the general public. These could be organized as permanent or temporary offerings and might conceivably be offered in collaboration with other institutions. Instructors might variably come from within or outside the schools. For example, course subjects might include: Introduction to various types of music; periods within music history; historic and national dances; ethnic music of various cultures; singing and playing of folk/popular songs; computer use in music; body posture; music and movement; music appreciation; instrument making; and courses for youth bands.

Ensemble playing for adults

Music schools can organize ensemble playing for interested people possessing some instrumental skills, although, not every participant might wish to take lessons at the same time. This could serve the needs of adults and youngsters wanting to maintain their skills and use them in amateur

groups. Orchestras, choirs, bands, and ensembles of various sizes could be formed in this way.

Running ensembles of this kind could be an ideal collaborative project between music schools and other parties, e.g. youth centres.

Introduction to instrumental study

Teaching beginners to play individual instruments in small groups over relatively short periods could be organized. The purpose of such introductory study could be to give pupils insight into instrumental learning, kindle interest, and make them more able to decide on further education in music, or on a specific instrument.

Instrumental teaching in small groups

In organizing instrumental instruction, pupils' needs must be the primary concern. Private lessons are, on the average, the most successful approach. However, in certain cases, teaching in small groups can be both efficient and successful, particularly, when pupils are starting their instrumental instruction.

Although private lessons are the predominant form of instrumental instruction in the country's music schools, individual schools might want to experiment with different arrangements. Teaching beginners in small groups can be expected to give good results if the teaching is of high quality. In organizing such teaching, pupils' age and development, suitable teaching materials, and appropriate instructional methods are all factors to be considered. Ideally, re-arrangement of pupils in groups based on different learning abilities should also be expected periodically.

Longer teaching periods must be expected for small groups than for private lessons, on the average. The size of groups can vary depending on the instrument taught, but ideally there should be no more than four pupils in each group. Instruction of individual pupils could be organized as alternating between private and group lessons, or the pupil could receive group instruction only.

Although instrumental teaching in small groups has various advantages in the instruction of beginners, it can neither offer all of the strong advantages nor replace individual instruction.

Creative music making

Purposeful, creative activities can develop the inner ear, make pupils more broad-minded and understanding of music as well as increase their initiative, confidence and creative facilities. The National Curriculum Guide stipulates that all elementary pupils should be encouraged with opportunities to improvise and compose music for their own enjoyment and development. More advanced pupils should also be involved in creative efforts. In short, comprehensive creative activities ought to form a significant part of instrumental instruction and music theory alike

For best results, pupils' creative work needs to be a regular and continuous part of their studies. Teachers are encouraged to record a substantial part of pupils' work and let them listen, criticize, and improve upon it. Having pupils notate their music is also recommended. Acquainting pupils with the

use of computers for composing and notating music is also commendable. Information technology is discussed further in the Music theory guide.

Creative activities in music education

Some ideas and ways to integrate creative activities with music learning are given in the following paragraphs. Instrumental instructors and music theory teachers can employ individual ideas or mix them together to suit different occasions.

Creative activities in music schools can be very versatile. Pupils can work alone or in small groups. Teachers are encouraged to have students use both classroom instruments and their own instruments, as situations permit.

The teacher can increase a pupil's awareness of musical phrases by improvising question-and-answer phrases in a conversational manner with the pupil. As pupils progress, they can improvise whole sentences with beginning and ending phrases in a traditional sense on their own. These could variably be unison, supported by simple chords, or an ostinato bass.

Pupils can 'answer' rhythmic patterns tapped out by the teacher or other pupils, make up their own patterns with predetermined note values, or without constraints. This activity can variously be notated, played on school instruments or pupils' own instruments.

Pupils' compositional activities can be implemented in a wide variety of ways: (a) Melody writing, free or within specified guidelines e.g. regarding pitches, range or rhythm. The melodies could be improvised or notated. (b) Short pieces, free or within specified guidelines, e.g. particular form, rhythmic pattern or time signature. (c) Making songs to poems, or music to dramatize a story, mood, atmosphere or feeling. (d) Improvising descriptive music to represent natural phenomena, such as storm, rain, fog or sunshine, or pupils could interpret pictures in sounds. (e) Pupils can create various kinds of accompaniments: using rhythmic/melodic *ostinati* or chords. Accompaniments to their own tunes, the tunes of others, or to familiar melodies are equally appropriate.

Group improvisations between pupil and teacher or teacher and several pupils offer various possibilities. Such improvisations might, for instance, be based on one or several chords, scales, themes, or on rhythmic patterns.

Music schools' housing and equipment

What follows is a set of recommendations regarding housing, school-owned instruments and equipment in music schools. Excluded though, are regular furnishings, i.e. tables, chairs, and various smaller equipment such as metronomes, music stands and footstools. See also the section on School Environment on p. 44.

Housing

In designing or selecting housing for music teaching, special attention must be directed to acoustics, sound insulation, air exchange rate, and illumination. Easy access of handicapped persons must always be considered.

Teaching studios need to be sufficiently spacious to accommodate small ensemble rehearsals, in addition to private teaching. It is advantageous if

some of the teaching studios could accommodate large size chamber groups. At least one teaching studio is required for each 25 pupils enrolled in the school.

Classrooms need to accommodate 10–20 pupils, instruments (including a grand or upright piano), furnishing, teaching materials and equipment. Space for various smaller instruments, pupils' group performance and movement must also be considered. At least one classroom is needed in each music school. On the average one classroom is need for each 140 pupils.

An auditorium for large and small concerts, rehearsals, and teaching is necessary in all music schools. The hall must have good acoustics for music, ventilation, adjustable illumination and ample ceiling height. In communities where new music schools are built, the school's auditorium should ideally be well enough constructed to serve as one of the local concert halls.

The **ensemble rehearsal room** has to be spacious with good soundproofing. If the room is intended for multiple types of groups, it should ideally have adjustable acoustics to suit each occasion, for instance, with movable curtains, screens or floor mats. If the room is to be used for jazz and popular music it has to be able to accommodate a drum set and other group instruments along with amplifiers, sound control and sound reproduction systems, and a grand piano.

The **percussion room** has to be extremely well sound-insulated and big enough for large percussion instruments. It is important to have good storage space for percussion instruments adjacent to the room. It should ideally be located on the same floor as the auditorium to facilitate the movement of instruments for use in orchestra and at concerts. Preferably, there must be an easy access to the room to facilitate the transportation of instruments should they be needed outside the school.

Multipurpose rooms offer various possibilities although specialized teaching rooms are more often preferable. For instance, it may be used for more than one type of teaching. To make such use possible, the room must be spacious, furnishings and equipment well placed considering the needs of all those who use the room.

A **pupils' waiting room** must be present in all music schools. Its size will depend on local situation but in many places parents/guardians can be expected use the room as well as pupils.

A **library** is essential in all music schools. It must be big enough to accommodate school-owned music, sound recordings, books about music and music education, reference books, periodicals etc. Facilities for reading, listening and other study activities must also be planned. A sensible location of a library in small schools is immediately adjacent to the school office to make use of office staff to supervise it.

The **sound recording studio** as a teaching facility, recording facility and multimedia centre ideally should be present in most music schools. Preferably, it should be located immediately adjacent to the auditorium to make easy use of the facilities to record concerts.

Practice rooms for pupils ideally should be in all music schools, particularly in schools for advanced students. Teaching studios can be used for this purpose when they are not in use for teaching. Schools offering

instruction on less common instruments, such as organ, harpsichord and percussion, need to be able to offer their pupils satisfactory practice facilities.

The **school office** must have sufficient space for all regular office equipment, be conveniently located and with an easy access for all. Separate facilities are required for the principal and head-teacher.

The **teachers' staffroom** has to have good ventilation, soundproofing and cooking facilities. Its size must be proportional to the number of teachers in the school.

A **teachers' resource room** is necessary in all music schools providing sufficient desk space, computers and software, photo copying machine, and facilities for developing teaching materials.

Toilet facilities must be provided both for pupils and teachers.

Storage rooms need to be spacious and conveniently located including close proximity to the auditorium.

Instruments, equipment and instructional materials

The following are recommendations on key equipment that ideally should be available in music schools even though such listings can never be exhaustive.

Instruments for loan and hire

It is recommended that music schools own a collection of wind instruments and children's-sized stringed instruments for renting or loaning to pupils, particularly those beginning instrumental study. The same applies for very expensive or rare instruments, e.g. bassoon or tuba, if they are taught in the school. Ideally, schools should also own instruments that are required for various ensembles, such as rare sizes of recorders, clarinets and saxophones. If instruction is offered on large and heavy instruments such as harp, double bass, tuba and percussion, those need to be school-owned.

Teaching studios

Preferably, studios for piano teaching should have grand pianos; other studios should have either upright pianos or grand pianos. Adjustable piano benches should accompany every piano, upright or grand. All teaching studios must be appropriately furnished for their use. Ideally, every studio should be fitted with a chalkboard with permanent music staff lines, and the instrumental studios also with a body-sized mirror.

Classrooms

Classrooms need to be equipped with the following instruments and instructional tools, in addition to teaching materials: a grand piano or a quality upright piano, classroom instruments (e.g. Orff-Schulwerk), a modern audio system, microphones, a chalkboard with permanent music staff lines, a computer with music software, a computer projector, an overhead projector and a screen. Ideally, a school should also own a video recorder with monitor, preferably portable.

Auditorium

A quality grand piano is essential in the auditorium. Sound reproduction system and recording facilities in the hall, or adjacent to it, are highly desirable.

Rehearsal room

A rehearsal room must have a grand piano. If jazz and popular music is taught in the room, a drum set, guitar and bass amplifiers, electric keyboard and sound system are also required.

Percussion room

The minimums of available instruments to teach percussion at the Elementary level are snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangles and xylophone, i.e. the basic percussion used in bands. A drum set is also desirable wherever percussion instruments are taught. However, universal instruction on percussion instruments at an advanced level is much more demanding on instrument ownership. This is explained in detail in the subject guide for percussion.

Library

It is important that music schools own a good collection of music, books, and recordings with varied music. This collection should be easily accessible for pupils and teachers alike. Listening facilities in the library are essential for pupils to use, both for study and leisure listening. Ideally, the library should have computers with Internet access, music and instructional software. Music videos and DVDs for pupils to use in the library are a desirable addition. The library must have a budget to add new materials regularly.

Sound recording studio

The audio production studio has a variety of uses in music schools. It enables the recording of concerts and recitals, production of instructional media, and it can be used for teaching, e.g. to teach student composition, or basic recording and sound editing techniques. The studio requires the following equipment as a minimum: multi-track recording machine, mixer, amplifier, speakers, microphones, synthesizers and various peripheral tools.

Tips to Parents/Guardians of Children in Music Schools

- The key to children's successful music learning is active parental support in terms of positive attitudes, showing interest, and watching how learning proceeds.
- Learning to play an instrument depends to a great extent on regular daily practice, so it is largely homework. Without regular practice, achievement will be negligible.
- It is important for children to have a designated area in the house for practice where they can be relatively undisturbed and do not sense that they are disturbing others.
- Young pupils need to be assisted in establishing a regular practice schedule and using it effectively.
- Short and frequent practice sessions are more effective for young pupils than long and few.
- Studying music must be gratifying, the pupil's pride from his/her own progress and increasing skills are not the least significant part of that gratification.
- It is quite normal for a child's motivation to fluctuate over time. If a child shows signs of giving up it is important that both instructor and parents/guardians look for causes and remedies. Sometimes, simply changing assigned materials is enough for motivation to rekindle.
- Listening is a vital part of all music learning. Listening to good performances provides students with necessary aural models. Parents/guardians can contribute to this by encouraging their child to listen to varied music on many occasions, and by taking them to concerts when the opportunity comes, both inside and outside the music school.