

Musical Futures in Victoria

Neryl Jeanneret

The University of Melbourne

Abstract

Musical Futures is a music learning program that was established in the United Kingdom in 2003. It aims to make secondary classroom music more relevant to young people through engaging them in the informal learning practices of real world musicians, recognising that the way in which popular musicians learn is quite different from the pedagogy of the traditional music classroom. This article reports on research that investigated the impact of the Musical Futures approach on music teachers and students in ten pilot government schools in Victoria, Australia (including a primary school). The research replicated aspects of the Hallam, Creech and McQueen (2010) UK research and data was collected through a survey of the teachers and two case study schools where the teachers and students were interviewed. After only two terms of implementation, the impact of the program on both the teachers and the students has been quite profound.

Key words: musical futures, music education, primary, secondary, informal learning, engagement, social learning,

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Background

Numerous academics, reports and teachers have noted that music in secondary schools as a school subject is frequently not a popular and stimulating element of the curriculum: in fact, it seems to be of little interest or relevance to many students (for example, Ross, 1995; Plummeridge, 1997; Green, 2002; National Review of School Music Education, 2005; Hutchinson, 2007; St George, 2010). On the other hand, numerous teenagers have their own bands; invest in mp3 players and their current chart favourites; and they go to local gigs like The Big Day Out, as well as dances and parties where music features. There seems to be no problem with involvement in music outside of school but there has long been a disconnect between school music and what happens outside the formal school environment.

Musical Futures is a music learning program based in the research of Lucy Green (2005, 2006, 2008a, 2008b) and others that was established in the United Kingdom in 2003. It aims to make secondary classroom music more relevant to

young people through engaging them in the practices of real world musicians, recognising that the way in which popular musicians learn is quite different from the pedagogy of the traditional music classroom. Research from the Institute of Education, University of London (Hallam, Creech & McQueen, 2010) has reported favourably on the impact of the program in UK schools. With the support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (which has funded the Musical Futures Project in the UK) and the NAMM (*National Association of Music Merchants*) Foundation (USA), the Australian Music Association (AMA), in collaboration with the Soundhouse and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), has piloted the program in 10 Victorian government schools in 2010. The teachers involved completed an intensive two day workshop with David Price from Musical Futures in the United Kingdom prior to implementing the program. This article reports on research that investigated the impact of Musical Futures approach on the music teachers and students in these ten schools.

Method

The research aimed to investigate two questions:

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

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

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

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

Findings from the survey

Ten teachers from seven of the schools completed the questionnaires representing a selection of metropolitan and provincial schools. The majority of the schools had been implementing Musical

Futures for two terms at the time of the data collection and over 1,000 students, mostly middle school, had been involved in the program. The investment in the equipment varied from nil to \$15,000 depending on what already existed in the school. Table 1 provides a summary of information about the schools involved.

The questionnaire asked teachers how well Musical Futures worked within the state mandated curriculum and pedagogical direction. They were very positive about how well Musical Futures integrated with the Victorian Essential Learning Skills (VELS), mainly commenting that creating, making, exploring and responding were facilitated easily by the approach. Two teachers noted that personal learning and communication were also supported. Five teachers chose to make comments about connections between Musical Futures and the recently implemented e5 instructional model which contains a variety of levels of teacher classroom practice related to engaging, exploring, explaining, elaborating, and evaluating (DEECD, 2009). They noted that student involvement in engaging and exploring was particularly pertinent.

There were few difficulties encountered by the teachers in implementing the program and where problems arose, they were different in each school. While one teacher found reluctance in the instrumental staff to become involved, another teacher found the program ran smoothly thanks to the support from the instrumental staff. Another teacher noted that he would be looking for ways to offset the costs in the future. There were only minimal adjustments and adaptations to the program model that appear to be minor tailoring to the individual needs of classes and students.

Impact on teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction

The teachers reported that since implementing Musical Futures, they felt more confident about facilitating student learning in a range of musical

Table 1: School information

Region	School	School Population	Location	Musical Futures						
				Survey Returned	Started	Duration	Years Involved	Students Involved	% of school population	Equipment Investment
Northern Metropolitan	A	597	metropolitan	Yes	2010	2 terms	7-12	260	43.55	\$2,243
	B	1713	metropolitan	Yes	2010	1 term	8/9	175	10.21	\$14,972
	C	711	metropolitan	Yes	2010	2 terms	8	75	10.55	\$5,689
Southern Metropolitan	D	910	metropolitan	Yes	2010	2 terms	8/9	180	19.78	\$15,441
Western Metropolitan	E	1577	metropolitan	Yes	2009	2 terms	7/8	250	15.85	0
	F	266	metropolitan	No	2010	2 terms	-	-	-	\$899
Gippsland	G	316	provincial	Yes	2010	2 terms	5/6	102	32.28	\$12,651
Loddon Mallee	H	567	provincial	No	2010	2 terms	-	-	-	\$5,080
	I	597	provincial	Yes	2010	2 terms	9/10	45	7.54	\$5,633
	J	890	provincial	No	2010	2 terms	-	-	-	\$14,051

Total number of students: **1087**

Table 2: Impact of implementing Musical Futures on teachers

MY TEACHING

Since implementing Musical Futures:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
I am a more effective teacher.	60.0% (6)	30.0% (3)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
I am more confident about teaching music.	60.0% (6)	30.0% (3)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
I enjoy teaching music more than previously.	70.0% (7)	30.0% (3)	0	0	0	10
I am more confident about facilitating singing.	40.0% (4)	20.0% (2)	30.0% (3)	10.0% (1)	0	10
I am more confident about teaching instrumental skills.	44.4% (4)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	0	9
I have become more aware of the music that students engage in outside of school.	56.6% (5)	44.4% (4)	0	0	0	9
I am more confident about facilitating student learning in a range of musical genres.	20.0% (2)	60.0% (6)	10.0% (1)	10.0% (1)	0	10
I have adapted Musical Futures to fit with my personal approach to teaching and learning.	40.0% (4)	60.0% (6)	0	0	0	10
I have adapted Musical Futures to meet the individual needs of my students.	50.0% (5)	50.0% (5)	0	0	0	10

genres, teaching instrumental skills and teaching music in general (Table 2). The least change in confidence was reported in relation to facilitating singing that mirrors the UK findings. Nine of the ten respondents felt they had become more effective teachers and were enjoying teaching more as a result of implementing Music Futures. It was agreed unanimously that they had been able to fit Musical Futures with their own approach to teaching and learning as well as being able to adapt Musical Futures to meet the individual needs of students.

There were a number of statements that generated unanimous agreement on the part of the teachers (Table 3). They all felt that Musical Futures was useful, had changed and improved their teaching, had changed music teaching in the school, integrated successfully with the VELS and helped students demonstrate their musical potential. They also agreed that Musical Futures helped integrate students' informal music learning with classroom activities and could be implemented successfully in other schools. There was very strong agreement that they had observed a positive response from students and an engagement of previously disinterested students.

All the teachers reported that Musical Futures would have a long-term impact on their music teaching (Table 4). They commented that the approach was more engaging for students and that working and learning alongside the students was an important aspect. Noting the positive impact of the approach on students, one teacher is looking for ways to implement the pedagogy throughout his teaching.

Impact on Students and Program Benefits

Given the Musical Futures program had only been running in all but one of the schools for two terms, the teacher perceptions of the student outcomes were overwhelmingly positive (Table 5). The teachers indicated that Musical Futures had a positive impact on students' attitudes

towards music, self-esteem in relation to music, love of music, group work, on-task behaviour, and general behaviour in class. Students created better musical performances than previously, had developed a greater range of musical skills, were able to demonstrate higher levels of attainment than previously, had enhanced listening skills, instrumental skills and strategies for composition, as well as developing a better understanding of a range of musical genres. Overall, teachers indicated that the improvement in musical skills of their students had exceeded their expectations and that students had a better chance of fulfilling their musical potential. It should be noted that one teacher added the comment that she responded to a number of the items listed with either "Don't Know" or "Disagree" because these criteria were already working quite well and it's difficult at this stage to assess further development".

The same teacher noted above was again cautious about commenting on the benefits of Musical Futures, feeling it was too early to assess but all the other teachers noted a variety of benefits that included greater engagement, improved motivation, independent learning skills, greater task focus, better behaviour and greater enthusiasm (Table 6). Most notable was one teacher's comment that "the behaviour issues are gone".

The teacher responses varied to the question *Has Musical Futures been more successful with some groups of students than with others?* (Table 7). On the one hand, a number of teachers felt there were no notable differences between students while others felt that a lack of musical knowledge was a hindrance for some students. One teacher noted gender differences and another felt that students with lower independent skills struggle a little with the emphasis on self-directed learning. Another commented that there were some difficulties with students who lacked social skills, in particular, those with Asperger's syndrome.

There were a variety of responses when the teachers were asked about whether there was an

Table 3: Musical Futures statements

MUSICAL FUTURES						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
Musical Futures helped me to improve my music teaching.	50.0% (5)	50.0% (5)	0	0	0	10
Musical Futures was very useful.	70.0% (7)	30.0% (3)	0	0	0	10
Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of Musical Futures.	50.0% (5)	50.0% (5)	0	0	0	10
Musical Futures has been integrated with previous musical activity in the school.	40.0% (4)	50.0% (5)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
Musical Futures has successfully complemented the VELS	50.0% (5)	50.0% (5)	0	0	0	10
Musical Futures has changed the way that I teach music.	40.0% (4)	50.0% (5)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
Musical Futures will have a long-term impact on my music teaching.	70.0% (7)	20.0% (2)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
The impact of Musical Futures on my music teaching is sustainable in the long term.	60.0% (6)	30.0% (3)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
Musical Futures would be able to be implemented successfully in other schools.	70.0% (7)	30.0% (3)	0	0	0	10
I would welcome further support for implementing Musical Futures.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
I found Musical Futures difficult to use in my school.	0	10.0% (1)	0	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	10
The students in my classes responded well to Musical Futures.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
Musical Futures was more suitable for some groups of students than for others.	30.0% (3)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	20.0% (2)	0	10
Musical Futures helped to integrate students' informal music learning with classroom music activities.	30.0% (3)	70.0% (7)	0	0	0	10
I found the Musical Futures initiative challenging to use.	0	30.0% (3)	20.0% (2)	30.0% (3)	20.0% (2)	10
Musical Futures is innovative.	60.0% (6)	20.0% (2)	10.0% (1)	10.0% (1)	0	10
Musical Futures has helped students to demonstrate their musical potential.	40.0% (4)	60.0% (6)	0	0	0	10
Musical Futures has helped to engage previously disinterested students.	40.0% (4)	40.0% (4)	20.0% (2)	0	0	10
Musical Futures supports student progression in music.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10

increase in students taking instrumental music and/or electing more classroom music (Tables 8 and 9). Some were cautious, saying it was too early to comment while others noticed a dramatic increase.

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

Case Studies

The purpose of the case study school visits was to explore the impact of Musical Futures on the

students beyond the teacher perceptions elicited by the surveys.

School E is situated 22 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD. It is a co-educational, P–9 school with an enrolment of approximately 1700 students. It has a well-resourced and supported music program and partnership with the Soundhouse, which offers guitar, keyboard and singing lessons. The College director and principal of this campus strongly support the arts and Musical Futures at all levels. The director had invested in a small bus to transport the students and their equipment to community performances and appointed a Creative Arts Manager (a senior management position) to oversee and support arts education in the school. The school emphasizes personal development and leadership capacity, and Individual Learning Plans are prepared each term for all students. Musical

Table 4: Teacher comments about the long-term impact of Musical Futures on their teaching.

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

Table 5: Teacher perceptions of student outcomes

STUDENT OUTCOMES						
Since implementing Musical Futures, my students:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	n
enjoy their music lessons more.	44.4% (4)	44.4% (4)	11.1% (1)	0	0	9
enjoy singing more.	30.0% (3)	40.0% (4)	10.0% (1)	20.0% (2)	0	10
have learnt to play at least one musical instrument.	50.0% (5)	50.0% (5)	0	0	0	10
are more confident in their music lessons.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	11.1% (1)	0	0	10
take part in more extra-curricular musical activities.	33.3% (3)	44.4% (4)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	0	9
have developed a greater range of musical skills.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	11.1% (1)	0	0	10
have developed a greater range of strategies for composing.	10.0% (1)	70.0% (7)	20.0% (2)	0	0	10
have developed a better understanding of a range of musical genres.	11.1% (1)	66.7% (5)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	0	9
create better musical performances	40.0% (4)	50.0% (5)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
demonstrate improved listening skills.	30.0% (3)	60.0% (6)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
have more positive attitudes towards music.	60.0% (6)	40.0% (4)	0	0	0	10
are generally better behaved in music lessons.	40.0% (4)	50.0% (5)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
are better able to stay on task.	30.0% (3)	60.0% (6)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
work together more effectively in music tasks.	30.0% (3)	70.0% (7)	0	0	0	10
attend music lessons more regularly.	50.0% (5)	20.0% (2)	10.0% (1)	20.0% (2)	0	10
have improved their musical skills more than I would have expected.	50.0% (5)	30.0% (3)	20.0% (2)	0	0	10
seem to be more motivated in music lessons.	50.0% (5)	40.0% (4)	0	10.0% (1)	0	10
generally have improved levels of self-esteem in relation to music.	30.0% (3)	50.0% (5)	20.0% (2)	0	0	10
demonstrate higher levels of musical attainment than they did previously	40.0% (4)	50.0% (5)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
are more likely to fulfil their musical potential.	60.0% (6)	30.0% (3)	10.0% (1)	0	0	10
are more likely to demonstrate that they love music.	60.0% (6)	20.0% (2)	20.0% (2)	0	0	10

Futures was implemented in 2009 with Year 7 and in 2010 extended to Year 8. With the success of the program, the intention is to broaden the program in 2011 to include Years 5, 6 and 9.

School G is a primary school 112 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD in the south Gippsland area and has an enrolment of approximately 320 children. The school has an affiliation with the Soundhouse and strongly supports the performing arts with about 200 children involved with instrumental, speech and drama, dance and singing lessons. This is the only primary school in Australia and the United Kingdom to implement the Musical Futures program.

Three major themes emerged from the analysis of the case study data. The implementation of the Musical Futures program has had the

greatest impact on **student engagement, social learning** and the development of **musical knowledge and skills**. While it was important to evidence the impact of the Musical Futures program on student outcomes, it was also important to examine what it is about the this approach that creates the conditions to support such outcomes (see Tables 10, 11 and 12). One of the most striking aspects of the school visits was the high level of enthusiasm shown by the staff and students alike for Musical Futures. Everyone was eager to share their experiences and observations with the researchers and there was an unmistakably positive “buzz” in the classrooms observed. These visits brought to life and reinforced the information provided by the teachers in the surveys.

Table 6: Teacher perceptions of the benefits of Musical Futures

Teacher	Comments
1	We hope to see positive improvements in all of these areas but it is too early to assess.
2	Independent learning skills certainly improved and students that generally ‘goofed around’ were proactive in groups. Musical students had an opportunity to liaise with students that struggled and were on occasions able to assist them with arrangements.
3	Yes
4	Students focus more on tasks at hand, engaged in music that they enjoy etc
5	A close to 100% participation level in all of my classes. Students experiencing Musical Futures forming bands, buying instruments and becoming involved in music outside the classroom.
6	They all learn their parts. They are enthusiastic about songs they pick and we have very good attendance and motivation across all year levels. This leads to many performances.
7	School E is located in the Western Suburbs of Victoria. It is a middle-low socio economic area where previous to this year, had no practical music lessons offered to the Middle Years students. Musical Futures has been life changing for the students. Some of these students had never had the opportunity to play any instrument before, let alone playing contemporary rock instruments like the drums, guitar, bass and keys. Due to this, I have noted that students are better behaved in class and are focused on the tasks they need to achieve and are more motivated to learn. Evidence to support this is that on Musical Futures days, attendance is far stronger than any other day throughout the week.
8	Students are excited and more passion is shown, they are wanting to do more in class and externally as well.
9	Behaviour issues are gone, only difficulty is keeping students motivated, not just chatting in groups; allows students to develop skills in areas they have chosen; huge improvement in attitude towards music – massive increase in elective enrolments.
10	Improved attitude toward music; increase in extra-curricular music activities; improved teamwork skills; improved awareness of learning styles in students; independent learning skills and motivation to learn independently.

Table 7: Responses to Has Musical Futures been more successful with some groups of students than with others?

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

Table 8: Responses to Has implementing Musical Futures had an impact on take-up of instrumental or vocal lessons amongst students in your school?

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

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

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

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

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

You bond with your teacher a lot more than any of your other teachers and you're allowed to express yourself, more than you can in, say, English. And there's no real answer. (Student, School E)

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

The students were very keen to attend music classes and looked forward to coming to school,

especially on music days.

I always, you know how you go to school on Monday and you think, "No, another school week again", but then I keep, I hold out until Friday and then I really enjoy it, cos Friday's my Musical Futures day.... (Student, School G)

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

I have noted that students are better behaved in class and are focused on the tasks they need to achieve and are more motivated to learn. Evidence to support this is that on Musical Futures days, attendance is far stronger than any other day throughout the week. (Teacher, School E)

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

I enjoy that well, you're actually getting to play the music that you hear on the radio, so it's I'm thinking, hmm I can actually play that now. (Student, School G)

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

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

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

One of the best things about Music Tech is it actually ... in some subjects, you're just like, "Oh,

Notes

1. The definitions of "engagement", "social learning", and "musical knowledge and skills" are taken from the recently completed MGSE arts partnership research for Arts Victoria and the DEECD, Imms, Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2010.

Table 9: Are more students choosing to elect music? When and which courses?

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

Table 10: Conditions for and impact on engagement

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

yeah. That's okay. That's a piece of work. That's all right." But with Music Futures, you're sort of ... you always want to improve on it because you love it that much that you actually care about your work and you care about how well it turns out, and stuff. (Students, School E)

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

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

S1: Yeah at home.

S2: Yup. (Students, School G)

You hear a song sometimes and you think, oh, that sounds cool. And you go home or come to class and you try it out. (Student, School E)

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

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

S1: Drums.

S2: Violin.

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

S4: I'd love to have a shot at the saxophone.

(Students, School E)

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

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

It can help get things that worry you off your mind... it just cheers you up. (Student, School E)

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

Table 11: Conditions for and impact on social learning

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

regular student performances on and off campus.

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

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

if we see that they've got a bit of extra talent in one instrument, we might sort of say hey you should try this or generally they start to realise, then the other kids start to realise, so they're like

no, we need him in our group or, you know, oh he should be able to go on drums because he can keep the beat better. (Student, School G)

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

Sometimes learning a new instrument that you haven't learnt before can be quite hard, but you get used to it and Mr Smith and the other classmates help you heaps. (Student, School G)
You find some of your friends have talents that

Table 12: Conditions for and impact on musical knowledge and skills

Conditions created by Musical Futures

- Guidance from teacher (when needed), in terms of instrument selection, material selection, simplification of material, instrumental techniques
- Performance expectation provides a goal
- Freedom to access technology support, such as YouTube, Jam Hubs, NUMU
- Realistic expectation from teacher – “just do the best you can do”
- Teacher’s belief in this learning approach
- Constant reflection and discussion of performances and learning
- Exposure and access to a range of instruments
- Opportunities to play instruments regularly (developing skills on the instruments) aids future musical learning
- Peer-peer assistance when facing musical problems
- Playing music that they like and know makes learning easier for the students (several reports of this)
- Teacher support for out of class rehearsals
- NUMU offers a challenge. Students want to improve to make their way up the charts
- Access to the online resources assists problem solving
- Teacher modelling of music skills
- Listening skills required to “work out” the music – especially when thrown In the Deep End
- Opportunities to record performances (when ready or at the completion of the task) provides a goal

Evidence of impact

- Students have developed skills on a range of instruments (guitar – lead, rhythm, bass; keyboards; drums – kit, bongos, congas; ukulele; vocals)
- Ensemble playing aids rhythm/beat/aural skills
- Learned how to read “sheet music”
- Ability to improvise
- Report that they can see an improvement over time
- New songs are easier to learn indicating development
- Students are able to articulate technical difficulties – in strumming, playing rhythms, fingering
- Awareness of the difficulties in learning new music
- Awareness of strategies to overcome difficulties in learning new music – perseverance, teamwork, regular rehearsal
- Students report an improvement in their ability to hear and identify all of the components in new recorded music (for example, they can recognise the different instruments, rhythmic patterns, and even chord structure)
- Evidence of skill level – second in the world NUMU charts
- Students themselves feel that they are learning a lot
- Understanding that practice = improvement
- Comfortable use of “metalinguage” i.e. the language associated with the discipline
- Highly articulate students in the interviews demonstrated a well-developed capacity to reflect on and discuss Musical Futures

you didn't even know that was there, it's quite amazing. (Student, School G)
Numu, the website that you can put your recordings up for the whole world to see which is quite interesting cos it kinda makes you feel like you're famous, well the kids are famous cos people are coming down to listen to what you're played. (Student, School G)

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

I find that they're starting to problem solve, they're starting to work together as a team much better, they're mentoring, so students going to other students for help rather than relying on the teachers, the full source of knowledge, which is the whole point of it as well. (Teacher, School G)
It really helps you work together, as a team, because when we're in our own little bands, and stuff, things don't always go as easy because we have to listen to the songs and do our own interpretation. But we have to learn how to cooperate with our band, so everybody's happy. Because if one of them isn't, then the whole band gets messed up. (Student, School E)

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

It's different because it's a more relaxed environment. You don't feel pressured to ... not that you feel pressured, anyway, but it's just really relaxed and people enjoy themselves more because they're like, "Oh, I missed this. No, it's all right. Do it again." (Student, School E)

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

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

S: Like working as a team, like cos you come to music and you do all the teamwork and stuff, you get out and like maybe if you had a problem working with a team, and the teacher would ask you, can you work with a team, and you'll be like fine with it cos you've done it like so many times with music. (Student, School G)

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

In our band, they nominated me as the leader, the little ... things. And it's just, you have to listen to what people want. Like, if one's not happy with it, you can tell and you're just like, "Well, what do you think?" You have to always ask for their opinion. Because, in the end, you do have to finalise it but you also have to make sure everybody can live with it. (Student, School E)
I: And how do you deal with that, when people aren't cooperating?

S1: We'll kind of just say, "Everybody else is doing it, so can you just try it?"
S2: Stop giving up. (Students, School E)

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

The best evidence that learning had taken place in these classrooms was to observe the lessons where the students were obviously able to demonstrate their developing musical skills and knowledge in the ensembles. Students had clearly developed skills on a range of instruments such as lead, rhythm and bass guitars; keyboards; ukulele; voice and percussion (drum kit, bongos, congas) and learned how to read "sheet music", as well as improvise. They were comfortable setting themselves up at the beginning of the lesson and all the lessons ran smoothly with the students demonstrating an extraordinary level of engagement in the tasks at hand. Recent research (Imms, Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2010) about the arts in schools has shown that students

Table 13: Adaptation for DEECD Primary school best practice research (Jeanneret, 2009) of success factors identified by the National Review of School Music Education (2005).**Success Factors Identified in the Case Study Schools**

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

simply aren't very good at being able to articulate what they have learned in the arts when asked, whereas their ability to produce artistic works as a result of instruction demonstrates that learning has taken place. The students interviewed for this study were considerably more articulate about their learning than previously encountered.

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

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

S: Maybe a new song.

S: A new instrument (Student, School E).

Well you can improvise on your work but in maths you can't, well you can, but it's not fun.

(Student, School E)

I have a friend that has absolutely nothing to do with music but then when he started Musical Futures he actually got into it and now he actually appreciates music a bit more than he used to. (Student, School G)

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

How to keep in time with the drumbeat so you're not all over the place. (Student, School G)

How to read sheet music. (Student, School G)

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

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

They also reported an improvement in their ability to hear and identify all of the components

in new, recorded music (for example, they can recognise the different instruments, rhythmic patterns, and even chord structure) and feel they are learning a lot in these classes.

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

And it's not just like you learn chords. You learn how to figure out the chords. Like, you can listen to a song and you can thing, that's B chord or A chord. And then you can go off and play it. (Students, School G)

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

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

S: Lots of practice, pretty much. (Student, School E)

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

By way of a summary of the site visits, Table 13 shows how the two schools measure against the adaptation for DEECD primary schools best practice research (Jeanneret, 2009) of success factors identified by the National Review of School Music Education (2005). The nature of the Musical Futures program and its implementation marry very well with what was identified as a national and state benchmarking standard.

Conclusions

In response to the first research question, *Has Musical Futures had an impact on teachers' confidence, pedagogy and professional satisfaction?*, there is considerable evidence to support that Musical Futures and its implementation has had a powerful impact on the teachers' confidence, pedagogy and

professional satisfaction. The teachers have referred this program and the associated Professional Learning as having changed their approach to teaching music in the classroom and they are witnessing a positive change in the school after only two terms (in most cases). The second research question, *What impact has the Musical Futures approach had on students?*, has drawn quite extraordinary evidence of a profound impact on students' engagement, social learning and development of musical knowledge and skills in a relatively short time based on the teachers' observations and discussion with some of the students. These young students are well on the way to becoming very competent musicians with well-developed aural and research skills, as well as a strong sense of their own learning and productive team-work. Although not part of the research brief, it is obvious how the Musical Futures approach can contribute to the ten Australian Curriculum capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT, thinking skills, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and social competence.

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

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Dr Neryl Jeanneret is the head of music education in the Melbourne Graduate School Education at The University of Melbourne where she teaches and supervises in the primary, secondary and postgraduate programs. She has been the National President of the Australian Society for Music Education and Chair of the International Society for Music Education's Commission for Policy.