SINGING A JOYFUL SONG:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF
PRIMARY SCHOOL MUSIC LEADERS IN
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the work of generalist primary school teachers who work in music leadership roles in their schools. There is an absence of research into the work of such teachers who play a key role in children's formal and informal music learning, and who represent the musical 'face' of their primary schools. This study addresses this music research gap by collecting and analysing the stories and observing the work of a sample of teachers for whom music is both a personal and professional passion, and contributes to our general understanding of the work of primary school teachers who love music and share it in their schools and classrooms.

Five men and five women representing a range of personal and teaching experience and demographics participated in the study. All participants were interviewed about their work as primary school music leaders and were also observed undertaking a regular music leadership activity of their choice. Interview transcripts and observation notes were analysed in relation to the three research questions that address who the teachers are and how they came to be music leaders; the work they do and the skills, knowledge and understandings that underpin that work; and the significance of their work.

Key findings related to the interplay of personal and professional factors in the development of these teachers' identities as primary school music leaders, the complex and multi-faceted nature of the role, and the broad significance of their work to the teachers themselves, the children they teach, and their wider school communities. In addition, themes of identity, emotionality and curriculum context emerged as important frameworks for understanding the data with Wenger's (1998) 'communities of practice' utilised as a unifying theory.

The study contributes to a body of locally-based and international research concerned with music's place in the primary school curriculum, the role of music teachers and leaders in sustaining music in the curriculum, and the value and benefits associated with music teaching and learning. In addition, it has practical and theoretical implications for teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum leaders at institutional and policy levels.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Through the unknown, remembered gate
Little Gidding: T.S.Eliot

1.1   Introduction

This thesis is about generalist primary school teachers who take a music leadership role in their schools. Although teachers such as these are accustomed to operating in very public contexts in which their work is seen, heard and evaluated by their students, teaching colleagues, parents and the wider school community, this public aspect represents only one facet of their wider role as music leaders. The research interest in teachers' lives (Barone, 2001; Goodson & Sikes, 2001); the affective components of teaching (Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1996; Noddings, 2005; Zembylas, 2007); and the links between teachers' personal and professional lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) has burgeoned in recent years, yet there has been a surprising absence of research into the lives of teachers who represent the musical 'face' of their primary schools. This study seeks to address this music research gap, and to build on the general research literature on teachers' lives by collecting and analysing the stories of a sample of teachers for whom music is both a personal and professional passion. While details of the individual stories may differ, the thesis contributes to our understanding of the work of primary school teachers who love music and share it in their schools and classrooms.

1.2   Context for the Study

This study is sited within the context of curriculum developments in Aotearoa New Zealand in the first decade of the new millennium. Findings from the study contribute to a growing body of locally-based and international research concerned with music's place in the primary school curriculum (Barrett, 2007; Braatvedt, 2002; Mansfield, 2003), the role of music teachers and leaders in sustaining music in the curriculum (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Hennessy, 2000; Rohan, 2004), and the value and benefits associated with music teaching and learning (Eisner, 2005; Elliott, 1994; Plummeridge, 2001).

In New Zealand, primary (elementary) school organisation varies from community to community with population base being an important determining factor. 'Full' primary schools cater for children from Years 1 to 8 with school entry normally being on a child's fifth birthday. 'Contributing' primary schools are attended by children from Year 1 to 6 and tend to be the norm in larger towns and cities. The children then go on to complete their final two years of primary schooling in an 'intermediate' school for Year 7 and 8 children, or, less often, in the intermediate section of a Year 7-13 secondary school, with music in either intermediate setting likely to be taught by a subject specialist. In contrast, music in New Zealand primary schools is almost always the responsibility of the classroom teacher, with or without the support of a teaching colleague with music subject leadership responsibilities.

The nature of subject leadership in New Zealand primary schools varies across and between subjects with the journey to becoming a music subject leader equally variable. From my personal experience as teacher, music advisor and teacher educator, music leadership most often reflects teachers' personal interests and passions, or their formal or informal qualifications, skills and knowledge. At times teachers actively develop the music leadership role for themselves, and at other times it is assigned along with appointment to a particular teaching position. Alternatively, some teachers assume the role in response to a perceived need in the school, or step into the role when it is vacated by another teacher. In large schools, music leadership may be attached to smaller teaching teams rather than school-wide.

The organisation of music in elementary or primary school systems differs from country to country, although there are patterns evident in both the 'how' and the 'what' of music education in schools. In the United States (Barrett, 2007), in some states of Australia (Jeanneret, 2006), and in some Scandinavian countries (Espeland, 2007), music is taught by specialist teachers who are qualified in both music and education, and regular classroom teachers' involvement is often limited to activities such as singing within the everyday programme. There is a perception that the presence of a music specialist in a primary school has an effect on how music is resourced and on the nature of the taught music curriculum (Mills, 1991; Rohan, 2004). For example, specialist teachers frequently work in dedicated music spaces with easy access to equipment and resources.

In addition, regular timetabled time allows for the provision of sustained instrumental teaching as well as introductory music reading and writing experiences, all of which may be difficult for a generalist teacher to offer for reasons of time, skills and confidence (Rohan, 2004).

In countries like New Zealand and the United Kingdom, where primary school music education is most often part of the regular classroom programme, classroom teachers are often supported in their music teaching by teachers who act as music curriculum leaders (Hennessy, 2000; Mills, 1991; Wheway, 1996), and until very recently in New Zealand, by music advisors working at a regional level. Over the past decade, arts discipline leadership positions within the New Zealand Ministry of Education have been disestablished, and music advisors to schools have all but disappeared. Therefore, with regard to formalised provision, the future of music education in New Zealand primary schools rests almost entirely on the efforts of ordinary classroom teachers supported by teachers with music leadership responsibilities (Rohan, 2004).

There is significant evidence, both anecdotal and empirical (Campbell, 1998; Eisner, 2002; Plummeridge, 2001) and across a range of contexts, that attests to the positive impact of music experiences in human lives. Because primary school teachers who work as music curriculum leaders potentially play a key role in both formal and informal music learning, it is important to gain a better understanding of how these teachers develop, the nature of their role, what they believe and value, and the possible significance of their work to children and school communities.

1.3   Origins of the Study

This study of primary school music leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand draws together a number of threads from my own personal and professional life. My first PhD proposal was developed from previous research I conducted into the characteristics of 'singing schools' (Boyack, 2003). This initial proposal combined my interest in action research as a means to initiate change, and a desire to assist one school access the benefits and advantages of a strong singing culture. However, after completing a detailed plan of the intended research and following the appropriate ethical approval procedures, I was unable to find a school in which the teachers were prepared to participate. In the

discussions I had with teachers and principals it was clear that they liked the idea of the study, but other demands on their time and other school-wide professional development initiatives, particularly in literacy, numeracy and information technology, took precedence over something seen as peripheral as singing.

I went back to the drawing board, and reflected on the place of music in New Zealand primary schools, and on the teachers who keep music alive in spite of competing demands on their time and energies. After considering the possibility of a broadly-based study of music in primary schools, my attention shifted to a stronger focus on the person of the teacher. My own frustrations about the marginal place of music in schools, which have their genesis in years as a pre-service teacher educator and music advisor, spilled across into imagining the position of these primary school music leaders who worked daily in environments that placed music on the margins.

I had, for some time, been drawn to the literature on teachers' lives and this coincided with my growing interest in the stories that New Zealand primary school music leaders might have to share. My intuition told me these could be a source of important new learning about how teachers and indirectly, their students, experience music as a part of school life. At a political level, I hoped that systematically gathering, analysing and disseminating teachers' perspectives on the place of music in their schools would aid efforts to advocate for music with school leaders and educational policymakers.

A revised doctoral proposal began to take shape, one in which my role would be to listen and observe, to question and reflect on what was already happening in schools musically, rather than to actively involve myself in a change process. This completed thesis is the fulfilment of that wondering and wandering (in intellectual territory), engaged in from before the chronological starting point for the research.

1.4 The Study

This research is a qualitative study of ten practising primary school music leaders for whom music is a significant part of their classroom and school lives. The study addresses the following key questions:

1. Who are the teachers who lead music in New Zealand primary schools and how do they come to be music leaders?
2. What do primary school music leaders do and what skills, knowledge and understandings underpin their work as music leaders?
3. What is the significance of primary school music leaders' work?

Each question is linked to one of three strands that are unravelled both explicitly and implicitly in the course of the research report, namely:

- Teachers' personal and professional lives;
- The familiar surface of teachers' roles and their underlying skills and knowledge;
- Things ordinary and things profound.

The overall research approach maintained a hermeneutic orientation with a focus on representing teachers' own perspectives on their lives and work. All participants were interviewed about their journey to becoming primary school music leaders and their subsequent experiences as music leaders. They were also observed undertaking a music leadership activity and most were interviewed a second time following this, providing both participants and researcher with the opportunity to reflect on the observed session and relate aspects of current practice to the wider story of primary school music leadership.

Significant changes in research orientation over several decades have created both liberating and constraining conditions for researchers. On the one hand, researchers have been relieved of the burden of attempting to be dispassionate observers of others' worlds, and of the expectation that they can deliver research reports cleansed of all subjective elements. However, on the other hand, the licence to be present within the research challenges researchers to carefully balance their own and others' perspectives with regard to the research context. One approach to this dilemma is for researchers to preface the research report with an account of how they personally relate to the study. This is the focus of the following chapter section.

1.5   My Own Story

Like the participants in this study, I also am a music teacher with a story to tell. The seeds for this thesis were planted in my early home and school life, fed and nurtured throughout my schooling and into my adult life as teacher and teacher educator. Music was gifted to me by my parents and is inextricably woven into my personal and professional identity. I was fortunate to have two particularly influential primary school teachers and I can trace their impact on my life and career in quite specific and significant ways. Fifty years later I retain vivid sensory and affective memories of music-making with them. I recall that, as a child in their classrooms, these teachers' involvement with us musically was a source of pleasure and satisfaction. As an adult looking back, I interpret this as an active expression of their care for us.

After finishing my own schooling I spent a year as a volunteer with the New Zealand aid agency Volunteer Service Abroad, teaching in a girls' secondary school on the outskirts of the Fijian capital, Suva. One of the highlights of this time was participating in the musical life of the school, through formal school activities such as singing in church services and important communal occasions, as well as informally with the girls in the evenings and weekends. Singing, in this context very often combined with dance, gave me opportunities to connect with the girls as people, and to engage socially with them and the wider school community. It provided both a means and a motivation for learning the Fijian language. My experiences in Fiji, particularly in relation to the normalisation of music activity, challenged my beliefs about what it meant to be musical and sowed the seeds of a changing philosophy of music learning and teaching.

On my return to New Zealand I completed a degree in music and English and subsequently gained a primary teaching qualification. My first teaching position was in a school with a high percentage of Māori and Pacific Island students, a school in which music was heard every day and at every event, as well as providing a significant point of connection between teachers and children, school and community. The high levels of musical confidence and skill exhibited by these children caused me to further question my existing beliefs about musical development and to ponder the importance of social context and expectations for success in music. Although not something I thought deeply about at the time, I sense that for every class I taught, the capacity to pick up a

guitar and sing with the children was probably the single most important aspect of building relationships with individual children, the class as a whole, and the different school communities. Among many memories from those teaching years, I recall one boy whose involvement as a student music leader provided the opportunity to establish a different and positive school persona from the 'trouble-maker' label that had been assigned to him by teachers in the school. From these early teaching experiences in Fiji and New Zealand, the idea of music as a point of connection and growth between human beings had taken root.

Although the importance of music in my life has remained stable throughout the years, experiences such as those outlined above have contributed to an expanded understanding of the complex concept encapsulated in this small word 'music'. One important insight is that although my thoughts and feelings about music may, at times, be shared by others, music also represents different things to different people and is imbued with cultural and contextual meanings. I see music threaded differently through the lives of my adult children, my mother (now in her eighties), friends, colleagues and students. Nonetheless, I continue to wonder at the joy this gift brings and the power of music to sustain, inspire, renew and strengthen humanity. My life has been significantly enriched by the musical thread which runs through it and I feel a deep sense of connection with fellow 'musickers' (Small, 1998), in particular the children and adults who sing or have sung in the choirs I lead.

Previous experiences of music and music teaching continue to influence my practice as a teacher educator and represent a fluid exchange between present and past. Our stories, mine and those of the teachers who participated in this research, are individual and sequential, but they are also about many children, teachers and school communities, about musicians and about music. In addition to the personal power each story has for the teller, there is collective power from many stories told, and there are lessons that educators today and in the future might draw from such a collection. I know from experience that although children in this country, at this time, have access to music in many forms, music at school has a character and life that private music lessons and listening to music videos and CDs cannot replicate. Music in schools offers students a unique way of being, relating and knowing. A key aim of this research is to capture some of that richness through the eyes of teachers who help make it happen, to

understand more about the part they play in sustaining the musical life of their schools, and to know what this might mean, not just to them but also to the children they teach.

1.6   Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into nine chapters. Chapter One has provided an introduction to the study and describes the origins of the study in terms of both immediate and wider contexts, and the personal interests and experiences that had a bearing on the research proposal and aims.

Chapter Two reviews research on teachers' lives and on conceptions of curriculum that inform the study and Chapter Three focuses on literature related to arts and music education, and to music learning and teaching in schools. The chapter culminates in posing the three substantive questions which frame the research. Chapter Four discusses the methodology for the study and the conduct of the research.

The data generated in relation to each of the three research questions are presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven with an emphasis on representing the experiences and beliefs of the participants and on building a comprehensive, cumulative picture of their work. Chapter Five is concerned with the processes of becoming and being a primary school music leader, and with the complex factors that contribute to teachers' overall experience as music leaders. Data presented reveal the mix of relationships, experiences and connections across time and place that weave in and out of teachers' work as school music leaders.

Chapter Six is concerned with the actual work of primary school music leaders with data presented according to tasks and responsibilities undertaken; the musical skills, knowledge and understanding underpinning the work; and emerging patterns of relationships, congruence between personal and professional roles, and care for music. The data presented in Chapter Seven convey participants' beliefs about the overall significance of their work, and are organised progressively outward from the most personal and individual through to those experienced by the wider school community.

Chapter Eight, the discussion chapter, draws together the data and the theoretical underpinnings of the study. Utilising a 'theoretical toolbox' approach, the discussion focuses on the complexity of primary music leaders' work, the broad context in which it is carried out, and the relevance of findings to the wider literature on communities of practice. Chapter Nine summarises the research findings, identifies the limitations of the study, outlines possible avenues for disseminating the findings and makes suggestions for further research into the work of primary school music leaders.

CHAPTER TWO
RESEARCH ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING

2.1   Introduction

This study examines who music leaders in primary schools are, what they do, and the significance of their work as music educators and leaders. The purpose of this chapter is to locate this particular research study within the broader traditions of theory and research on teachers' work. Given that research on teachers may be conducted from a range of perspectives, it is important to justify the approach taken within this study and to identify the beliefs about teachers and teaching that underpin all stages of the research. In addition, studies of teachers frequently point towards the influence and significance of the official curriculum to teachers' work. For this reason, a second important contextual backdrop to this study of contemporary primary school music educators is the broad field of curriculum, its relevant theoretical history and contemporary character.

The first major section on teachers' work begins with a brief overview of the important foci and paradigm shifts in teacher research through the twentieth century to the 1980s, a decade that marked a turning point in how teachers' perspectives were represented in the research literature.   Literature and research from the 1980s through to the present day is then reviewed in order to demonstrate the current methodological variety and scope of research about, on, or with, teachers. Of particular importance is research that sheds light on the central role of teachers in classroom teaching and learning, the complex and multifaceted nature of their work, the intersection of their personal and professional lives, and the perspectives of teachers themselves on their work and lives.

The second major section of the chapter is concerned with the field of curriculum study and focuses first on alternative conceptions of curriculum that have relevance to this study. This is followed by a discussion of more critical perspectives on the notion of curriculum and the relationship of this work to teaching and learning in the arts. The chapter concludes by clearly positioning the study within a hermeneutic framework (see Chapter 4 for fuller discussion) that seeks to represent teachers' views of their work in

their own terms, thereby providing a context for the expanded review of arts and music education literature in the following chapter.

2.2   An Historical Overview

Throughout the twentieth century, researchers and philosophers have represented different perspectives on the role of teachers in the wider educational endeavour (Greene, 1986) and grappled with contrasting ideas of who teachers are and what their role entails. Although there is widespread acknowledgement of the pivotal part teachers play in education and schooling, the positioning of teachers within the research literature represents changing views of their power, control, effectiveness and significance.   Including a broad historical perspective on studies of teachers' work not only enables us to understand the way in which current research practice is built upon old practices (Robertson, 1996) but also keeps us mindful of the reasons for change, providing a methodological point of reference that mitigates the risk of repeating old mistakes (Pitts, 1998).

Up until the 1980s, research into teachers' work utilised predominantly quantitative methodologies, with a reliance on statistical data generated in large scale studies (Goodson, 1992) and with teachers themselves reduced to "shadowy figures on the educational landscape" (Ball & Goodson, 1985, p.6). In the absence of studies that represented teachers' experience from the 'inside', Lortie (1975/2002) suggested that the overwhelming character of teacher research was to tell teachers how to do their job rather than to reveal the realities of their work. In similar vein, Butt, Raymond, McCue and Yamagishi (1992) criticised researchers' prevailing view of teaching as a technocratic profession in which participants learned the mechanics of what and how to teach and then proceeded to deliver what was expected. Other shortcomings identified in the research were a tendency to dissect teaching into discrete packages which failed to account for its complexity (Carter, 1993), an assumption of the primacy of generic over context specific teaching skills (Eisner, 2005), and a failure to communicate issues of difference, tension or ambiguity in teaching (Goodson, 2003).

The representation of teachers in research literature has been a consistent theme in Goodson's writing over more than two decades with portrayals of teacher and role an

important theme in much of that research. Goodson (2003) observed that in the mid-decades of the twentieth century teachers were defined in terms of the accepted characteristics of the role rather than by the individual qualities and dispositions they brought to it. Whether portrayed as villains or victims, the literature tended to represent teachers as lacking agency in their work. Reflecting on those times, Goodson noted that "researchers, even when they had stopped treating the teacher as a numerical aggregate, historical footnote or unproblematic role incumbent, still treated teachers as interchangeable types unchanged by circumstance or time" (p.50).

In spite of the pivotal place teachers occupy in the educational endeavour, it has only been in the last thirty to forty years that teachers' own experience of their work has attracted significant research attention. One notable exception that foreshadowed contemporary research interest on teachers' perspectives was Willard Waller's (1932) *The Sociology of Teaching* which had as its central thesis the idea that "the school is a social world because human beings live in it" (p.1). Although dated now in terms of both the social context it described and its underpinning attitudes and beliefs, the research was, in many respects, ahead of its time. Of relevance to this study is Waller's recognition of teachers' potential power to guide students into "a new world which gradually unfolds and takes shape" (p.235). These comments foreshadow understandings of music learning and teaching that are articulated by researchers such as Swanwick (2008) and will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

Also noteworthy is Philip Jackson's (1990b) *Life in Classrooms*, first published in 1968 after something of an epiphany experience for the author. In his introduction to the more recent edition, Jackson described the growing tension he experienced between a successful research career in which he utilised large scale and depersonalised methodologies, and a developing awareness that such approaches, by their very nature, bypass huge tracts of human experience. In addition to data from his own observational studies, Jackson also drew on a range of other studies as a means of "moving up close to the social realities of school life" (1990b, p.xxii). Jackson's work encourages readers and researchers to bring fresh eyes to familiar contexts, and to probe beneath the surface for new meaning and significance. A key focus of his text is a study of 50 elementary teachers' views on life in the classroom and, in turn, on how their expressed beliefs and ideas impacted on their work. Jackson was struck by the recurrence of four embedded

themes in the teachers' responses: namely, a focus on the *immediacy* of action within the classroom, a tendency towards *informality* in their relationships with children, a valuing of teacher *autonomy* in shaping learning experiences, and children's *individuality* as the basis for teachers' evaluative comments. He also noted teachers' use of imagery to convey their joy and satisfaction over significant achievements of individual children.

Similarly, Lortie's (1975/2002) text *Schoolteacher* offered a distinctive view of the work of teachers. This work has provided a point of focus through to the present day for researchers who seek to represent teachers' viewpoint of the teaching profession from the inside. Lortie's comprehensive report incorporated data from a range of studies including the Five Towns study of 94 New England elementary and secondary school teachers, and captured the character of teaching through individual teachers' unique experiences. One finding relevant to this research was that many of the daily satisfactions and pleasures that teachers experienced, in Lortie's terms "psychic rewards" (1975/2002, p.101), could be traced to relatively modest achievements of individuals and groups of children.

Although much of the research that portrayed teachers' work through the use of survey methodologies, questionnaires and the like still contributes to our broad understanding of the field, a growing number of researchers in the past thirty years have utilised an expanded range of qualitative methodologies in an effort to access richer and more personalised accounts of teachers' working lives. Carter (1993) suggested that the use of personal story provided a means to address the complexities of teaching, and she credited the shift in research focus to increasingly interpretivist modes of inquiry. As Jackson (1990a) noted:

> That dream of finding out once and for all how teaching works or how schools ought to be administered no longer animates as many of us as it once did. In its place we have substituted the much more modest goal of trying to figure out what's happening here and now or what went on there and then (p.7).

It is clear that research approaches to understanding teachers' work have broadened considerably in the past two to three decades. The reasons for this are complex and the developments are not as neatly linear as this short summary might suggest.

Nonetheless, they represent important changes in focus which are relevant to this study of primary school music leaders and which surface in terms of issues such as: more balanced consideration of both teachers' experiences and researchers' perspectives; recognition of the complex relationship between the unique 'case' and the general category; and the need to bridge the divide between research on teachers and teaching, and the practice of teaching. It is to these contemporary developments in teacher research that we now turn our attention.

2.3   Contemporary Research on Teachers

This section explores contemporary research and literature on teachers' work that has relevance to this study of primary music leaders. Contemporary is defined here in terms of the chronological time period from the 1980s to the end of the first decade of the new millennium, as well as in terms of an overall research approach which acknowledges and accounts for the breadth of teachers' lives. The literature reviewed represents a dual focus on the theoretical work of key researchers, and on single studies that reflect or have influenced the ongoing direction of research about teachers and their work.

Bearing in mind the wide scope of contemporary research on teachers and teaching, this review has needed to focus on aspects of the field that are directly relevant to the work of primary school music leaders. Given that music leadership is but one aspect of participants' overall teaching responsibilities, the section begins by addressing the central role of teachers in schooling and the complex, multifaceted nature of that role. This is followed by an examination of research into the intersection of teachers' personal and professional lives and histories, including a consideration of teacher identity. Attention is then given to contemporary studies concerning the emotionality of teaching and aspects of care for students. The section concludes with a focus on research that accesses teachers' own voices and perspectives on their lives and work.

2.3.1 The centrality and complexity of teachers' work

The notion that teachers have a central role in the learning and teaching process can be regarded as axiomatic. Shulman (1986) portrayed teachers as 'primary participants' along with the students they teach, and emphasised the joint contribution both groups

make to the learning and teaching context through their unique combinations of abilities, thinking and achievement. Parker Palmer (1998) described teacher, students and subject matter as the trinity of participants that constitutes the heart of teaching, taking researchers to task for their focus on the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of teaching at the expense of the 'who'. Central to his thesis is the idea that "we teach who we are" (p.2). Notwithstanding the huge challenges inherent in any research endeavour that seeks to unravel the complex interplay of cause and effect, personality and context, intuition and deliberate action that represents a teacher teaching, the appeals of Shulman and Palmer reflect many other calls for research to capture the essence of teaching through highlighting the interconnectedness of person and role. Such calls also resonate with extensive theoretical literature that dismisses theories of separated mind and body, action and thought, as erroneous and outmoded (Dewey, 1934/2005; J. Drummond, 2003; Eisner, 2005; Stefanakis, 2005).

Clandinin and Connelly (1995; 2000) have spearheaded an important branch of research into teachers' professional knowledge with their use of narrative as both process and product. Teachers' storied accounts of themselves enable description and assist understanding of their own and others' personal and professional identities (Drake, Spillane, & Hufferd-Ackles, 2001). Within this narrative inquiry approach, Clandinin and Connelly have developed a three-dimensional metaphor to give shape to their work, suggesting that in studying teachers' lives we should take account of temporal, personal/social and contextual factors. Spanning more than two decades, the focus of their research about teachers' professional work and lives has shifted from the context of the teacher in the classroom to that of the teacher within the other professional spaces and communities (e.g. the school staffroom) which shape their knowledge landscape. However a possible limitation of their earlier studies was an emphasis only on within-school contexts as they investigated how teachers negotiated and learned to live with school-based dilemmas, policies and constraints.

In their more recent work there appears to have been a softening of the borders between a teacher's life in school and beyond the school gates (Clandinin & Connelly, 2002) with a concern for representing teachers' lives "not as taken apart by analytic categories, but as people who were composing lives full of richness and complexity, lives with artistic and aesthetic dimensions" (p.163). Clandinin and Connelly's concern for the

affective environment foreshadows an aspect of practice that is significant for participants in this study of primary school music leaders.

In a subsequent research collaboration (Phillion & Connelly, 2004), the earlier notion of three-dimensional narrative space was further developed in order to highlight the distinction between 'knowledge for teachers' which can be directly taught and learned, and 'teacher knowledge' which develops through rich personal and professional experience, and is immediately accessible as a practical guide/resource for teachers. This expanded framework offers a fruitful entry point for investigations of the work of primary school music leaders in that it allows for more richly-nuanced accounts of the formal and informal learning contexts and content that shape these teachers' practice at any time.

Using the framework of biography as a point of reference, the formative experiences and relationships that contribute to teachers' beliefs and dispositions have also become a fertile field for study (Knowles, 1992). Biography provides not just a method but also the substance for gaining more intimate understanding of teachers' work. In a study which considered beginning teachers' early life experiences in education and schooling, Middleton (1992) was able to draw links between these early experiences and important aspects of pre-service teachers' teaching practice. Both Knowles' and Middleton's findings highlighted the need for beginning teachers to confront aspects of their own life stories, particularly those with potential to harbour negative teaching beliefs, attitudes or practices.

Huberman (1993) also considered the significance of life events on a teacher's work in his comprehensive study of secondary school teachers' careers. One shortcoming of this study was the emphasis given to momentous events such as marriage or the birth of a child, and the decision not to consider the possible impact of more everyday experiences. Neither were possible links between teaching a subject and teachers' real life engagement with that subject explored in the research report, and music teachers were notably absent from an otherwise complete list of subject specialisms, an omission not confined to his study alone. For example, in a study of 80 secondary school teachers' perceptions of professional identity, Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt (2000) used a detailed questionnaire to explore characteristics of and changes in identity.

Although the teacher as a subject matter expert was one of three key identity measures, aside from grouping arts teachers together, there was no attempt to draw out distinctive aspects of their role or subject that might impact strongly on professional identity.

Professional identity is increasingly portrayed in the research literature as a dynamic process whereby personal and contextual factors interrelate with language and experience (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Cohen, 2010) enabling teachers to continuously re-work their understanding of themselves as teacher and person. In their review of recent research on teachers' professional identity, Beijaard et al. (2004) singled out four factors that characterise understandings of teacher identity. First, it is dynamic and responsive to experience and reflection. Second, it reflects both unique aspects of the person and shared aspects of the context. Third, although identity is multifaceted in nature with different sub-identities representing core and more peripheral aspects of identity, teachers endeavour to minimise conflict between the different components of their overall identity. Finally, the development of teachers' professional identity is a response to their active engagement or agency as teachers. This analysis represents an important step in recognising the complexity of the relationship between teachers and their work, and suggests the importance of guarding against presenting overly-simplistic and linear accounts of that work.

2.3.2   The personal/professional nature of teachers' work

As alluded to by Beijaard et al. (2004) in their review, the overlapping of personal and professional lives is an important strand that brings teachers into the foreground of educational research. In their study of 39 teachers undertaking masters study, Day and Leitch (2001) used a personal narrative methodology to explore the relationship between the teachers' personal histories and professional lives. Among the trends they identified were the intrusion of student issues into teachers' weekends, and teachers' constant struggle to gain a more balanced perspective on working life. Investigations such as these have relevance to this research in that they draw attention to the emotional demands of teaching and its associated lifestyle, and provide a more complete understanding of teachers' need for balance, refreshment and recreation.

Some researchers into teachers' work have turned their attention to teachers within particular sectors. Nias's (1989) seminal work accessing the voices of 99 primary school teachers is one such example. Using semi-structured interviews supplemented by some participants' written accounts, Nias addressed a comprehensive array of experiences, dispositions, and reflections, including the challenges associated with exploring 'self-concept' and its relationship to primary teachers' work. Her research report emphasised the intensely personal nature of primary teaching and the demands the role placed on primary teachers to invest their very 'selves' into their work. She noted that over half the teachers in her study saw primary teaching as an occupation which allowed them to live out their unique interests, qualities and dispositions. In terms of this current study of primary music leaders, Nias's work raises questions about how primary school teachers' music leadership roles are incorporated into their overall teaching self-concept.

Nias (1989) has also made an important methodological contribution to ongoing investigations of primary teachers' work by addressing the tensions that arise from using individual teachers' accounts to shed light on common experience:

> In short, as they talked about teachers, pupils and teaching they revealed a paradox: what they had in common was their individuality or, to put it another way, it was their persistent self-referentialism which made it possible to construct a generalized picture of their experience. Aspects of the 'self' repeatedly emerged as central to the experience of these teachers, even though each 'self' was different (p.5).

Although the present study's much smaller data set does not allow for generalisation to the wider population of primary school music leaders, Nias's findings provide a clear lens through which to consider the data, and a basis for comparing and contrasting the findings related to individual teachers. Similarly, with regard to research interest in teacher voice, Hargreaves (1996) sounded a note of caution when he observed that researchers "speak of a singular voice that is also a representative voice, a voice that supposedly embodies qualities that are generic to all teachers and teaching" (p.13). Both commentaries point to the importance of carefully analysing what is unique and what is shared in the meaning that research participants attribute to their work as primary school music leaders.

Shifting conceptions of knowledge provide new challenges and opportunities for educational researchers in the 21st century (Eisner, 2002), ideas that are echoed by Drummond (2003) in relation to music education in Aotearoa New Zealand and will be addressed in more depth in the following chapter. With reference to the *Third Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Wittrock, 1986), Eisner (2002) bemoaned the lack of reference to teaching as a form of artistry which required sensitivity, imagination and responsiveness to particular circumstances, and asserted that understanding each teacher's "distinctive signature to the art of teaching" (p.384) is contingent on knowing what brings them joy in that work. In addition, he argued that directing attention to the conditions that promote teachers' growth would support the development of effective practice and the growth of artistry in teachers, and would enable them to facilitate similar growth in their students. The concept of artistry and its requisite qualities of sensitivity, imagination and responsiveness to context, can provide another useful lens through which to examine participants' accounts of their practice.

Alongside burgeoning research interest in teacher stories has come a deepening understanding of the complex interrelated factors that contribute to the overall personal/professional identity of teachers. Palmer (1998) considered three dimensions of being: intellectual, emotional and spiritual, as significant to the sense of 'self' that teachers bring to their teaching lives.   Palmer is not alone in emphasising that these dimensions do not easily lend themselves to separate analysis (see also e.g. Zembylas, 2007). Nonetheless, of particular relevance to this research is the emotional nature of teaching which has received systematic attention from a number of researchers over the past decade. This is the focus of the following sub-section.

2.3.3 The emotional and caring nature of teaching

Up until the last two decades, considerations of emotionality in teaching have tended to be restricted to situations in which emotions are perceived to facilitate more important cognitive agendas (Day & Leitch, 2001). In a special edition of the *Cambridge Journal of Education* devoted to emotions in teaching, Nias (1996) argued that research neglect of the affective components of teaching had obscured the pervasiveness of emotion in teachers' working lives, failed to acknowledge the connectedness of emotion to cognition and action in teaching, and finally, ignored the grounding of emotion in the

social contexts of teaching. Nonetheless, Nias maintained that it was not difficult to find evidence of emotion as a significant contextual element in teacher research. For example, she noted that, when researching and writing about teachers' emotions, researchers with a teaching background demonstrated a tendency themselves to be transported back into their own emotional world of teaching. Although Nias's particular focus was on the difficulties that come from remembering negative emotions, it may also be that positive emotions such as satisfaction, joy and a sense of fulfilment colour teacher researchers' views and perceptions. Such issues of researcher identification in relation to this study are explored in more depth in Chapter Four.

In seeking to explain why emotions are such a significant factor in primary teachers' work, Nias (1996) drew attention to the particular circumstances that characterise teachers' working environment: namely, the dynamics associated with multiple relationships, the physical conditions of classrooms, and the often egocentric nature of children. In addition, teachers bear responsibility not only for children's learning but also for the quality of the relationships with and between the children in their class. Another important thread in recognising and understanding the place of emotion in teaching is the huge personal investment teachers make in their work and its connection to their personal as well as professional identity. Nias suggested that survival in the classroom is closely related to teachers' capacity to maintain personal integrity and authenticity within their emotional lives.

Another key researcher on the centrality of emotion within teaching, Hargreaves (2001), suggested that a passion for teaching and for students' learning is an important facet of this emotional life. He maintained: "Good teachers are not just well-oiled machines. They are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy" (p.835). However Hargreaves also reminded us that the emotionality of teaching is not confined to positive emotions. Following interviews with 53 Canadian primary and secondary teachers about their emotional experiences of teaching, Hargreaves utilised a theory of the 'emotional geographies of teaching' as a means of representing the emotional closeness or distance that teachers described in their interactions with children, parents and colleagues. He emphasised that these emotional landscapes are not context-free nor confined to physical, objective space. Neither are they immovable structures that

teachers bump up against but rather, they represent the dynamic interplay between teachers' emotions, other participants in the teaching process, and the act of teaching itself. (For primary school music leaders in the present study, an additional contributor to this emotional landscape may be the learning content itself, music.) Hargreaves' work also raises questions about the kind of teaching episodes which might engender emotional understanding between primary school children and their teachers, with the possibility that teachers' accounts of working musically with children could provide exemplars for building emotional understanding and bridging emotional distance.

Much of the recent literature highlights two alternative views of emotion: on the one hand, residing within the individual and of a private nature, and on the other, a complex set of social constructions which, over time, incorporate rules, values and behavioural mores. In their review of a range of research that considered emotions in teaching, Sutton and Wheatley (2003) included research and theory that identified links between teachers' emotions and cognition, motivation and general teaching behaviours such as occur in shared goal setting; and demonstrated how students are impacted by teachers' emotions. For example, they described a 'virtuous' rather than 'vicious' cycle in which positive emotional affect from movement towards a desired goal heightened teachers' cognitive functioning in the learning setting, with the result that they made more strategic teaching decisions, thereby strengthening their pedagogical relations with students and leading to conditions for ongoing positive emotions. Although not carefully explicated in the research findings, Sutton and Wheatley also noted that students reported a link between positive emotions and caring. These ideas suggest possible value in ongoing study of the relationship between subject disciplines, positive teacher emotion and students' experiences of teacher caring.

In his longitudinal study of an elementary school teacher's emotional characteristics, Zembylas (2004) proposed a three-faceted understanding of emotions in teaching as *evaluative*, *interpersonal* and *political*. Of relevance to the current study is the notion that the emotional nature of teaching reflects and is activated by teachers' personal values about learning content with institutional and political contexts operating as both enabling and constraining factors in a teacher's emotional life. Zembylas (2007) suggested that prevailing views of pedagogical content knowledge (see for example Shulman, 1987) imply a theoretical separation from teachers' emotional knowledge. He

used the concept of 'emotional ecology' drawn from organisational theory to underscore that such a separation is artificial and serves to marginalise the very real contribution of emotions to teaching. With reference to four teachers involved in separate research projects, and drawing on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, Zembylas (2007) provided examples of different types of emotional knowledge which operate on individual, relational and socio-political planes to enrich teachers' overall pedagogical content knowledge. At the heart of Zembylas' (2007) conceptualisation of emotional ecology is firstly, understanding of the source of emotional knowledge through complex interactions over time and across contexts, and secondly, the dynamic that arises from teachers being "products and producers of their own emotional development" (p.357). Zembylas described one teacher's extensive use of expressive behaviours to build relationships with her students and to empower them in their learning, and went on to suggest that student satisfaction and enjoyment contribute significantly to teachers' sense of fulfilment and achievement. These ideas raise questions about the emotional climate associated with being a primary school music leader.

Drawing on an extensive body of research, Day (2004) explored the importance of passion in teachers' daily experience of teaching. He noted that "in observing passionate teachers at work in classrooms, there is no disconnection between the head and the heart, the cognitive and the emotional. None is privileged over the others" (p.16). He suggested that the kinds of bureaucratic and managerial reforms that are springing up internationally in relation to compulsory education have a profound effect on the very teaching conditions that sustain teachers' passion for their work. One noticeable effect is that as external demands on teachers increase, there is an erosion of time and place that can be given over to more creative and spontaneous pursuits. Day's work provides a rich resource through which to examine the work of primary school music leaders. He alluded to the inherent loneliness of classroom teaching and, paradoxically, to the complex webs of relationships that characterise such teaching. He also emphasised the importance of passion for subject matter as one facet of an overall passion for teaching, and drew on concepts of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), thoughtful tact (Van Manen, 1991) and artistry (Eisner, 1996) to illustrate the complex repertoire of personal qualities upon which dynamic and responsive teaching practice is built.

The link between the development of teachers' subject identities and their teaching practice was also noted by Zembylas (2004) in relation to one teacher's insight that her own positive memories of being taught science have influenced her planning, decision-making and approach to teaching science. The nature of the relationship between personal and teaching identities in different subjects was also explored by Drake, Spillane and Hufferd-Ackles (2001) in their study of 10 elementary teachers. They identified distinctively different characteristics for identity development in mathematics and literacy, providing further evidence of the importance of pursuing research agendas across a full range of school subjects.

Another relevant thread in the teacher research tapestry is the work of Noddings (2005) and her concern for an 'ethic of care' in education. Although the cited text is primarily concerned with the dislocation between the traditional disciplinary focus of secondary schools and the students they serve, her ideas are relevant to both teacher research and considerations of curriculum in the primary school. Inherent in Noddings' view of 'care' is the primacy of relationship between teacher and learner, a relationship that is not always focused directly on the learning content but may influence it in a more roundabout manner. Drawing on her experiences as a mathematics teacher, Noddings (2005) described how students' relationship with mathematics reflected their success in traditional measures of mathematics knowledge. When a gifted visual arts teacher joined the school staff, Noddings observed that some students who had struggled in mathematics demonstrated a completely different set of learning attributes in the area of visual arts. They showed themselves to be capable, self-motivated, resourceful, strategic and passionate learners; experienced success; developed ambitions for ongoing learning; and contributed fully to the development of a community of artists within the school. In addition to these observations, Noddings noticed a change in her own attitude towards these students in mathematics and found herself accommodating to their needs in ways that enabled them to have increased success in her classes. This account of drawing towards students in the wake of their engagement in another learning area suggests a possible lens through which to view the significance of primary school music leaders' work.

Care for students also emerged as a theme in Barone's (2001) account of a visual arts teacher whose career was lived out in a remote Appalachian community. Constructed

from former students' portrayals of their teacher and his influence beyond their high school days, and on his own interviews with and observations of the teacher, Barone provided a provocative and challenging account of one teacher's influence in students' lives. In a more recent study on the caring dimension in the work of three Australian secondary school teachers, O'Connor (2008) found that a caring orientation allowed the teachers concerned to work in ways that were congruent with their personal beliefs about the humanistic nature of the teaching role. These examples from practice bear out Hargreaves and Goodson's (1996) claim that "care as well as cognition should be at the heart of the teaching profession and for many teachers is so" (p.9). They also point to the value of accessing multiple viewpoints, a theme that is addressed in the following sub-section.

2.3.4 Accessing teachers' voices

A final thread in this discussion of contemporary approaches to studying teachers' work is concerned with whose perspectives are brought to bear on the research investigations and reports. Increasingly, there has been awareness of the need to fairly represent teachers' own perspectives on aspects of their work and to ensure that their voices are not distorted or marginalised in research reports. The shift to researching from the viewpoint of the teacher brings its own set of challenges and responsibilities. A brief discussion of these follows with additional methodological considerations addressed in more depth in Chapter Four.

On the surface it should be a relatively simple matter to bring teachers' words, whether spoken or written, to the pages of research reports. To not do so runs the risk of omitting what is really important, teachers' own insider perspectives, from studies that claim to be about aspects of teachers' work. For example, in her study of why women activists leave teaching, Casey (1992) demonstrated that investigating an issue without accessing teachers' voices can obscure the true motivations of the teachers. However Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) sounded a note of caution, warning of an inherent danger within the interpretive/qualitative paradigm that teacher stories will be consistently filtered through the researcher's lens. Referring back to the *Third Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Wittrock, 1986) Cochran-Smith and Lytle commented: "Missing from the handbook are the voices of the teachers themselves, the questions that teachers ask, and the interpretive frames that teachers use to understand

and improve their own classroom practices" (1999, p.3). The need to understand experience from within is a recurring theme in a great deal of literature about teachers and teaching (Cochran-Smith, 2005). However laudable these aims, they must also be balanced against teachers' own wishes to tell their stories or to remain silent, and in particular, their willingness to take time away from already demanding schedules to make such contributions.

Goodson (2003) advocated for research on teachers' work that utilises a broader lens than teaching practice alone:

> The way teachers interact in the classroom relates in a considerable manner to who they are and to their whole approach to life. It would be important, therefore, to have a collaborative form of research which links and analyses the teacher's life and work (p.19).

Life, music, teaching, training and leadership experiences all contribute to music teaching practice that can be observed, and in exploring these aspects of life the researcher "listens, above all, to the person at whom 'development' and 'implementation' is aimed" (Goodson, 2003, p.20). Evans (2002) also suggested that educational researchers need to take account of the practical concerns of teachers and of the questions they would like answered and addressed as contributors to policy and practice. She cited Kennedy's (1999) research in which he established that teachers are most drawn to and most influenced in their thinking by research that addresses the relationships between teaching, learning, subject matter and context.

It has been observed that research on teachers has been and always will be vulnerable to the influence of other economic, political and educational agendas (see for example Robertson, 1996). Goodson (2003) warned that telling teachers' stories must not be at the expense of or as a distraction from policy changes that impact strongly on those very teachers whose stories we are bringing to light. Taking a critical stance in relation to narrative inquiry, Goodson cautioned against the celebration of the individual to such a degree that any relevance and value is confined to the individuals alone and thereby, a tidy means of allowing the big work of education to be decided in the boardroom and the corridors of power, be they political or economic. The 'turn to narrative' needs to take account of the context in which teacher stories are lived out so that they shift from 'stories' to 'histories' (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). A vital contextual factor in any study

of primary school music leaders' work is that of the curriculum, and this is the focus of the following chapter section.

2.4   Teachers' Work and Curriculum

Reference has already been made to the interactions between teachers, students and learning content that characterise school-based learning. Although the broad field of curriculum study is outside the main scope of this research, there is a need to tease out those aspects of 'curriculum' that do have a bearing on this study of primary school music leaders. The close relationship between these teachers and the curriculum can be clarified by addressing three increasingly complex layers of understanding. At its most superficial level, understanding curriculum suggests that the boundaries of what is to be taught can be clearly drawn in terms of specific and expected programme content. Attention to this prescribed curriculum provides a means of revealing a second layer, the philosophical perspectives that underpin the curriculum. Recognition of these philosophical foundations highlights what is valued as legitimate knowledge in a subject or set of subjects, as well as indicating the different status accorded to particular subjects. Finally, and at a more critical level, analysis of the relationship between how a subject is represented in formal documents and how it is lived out in schools provides a context through which to discern the relative values attached to different subjects and the power relations that exist between them (Grundy, 1987).

In light of the above, the purpose of the following overview of contemporary curriculum issues is to inform the more detailed examination in Chapter Three of generic arts and music curricula, and of arts practice, both in New Zealand and internationally. The section begins with an introduction to a range of conceptions of curriculum including curriculum as product, curriculum as process, and the hidden curriculum. The inclusion of an international perspective recognises that single national curricula do not emerge in a conceptual vacuum but that they have historical roots in and continue to be informed by wider global trends and initiatives (Goodson & Marsh, 1996). Understanding the place of arts education within comparative educational settings also allows for a fuller appreciation of whichever research setting, in this case Aotearoa New Zealand, is in the spotlight. Finally, the examination of critical approaches to curriculum recognises that surface features of a document are not neutral

but instead, are representative of underlying power relationships in relation to curriculum aims and values.

2.4.1 Conceptions of curriculum

At first glance, the most obvious view of curriculum is as a product that represents the programme of study for schools and classrooms; captured in written word, available not only for all teachers but also for public scrutiny; and comprising a framework for planning, implementation and assessment of learning. A significant characteristic of curriculum as understood in this way is that it is prescribed by those who exercise institutional power and located externally to both students and teachers (Olson, 2000). Curriculum, thus defined, is one example of 'out of classroom professional knowledge' to be received by teachers in readiness for classroom use, suggesting an image of teachers as consumers of curriculum knowledge transmitted by means of a metaphorical funnel (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

Although the status and level of prescription of written curricula varies considerably world-wide, the possible impact on teachers' working lives can be clearly illustrated. For example, the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales and the prospect of a more prescriptive framework to guide the work of individual teachers in their own classrooms led Nias (1989) to predict that independently-minded teachers would not respond well to legislation or other attempts to curtail their creativity or individual agency. Her concern was that any perceived heavy-handedness could impact on the recruitment and retention of teachers who would otherwise make a significant contribution to the life of their schools and to individual learners. Attempts to 'teacher-proof' curriculum material require teachers to assume a technical role in bringing the curriculum to life. This type of action, akin to the Aristotelian notion of *techne*, stifles teacher agency in favour of skilled practice that proceeds in pre-determined linear fashion in order to achieve particular learning outcomes for students (Grundy, 1987). The nature of this relationship between the written curriculum in New Zealand and primary school music leaders, and its relevance to their daily work, will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 3 and beyond.

A contrasting conception of curriculum is one whereby teachers, learners and learning content interact (Olson, 2000; Paynter, 1997; Wing, 1992), with *process* more complex

than a set of strategies for achieving a pre-determined outcome (Grundy, 1987). The notion of curriculum as process links closely to the Aristotelian concept of *praxis* in which action is preceded by thoughtful interpretation of context. In particular, judgments are made on the basis of 'good' (beneficial) rather than 'right' (rules-based) outcomes (Regelski, 1998), with participants experiencing a heightened sense of ownership of the process (Grundy, 1987).   Grundy noted that praxial action "generates action between subjects, not action upon objects" (p.65) and this relationship, in turn, has a bearing on our understanding of curriculum. Similarly, Paynter (1997) emphasised an interdependent relationship between teachers' identification of what they wished to achieve and the curriculum, whether localised or national document. In these terms, it is the explicit teaching aim that "determines how we proceed" (p.16).

Teachers operating from a praxial position are said to be concerned not only with their own interpretations and judgments in relation to the curriculum but also motivated in terms of the meaning that learners make of the learning material: "Learning, not teaching, will be the central concern of the teacher" (Grundy, 1987, p.69). This 'lived' curriculum is seen as the embodiment of official documents, programmes of work and other learning material as they interact with teachers and learners through time, transforming students and teachers in ways that reach beyond the constraints of pre-determined objectives and outcomes (Grundy, 1987). On this view, children's learning is, in itself, a significant contributor to the curriculum, not only in observable ways but also in the unexpected and frequently unrecognised learning that occurs alongside the assessed or intended learning (Nuthall, 2007).   Neither is the relationship between curriculum and learning uni-directional from teacher to student but is claimed to be more accurately expressed in terms of both teacher to student and students-as-teacher (Grundy, 1987). Of relevance to this study is the question of how theories of 'curriculum as process' surface in the work of primary school music leaders.

Another facet of contemporary curriculum discourse relates to the so-called 'hidden curriculum' which often represents the 'true' as opposed to the 'official' way that things are done in a school community. The required curriculum document and the associated documentation that sits alongside it for evaluation and review purposes may impart one part of the story, but the more complex reality of curriculum practices may, in all likelihood, be quite different. Shulman (1986) distinguished between the 'manifest'

curriculum which appears to tell one version of events and the 'hidden' curriculum which enriches the version with context and perspective. He suggested that researchers who are concerned with classroom ecology and context, and who access the voices and stories of key participants (teachers and students), uncover realities that would not be exposed in research programmes that focus only on quantifiable and observable process-product events that have been stripped of their social context. Similarly, Grundy (1987) also emphasised the embedded nature of curriculum:

> The curriculum of a society's schools is an integral part of the culture of that society. To understand the meaning of any set of curriculum practices, they must be seen as arising out of a set of historical circumstances and as being a reflection of a particular social milieu (p.6).

Curriculum statements do not materialise out of thin air but are the product of historical, political and educational processes such as advisory groups representing key stakeholders, and consultation with members of educational communities. Critical approaches to curriculum allude to its political nature as a means of control. Goodson (1990) wrote of the Curriculum of Prescription in which teachers experienced a benefit of limited autonomy as the price of accepting centralised control. He maintained that a concerning effect of such an alliance is the removal of teachers' voices from the official debate around curriculum thereby returning them to their place in the shadows (Goodson, 1992).

Considerations of curriculum also require us to attend closely to what is included in official statements and what is absent, what Peters (2003) described as "the silences and closures of the curriculum" (p.13). He reminded us that the process of constructing a curriculum is akin to a process of selection, the final document representing what is deemed to be important knowledge and a window through which to discern prevailing power relations. Eisner (2002) provided an additional insight in his description of the 'null' curriculum as encapsulating the opportunities to learn and experience that are denied children through the omission or inadequate teaching of particular learning areas. These issues will be explored in greater depth, and with reference to both arts curricula and the New Zealand curriculum, in the chapter that follows.

2.5   Chapter Summary

The aim of this exploratory study of primary school music leaders is to reveal teachers'
own perspectives on their role in order to contribute another layer of understanding to
the bigger picture of music education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The purpose of this
chapter has been to position the study within the broader fields of research on teachers
and teaching, and associated curriculum research, and, in so doing, to provide a
contextual guide for both the ongoing review of literature in Chapter Three and the
methodological considerations addressed in Chapter Four.

The review of research on teachers and their work highlighted important shifts in
research goals and approaches signifying changes in perspective on the role and agency
of teachers. References to the literature from the decades leading to the 1980s,
demonstrated a prevailing view of teachers as passive rather than active agents in
schooling, and of teaching as a prescriptive rather than creative occupation. In contrast,
the contemporary literature reviewed acknowledged the importance of representing
teachers' own views of their role, emphasising that teaching both reflects and
contributes to personal and professional aspects of identity, and drawing out important
affective components of the role. Challenges associated with accessing teachers' voices
have also been identified and will be addressed again within the methodology chapter.

A number of contrasting conceptions of curriculum were introduced in order to provide
a context for more detailed coverage of arts and music curricula. Of particular
relevance to this study is the extent to which teachers mediate between official
curriculum documents and curriculum practices.

The focus in Chapter Three now shifts from generic understandings of teachers, their
working lives, and the curriculum, as represented in research through the decades; to
research which is more specifically concerned with music and arts education, teacher
leadership in music, and broader issues of music teaching and learning.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH ON ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews arts and music education literature that underpins this study of primary school music leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand. It builds on the research contexts of teachers' work and curriculum that were explored in the previous chapter, provides a selective account of arts and music curriculum developments in both New Zealand and abroad, and examines how these might contribute to and influence the study of primary school music leaders in the first decade of the 21st century. In order to highlight the multiple factors that contribute to the work of primary school music leaders, and the multifaceted nature of their work, there is a particular focus on theoretical and empirical literature that sheds light on the dynamic relationship between teachers, learners, and learning content.

The chapter comprises three major sections: namely, reviews of literature related to arts and music curricula both in New Zealand and internationally; literature on teacher leadership; and literature on music teaching and learning in schools. The concluding section summarises literature reviewed in relation to the nature and place of arts and music curriculum in primary schooling, the nature of primary school music leadership, and relevant music teaching and learning issues. Areas yet to be adequately researched are also highlighted. The chapter concludes with a statement of the topic and questions for the current study.

3.2 Arts and Music Curricula

In the previous chapter, reference was made to alternative conceptions of curriculum and how these equate with particular role expectations for teachers. Having identified the theoretical relationship between specific conceptions of curriculum, political structures, and issues of power and control, it is now important to make more explicit links between arts and music curricula and this study of primary school music leaders.

The focus of this section is arts and music curriculum developments within the New Zealand context. Attention is also given to selected historical and contemporary

international perspectives in order to provide an overarching context for the study and to demonstrate that the issues facing music education in New Zealand are not unique to this country. The overall place of the arts and music in primary schooling is explored, and issues of curriculum marginalisation are also addressed.

3.2.1 Music in the New Zealand curriculum

Up until the late 1980s, provision of music in New Zealand primary schools was guided by a range of policies, understandings of accepted practice, and supporting documents. The Department of Education publication, *Suggestions for teaching music in primary schools* (1973), assisted teachers to organise their school and classroom programmes in terms of key music activities such as singing, listening, playing instruments, music reading, music and movement, and creative music activities. A final chapter on linking music to other subjects reflected early understandings of curriculum integration. Although some reference was made to the indigenous musical culture of New Zealand, the overall structure and musical content of this publication revealed an underlying philosophical approach consistent with New Zealand's colonial past.

The first syllabus statement for primary and secondary school music was published in 1989 by the then Department of Education, supported by designated subject leaders from within the Department as well as leaders from the fledgling New Zealand Society for Music Education. The Music Syllabus (Department of Education, 1989) reflected an evolving understanding of the purpose and possibilities of music education in schools and was firmly grounded in the Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) philosophy that prevailed in western societies at that time. The stated aim of the syllabus was to "involve people in the active, creative processes of making and listening to music, in ways that promote individual aesthetic growth and fulfilment" (p.6).

Built around central themes of making and understanding music, the syllabus was organised according to *musical content*, defined as creating, re-creating (performance) and appreciating music; *musical processes,* identified in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that students would demonstrate and develop in the course of engaging with the musical content; and finally, *motivation and involvement* as important learner attributes contributing to both the outcomes of teaching and the learning context itself. Although the syllabus provided teachers with an overall framework and

philosophical basis for the inclusion of music in the regular school programme, it lacked detail and direction. Subsequently, three sector-related handbooks were developed in the early 1990s to provide comprehensive resource material and guidance for teachers in the use of the syllabus.

The origins of the current mandated curriculum document were first prescribed at the national level by means of *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993). This statement was structured around seven Essential Learning Areas of which The Arts was one, and, from the outset, its publication provoked debate.   In particular, critics were concerned with the underlying educational philosophy implied by the proposed structure of subjects/knowledge and the language used to justify that structure. Commentators criticised the document's emphasis on the development of "skills-based technologies or functionalist knowledge" (Grierson, 2003, p.95) and neglect of more personal and social goals, maintaining that "the arts do not fit comfortably into a perspective that is anchored in a view of knowledge as instrumental in serving the interests of a national economy" (Peters, 2003, p.21).

The relationship between specific art forms and The Arts was also seen as poorly conceptualised. On the one hand, the framework attributed a generic 'creative' character to the arts which were perceived as a single entity (Mansfield, 2003).   On the other hand, there was a lack of logic in the privileging of four arts disciplines: music and art (now called visual arts) which had existing national syllabi, plus drama (whose previous connection was with English), and dance (previously incorporated into physical education), were deemed to be 'essential', while other art forms were omitted altogether (Bracey, 2003).   In their response to the draft curriculum, the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators expressed concern that "the alliance [of dance, drama, music and visual arts] will benefit neither art nor arts education, as the arts subjects will be forced to fight amongst themselves for limited funding, timetabling and resourcing" (Boyask, 1999, p.3).

Following the adoption of the Curriculum Framework, expanded documents were written for each Essential Learning Area with equivalent documents developed for use in Māori language immersion schools or *Kura Kaupapa Māori*. The Arts document was the last of the seven to be written and was preceded by a consultation phase with

stakeholders, publication of *The Draft Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1999) and a subsequent consultation process with teachers and key interest groups. Both the draft document and the final *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000) stressed each arts discipline's distinctive body of knowledge and practice, and expanded the framework by providing four interweaving strands of learning that were consistent across all four disciplines: namely, a practical knowledge strand; a creating strand; a performing and appreciating strand; and an arts in context strand; with each strand informed by broad Achievement Objectives that suggested the kind of learning that would occur in increasingly complex two-year levels.

As with the Curriculum Framework, the draft and the final document both came in for their share of criticism. For example, arts educators noted that, in the preamble to the document, an important rationale for the arts was as a tool to promote the development of the Curriculum Framework's 'essential skills' which included problem-solving skills, self-management and competitive skills, and communication skills (Mansfield, 2003). Notably absent from this set of skills were specific arts or discipline-related skills. Critics suggested that this instrumental understanding of the arts bypassed more critical reasons and justifications for the inclusion of arts subjects in the mandated curriculum, including their value as a means of cultural affirmation and change (Mansfield, 2003). In Mansfield's terms, both the Curriculum Framework and the Arts Curriculum served as agents for the marginalisation of the arts. Given the underlying emphasis in both documents on a Western rational model of education, some commentators struggled to make sense of how the arts as a 'unique way of knowing' was reflected in the practical detail of each discipline statement (J. Drummond, 2003).

A contrasting perspective on the development of the Arts Curriculum was outlined in the Education Forum's (an extreme right wing lobby group) response to the Draft Curriculum (Education Forum, 1999). Their submission's opening statement, "access to the arts is an important hallmark of a civilised society" (p.xi), represented an understanding of arts education that privileges the western canon, and prefaced the Forum's assumption that such a curriculum orientation is politically neutral. While acknowledging the complexity of the task facing the document writers, this group of educationalists' and academics' preferred aim for arts education in the New Zealand curriculum was seen to be the development of artistic and aesthetic judgment. Their

submission returned again and again to a portrayal of arts education as a rational endeavour in which the emotions are brought into the service of cognition and reason, in order to be "developed, refined and enriched" (1999, p.16).

The situation with regard to national curriculum directives in Aotearoa New Zealand has both stabilised and changed within the timeframe of this research. In response to a range of concerns, including the breadth of learning content contained within the seven English-medium curriculum documents, the New Zealand Ministry of Education embarked on an extensive 'Curriculum Stocktake' early in the new millennium. The timing of the resultant report (McGee et al., 2004) which coincided with ongoing Ministry-funded professional development programmes in The Arts, allowed little time for implementation of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* and none for sustained reflection on its effectiveness.

A revised document *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) has subsequently been published and mandated, and the status of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000) and the other learning area documents has changed to that of supporting resources. An underlying premise of the new document is that it allows greater flexibility for schools to tailor the curriculum towards the needs of their students and the character and aspirations of their communities. Key features of the new document are the inclusion of Language and Languages as one of eight Learning Areas (no longer described as 'essential'), and an explicit emphasis on the development of specified values and key competencies (replacing the earlier essential skills) through the medium of the learning areas.

3.2.2 Implementing The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum

The launch of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (2000) marked the beginning of what can be regarded as a modest highpoint of arts education in this country: the provision of a new curriculum document that recognised learning in the arts disciplines as an essential component of compulsory education, and Ministry of Education-funded professional development that (i) supported schools in implementing the overall aims of the curriculum, and (ii) identified and worked with teachers who could assume curriculum leadership roles in the arts. The provision of a 'whole school' professional development model reflected the expectation that arts learning in primary schools

should be the responsibility of classroom teachers. To this end, the programme involved support for "all teaching staff in the school over a period of time in the development of a school-wide implementation plan for the Arts curriculum" (Beals, Hipkins, Cameron, & Watson, 2003, p.2). The inclusion of a 'curriculum leadership' model represented a key Ministry strategy to ensure ongoing on-site maintenance of arts teaching capability within the nation's schools. The Ministry of Education-commissioned evaluation study (Beals et al., 2003) that followed the nationwide professional development, researched the views and experiences of a selection of participants drawn from all regions and from both whole school and curriculum leadership models.

Although participants in the evaluation study expressed overall confidence that the professional development would have a positive effect on their arts teaching, "expectations for music were noticeably lower than for the other 3 disciplines, especially with respect to discipline literacy, and reservations about their own knowledge and skills" (Beals et al., 2003, p.35). This statement was supported by quantitative data that showed that while almost all the surveyed teachers expected to teach their own visual arts, one-fifth stated that they would not be teaching the music in their classroom. The use of visiting specialists or performers in a teaching role was reported as most likely in either music or drama, while 42% of schools noted that the teaching of music in their schools was expected to be carried out by teachers with music strengths, in contrast with 24-30% of schools using teachers with strengths in the other disciplines. These data are consistent with international research evidence of generalist teachers' lack of skills and efficacy to teach classroom music (Beauchamp, 1997; Bridges, 1994; Gifford, 1993; Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret, 1997), and an analysis of reports from the former United Kingdom Department of Education and Science (DES) in the 1970s and 80s which showed that music was the primary school subject most likely to be taught by someone other than children's regular classroom teacher (Mills, 1989).

With regard to professional development processes undertaken during the whole school development model, the study reported that participants tended to favour a sequence that allowed for the development of relevant content knowledge in each discipline followed by gradual progression towards planning and assessment material. The whole

school programme was also perceived as providing support for school-based curriculum leaders by modelling an effective process for building discipline and pedagogical confidence and efficacy in their colleagues: recognition that learning to teach arts subjects is a complex and long-term process.

The evaluation of professional development in The Arts (Beals et al., 2003) sheds light on both the practices and expectations of arts leadership in New Zealand primary schools at that time. The report distinguished between 'curriculum leaders' who work across all four arts disciplines and 'discipline leaders' who take responsibility for a specific discipline, with some teachers fulfilling both roles. Principals reported that the two types of leaders assumed similar roles and responsibilities, with over half of principals identifying the most common roles as programming and planning, resource development, and whole staff professional development. Although the surveyed teacher leaders suggested that curriculum leaders carried more responsibility than individual discipline leaders, the data showed considerable overlap between the two roles. There were differences between teacher leaders' and principals' analysis of tasks, with almost all teacher leaders identifying programming and planning as their key task, and close to half specifying staff professional development and resource development as important aspects of their role. Principals' views of key leadership tasks were more evenly distributed between the three categories of programming and planning, professional development, and resource development. They also placed much higher priority than the teacher leaders themselves on liaising with community groups and other schools. The discrepancy between the principals' and the leaders' understandings of the nature of the role may be explained by the fact that teacher leaders' understood their role from 'within' whereas principals' view was from the 'outside'.

With regard to arts leaders' perceptions of their role (Beals et al., 2003), one third of surveyed leaders regarded involvement in a professional development contract as being the most positive aspect of the role at that time (the years 2001 and 2002), while another quarter cited their teaching colleagues' arts learning and development. This finding suggests that many arts leaders are motivated in their attitude to less confident workmates by notions of 'empowerment' through a *transformational* leadership style (Busher & Harris, 1999) rather than by notions of 'power over' their colleagues. Time and workload pressures provided the greatest role challenge for over half the surveyed

leaders with another third citing staff development and motivation. Approximately one-fifth of the leaders who struggled with workload issues found that these were resolvable when there were high levels of collaboration among the staff. For example, senior teachers sometimes took on arts tasks in order to provide additional time and space for the leader, and in some schools priority was placed on developing a school-wide arts implementation plan. These findings highlight that professional development in the arts requires commitment from all concerned, not just arts leaders themselves.

In relation to questions about the level and nature of support for arts leaders, 87% of principals offered specific support "with opportunities for professional development the most common method... Allocating time for the staff to meet, and release time for planning and preparation were reported by nearly a third" (Beals et al., 2003, p.81). However half the principals noted that they were intending to offer different (although unspecified in the report) support for curriculum leaders from 2003 (coinciding with a reduction in Ministry of Education contracts for professional development in the Arts) and many of them suggested that staffing changes were likely to impact on their school's capacity to meet the newly-mandated curriculum requirements.

The focus of this section has been on establishing the broad curriculum context for the work of music leaders in New Zealand primary schools, and in describing the support and implementation processes that accompanied the release of The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum document. These form the backdrop for the work of participants in the current study. What has not been explored in any depth thus far is the place of the arts, and in particular, music, in the New Zealand curriculum and internationally. It is to this that we now turn.

3.3   The Place of the Arts and Music in the Curriculum

Studies of the arts as a generic learning area or as separate disciplines, almost invariably include considerations of the place of arts teaching and learning within compulsory education. Music education historians have explored music's shifting fortunes, and its status, character and fortunes in the past century and in the context of both compulsory and community education (Cox, 2001; Heller & Wilson, 1992). In an analysis of historical justifications for the inclusion of music in compulsory curricula, Pitts (1998;

2000) identified that reasons espoused across the decades represented both variety and stability of purpose. These included the transmission of cultural values, the capacity for music to contribute to broader dispositional or intellectual attributes, the importance of music for leisure and its potential for future employment.

Although it has been shown that school music has contributed significantly to overall music education within western societies from the middle of the twentieth century onwards, concerns have continued to surface about music's lowly status and the uneven provision of music education across the entire school population (Cox, 2007). Cox's emphasis on breadth of (i) historical context, (ii) musical content and (iii) overall scope of music education as guiding principles for history of music education research, has equal relevance for music education researchers investigating contemporary contexts. Such an approach reflects a shift from earlier perceptions of music as an artefact disembodied from the broader world or culture, a concept which has been comprehensively critiqued in recent times (see for example J. Drummond, 2003; Elliott, 1994; Mansfield, 2003). In DeNora's (2003) view, music does not operate as a passive reflection of the social setting, but instead can be regarded as having agency at all levels of social interaction:

> It is this last point (the idea that music may come to structure or otherwise influence the shape of action, thought or embodied matters such as comportment or emotion) that, in my view, opened up a new approach for socio-musical studies, one that converges with other disciplines in its aims. In a sense, this work can be seen to illuminate how we 'learn', via music, to experience socially constructed modes of subjectivity and how music serves as – in the most general sense – a socialising medium (p.170).

Drummond (2003) suggested that a possible explanation for music and the other arts' marginal position on the curriculum landscape could be found in firmly embedded notions (from the time of Socrates) about body/mind duality and the opposition of emotion and reason, and a hierarchy of subject knowledge that reflects the higher status of *rational* over *musical* forms of thinking . Such views have been widely critiqued by arts educators, among them Dewey (1934/2005) who suggested that "only the psychology that has separated things which in reality belong together holds that scientists and philosophers think while poets and painters follow their feelings" (p.76).

Similarly, Eisner (2002) has consistently argued against an interpretation of arts practice as a process of sensory input leading to expressive output that neither assumes nor contributes to cognitive capacity, and has instead emphasised the active engagement of the mind as a necessary condition of meaningful artistic action. As he noted: "One no more plays the violin with one's fingers than one counts with one's toes" (p.82). Furthermore, engagement in music as performer, composer or listener, entails both an individual connection of body, mind and emotion, and a relational interaction with others and our socio-cultural world (Stefanakis, 2005).

With regard to music's place in the curriculum, music educators from around the world have expressed disquiet about how current practices in school-based music education reflect its relative unimportance in the overall curriculum (Barrett, 2007; Cox, 2001; Plummeridge, 2001). In Australia, the National Review of School Music Education (Pascoe et al., 2005) raised major concerns about inadequate state and federal provision and made extensive recommendations for improvement, with these being backed up elsewhere in the literature (Jeanneret, 2006). The marginal position or status of music education in the compulsory Aotearoa New Zealand education system has also been well-documented (Braatvedt, 2002; J. Drummond, 2003; Mansfield, 2000), while Choi's (2007) analysis of contemporary Korean music education confirms that unease about the position of music in schools is not restricted to western nations.

Dictionary definitions of the term *marginal* allude to the notion of relative place within a larger structure, and to issues of resource-requirements and provision. In curriculum terms, place and value are closely related in the sense that marginal subjects such as music may be seen to reside on the periphery of the larger curriculum, with more important subjects occupying a central or core position. The marginality of arts subjects is sometimes also evident in terms of the resources they attract. In this sense, 'less-regarded' may translate into less equipment, less budgetary provision, less timetabled time, less professional development (see for example Hammersley-Fletcher, 2002), less-qualified staff and fewer of them, less confidence to teach the subject, less support and accountability for teaching, and less concern for assessment of learning, than would be the case for core curriculum subjects. With regard to resourcing, Eisner (2005) emphasised that time given to the arts represents not only how much it is valued by those with decision-making power but also the breadth of opportunity for children to

grow as artistic beings.

Closely related to concerns about the status of music within schools is research evidence regarding generalist teachers' lack of confidence to teach music (Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret, 1997; Mills, 1989).   In view of documented reductions in teacher support provision at both state level and within the tertiary education sector, and with reference to the outcomes of the National Review of Music in Schools (2005) in Australia, Jeanneret (2006) suggested that in an environment of under-resourcing and low teacher efficacy, it is likely that music education will not fare well. She identified a recurring pattern of review and recommendations, and an absence of coordinated action to improve the situation, suggesting that this was a widespread concern wherever generalist primary teachers were responsible for music education in their schools. With regard to the situation in New Zealand primary schools, Pirihi (2002) found that where there are pockets of musical activity to inspire and engage children, this very often reflects the presence of a skilled and motivated music leader in the school. This raises the question of who these leaders are, and the nature of their leadership roles and experiences in what appear to be less than favourable circumstances for music in schools.

Advocates for music's importance in the curriculum frequently cite the support music provides for learning and development in a range of non-musical areas. For example, in a study of four arts-rich educational programmes, Bresler (2005a) investigated the efficacy of each programme in relation to intellectual development. With regard to a broader conception of intellect than more conventional rational models, Bresler found that students in all programmes utilised an expanded range of linguistic, cognitive and affective strategies. In addition to students' engagement with the arts learning materials, Bresler also noted the inherently motivating and supportive learning contexts in which they were working. Although encouraging, too much should not be read into Bresler's findings. Meta-analyses of empirical data on learning through music suggest that there is insufficient theoretical understanding of the transfer of learning to warrant all but the most tentative of assumptions about how music contributes to learning across a broad spectrum of learning areas (Staines, 1999; Winner & Cooper, 2000; Winner & Hetland, 2000).

In contrast to studies that have attempted to establish a direct relationship between learning in the arts and improvement in other academic domains, Eisner (2002) sought to illuminate the relationship between conceptions of knowledge and the curriculum. He argued that the status of the arts in compulsory education has suffered on the basis of two misconceptions: first, the particular beliefs about learning and knowledge that underpin schooling in the United States and many other western education systems; and second, fundamental misunderstandings about the nature of learning in the arts. As a consequence, he maintained that the marginalisation of the arts is inevitable when language, logic, detachment, and the scientific method, are privileged over sensory experience, multiple and flexible solutions to problems, and the inter-relatedness of form and content, and of expression and discovery. Of relevance to this research is Eisner's contention that "for children, the school constitutes a primary culture for development of mind" (p.129). This raises a question of whether, and in what ways, the work of primary school music leaders plays a part in this ongoing development of the mind.

With regard to perspectives on music's place within the curriculum and rationales for its inclusion within compulsory schooling, Humphreys (2006) rejected instrumental reasons or philosophical statements about music's meaning, asserting that: "music simply 'is' – it represents itself" (p.184). Colwell (2007), pondering on the breakdown between disciplinary knowledge and general educational study, concluded that:

> The discipline of music does not need the discipline of music education – music was taught successfully for centuries and continues to be well-taught by individuals not trained in music education. Education, however, requires that music be part of any thoughtful curriculum (p.101).

Swanwick (1999) maintained that it is the symbolic nature of music that accounts for its continuing presence within schools and our wider communities: "It is a mode of *discourse* as old as the human race, a medium in which ideas about ourselves and others are articulated in sonorous shapes" (p.2). He suggested that in order to teach music *musically,* teachers needed to attend to the essence of music itself. Likewise, Paynter (1997) emphasised that the basis of a music curriculum should be to encourage the development of musical thought and as a means of teaching what he described as "*musical* music" (p.18).

Advocacy for music has emerged as a parallel theme in the literature on music's place in the curriculum. Findings from a study that explored reasons for the inclusion of music in the school curriculum highlighted both the immediate pleasures and the lifelong value that can accrue from music education (Pitts, 2000). However Pitts also warned that too strong a focus on a rationale for music in schools may ultimately miss the point of what is important about music. Acknowledging the contribution of teachers to both present and future outcomes for students, Pitts noted: "However it is expressed, the sense of commitment that individual teachers bring to their work is vital to the continued success and development of music education" (p.40).

Of particular relevance to this study is the suggestion that the marginalised curriculum position of certain subjects or disciplines, in this case music, can result in the creation of a privileged autonomous space for teachers with leadership responsibilities or even interest in music to inhabit. Regelski (2005), writing about the need for music education to more clearly articulate its place, purpose and value within the constraints of compulsory schooling, noted that even within the highly standardised and controlled curricula that characterise most western education systems, music teachers are often afforded greater autonomy than their counterparts in any other discipline or subject.

Another aspect of the complex relationship between the curriculum and teachers' work that has received research attention is the impact of curriculum policy on teacher agency. Helsby and McCulloch (1996) cited studies that suggested that constraints in practice do not automatically follow in the face of highly centralised curriculum directives. In their study of the relationship between teachers' professionalism and curriculum control following the introduction of the National Curriculum for England and Wales, Helsby and McCulloch surveyed 2000 secondary school teachers and head teachers, and conducted almost 200 additional semi-structured interviews. Not surprisingly, a high proportion of teachers, many with considerable years of experience and high teaching self-efficacy, expressed deep concern about the impact of curriculum imperatives on their day-to-day teaching lives. However one important finding was that participating teachers involved in the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), a government funded project that sought to equip young secondary school students to gain work-related skills and experience, reported significantly higher levels of autonomy and freedom than other groups of participants. The researchers suggested

that these teachers, many of whom had previously worked in low-status areas of the school, demonstrated creative and innovative approaches to working within the confines of the new curriculum. One explanation was that they may have had more to gain from making the new curriculum work in terms of increased support and recognition, and less to lose in terms of perceived autonomy and status. Given the marginalised nature of music teaching and learning in New Zealand primary schools, it may be that primary school music leaders share this sense of curricula freedom and are focused on potential gains for their subject.

Wing (1992), in her contribution to the first *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning*, made use of curriculum studies in subjects other than music in order to illustrate music education's more restricted understandings of curriculum, particularly as exemplified in compulsory education within the United States. Drawing on expanded conceptions of curricular elements - the teacher, the student, the subject matter and the learning context - Wing cited a study by the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Project (MMCP) which identified six common characteristics of 15 innovative music programmes. A notable finding from the MMCP study was teachers' willingness to share power with students and to work alongside them as musicians. Of particular relevance to the current study was the value teachers placed on being active musicians beyond the classroom context. Wing noted: "The importance of the teacher in the curriculum has been a lesson to be learned over and over again… [Teacher knowledge] plays an important contributing role in the curriculum rather than being an obstacle to be overcome" (p.213).

Difficulties associated with evaluating arts programmes, either in relation to separate disciplines or as integrated disciplines, were noted by Russell and Zembylas (2007). In their review of arts integration in the curriculum, they observed that many teachers who work innovatively in the arts do not draw attention to themselves and "their efforts are not always documented or evaluated" (p.293). Also with regard to evaluation, Barone (2007) alluded to the presence of a 'skeptical postmodernism' which discounted the influence of teacher/child interactions in the present and the remembered past. Citing F. Scott Fitzgerald who affirmed that "one should be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise" (p.243), Barone suggested that it is in this spirit that some teachers are "doing their best to make a difference in deep

collaboration with their students, through personalized arts curricula that foster genuinely educational and aesthetic experiences" (p.243). Such aspirations find support in the work of Dewey who pointed to the enduring outcomes that accrue from the mix of past and present experience: "When excitement about subject matter goes deep, it stirs up a store of attitudes and meaning derived from prior experience" (p.68).

Contemporary theories of learning stress the socio-cultural nature of schooling, building on the work of researchers such as Schwab (1969) who rejected ideas of curriculum as a top-down, uni-directional system. Current understandings of curriculum stress the dynamic interaction between learners, teachers, learning material and learning context within the curriculum, emphasising that no aspect of the learning process is unchanged in the interaction (Rogoff, 2003). Such considerations of curriculum shed light not only on what is taught but also on what is learnt. This point is well-illustrated by Noddings (2005) who, among a range of other research studies, has been concerned with the provision of programmes that connect deeply to the reality of students' lives and needs. Using the curricular approach known as Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) as an example of practice that fails to nourish students, Noddings maintained that much of the joy and freedom inherent in practical subjects can be lost through the use of cognitively-based systems that advantage those succeeding within the liberal arts/science/maths tradition, and serve to further disadvantage students whose options are already limited by the prevailing cognitive learning culture. Noddings' analysis of DBAE is important because it encourages reflection on the values and beliefs that underpin the practice of music education in schools, and on wider issues of equitable provision.

Socio-cultural theory also considers learning as a form of social participation. Building on ideas that learning and teaching interactions effect change in all participants, Wenger's (1998) notion of "communities of practice" offers a potential framework through which to examine the processes of shared music-making, and, in particular, the development of children's identity as musicians. The relationship between different conceptions and manifestations of curriculum and the development of student identity as learners has been further explored by Noddings (2005) in relation to alternative possibilities for the core content of schooling. She emphasised the potential overlap between recreation and employment or, in the case of school students, recreation and formal education, observing: "It is important for all young people to discover what

refreshes and renews them. A well-integrated life includes intervals of activity that energize and make us feel whole" (p.89). Although Noddings' primary focus is on secondary school students, these comments suggest a possible purpose and value of music in the primary school curriculum for students and for teachers themselves.

The focus of this section has been on establishing the curriculum context for the work of music leaders in New Zealand primary schools. Although the curriculum, in the broad sense of programmes of work interwoven with dynamic learning and teaching contexts, is brought to life within individual classrooms, we have touched on the support that teachers provide for and receive from their colleagues as an important aspect of curriculum implementation. Data from a range of studies, but in particular from Beals et al.(2003), suggest that in-school curriculum leadership has an important role in building a school's arts capacity. It is to this subject, teacher leadership, that we now turn.

3.4   Teacher Leadership

This section of the literature review is concerned with leadership in schools. Formal subject leadership is first explored in general terms and the relationship between secondary and primary school leadership is also addressed. This is followed by a review of literature concerned with music leadership in schools. The section concludes with an exploration of issues relating to teacher leadership.

3.4.1 Subject leadership in schools

There is significant research evidence to support the view that the status of subject leadership in schools differs according to the subject (Spillane, 2005) and reflects that subject's place in the overall curriculum hierarchy (Bernstein, 1996). The organisation of subject leadership varies from school to school (Busher & Harris, 2000) and may involve its own hierarchical structure nested within the broader leadership structure of the school or the teaching team (see for example Beals et al., 2003). The diverse practice of curriculum leadership has been unevenly addressed by researchers with subject leadership in secondary schools receiving more attention than its primary school equivalent. This may, to some extent, reflect the different organisational and administrative structure of secondary schools and that, unlike the work of the majority

of their primary school counterparts, secondary teachers' work involves subject specialisation. However, where subject specialists are employed in primary schools, whether in New Zealand or internationally, it is frequently in subjects such as music where high numbers of generalist teachers lack self-efficacy (Education Review Office, 1995; Mills, 1991).

Given the paucity of primary school subject leadership research, researchers have often looked to secondary school-based research, or research in other subjects to inform their understandings of subject leadership in primary schools, and to provide frameworks for understanding specific aspects of music leadership practice. As noted earlier, Busher and Harris (1999) studied the power relationships that underpin subject leadership and distinguished between a *transformational* style which is concerned with empowering teachers to develop and grow, and a *transactional* style that is more directive and task-focused. Hammersley-Fletcher (2002) also addressed dimensions of leadership style in her study of 20 subject leaders in English primary schools, and findings from both studies are relevant to the current research.

With regard to the National Curriculum and the devolution of subject learning and support to designated subject leaders, Hammersley-Fletcher (2002) found that participants in her study preferred to support their colleagues through the provision of resources and teaching materials rather than by direct monitoring of their teaching practice. Regardless of a shared perception that the subject leadership role included improvement of teaching and learning in their subject, these teachers reported that the demands of their own classroom teaching meant that there was little time or opportunity to provide such leadership. In addition, it appeared that maintaining collegial relationships with their peers took precedence over direct professional leadership. Although Hammersley-Fletcher pointed to clear leadership differences corresponding with the position of different subjects in the curriculum hierarchy, details of these style differences were not expanded on in the research report. In an earlier survey of 40 English and Welsh primary teachers' preferences for music in-service training, Beauchamp (1997) found that generalist classroom teachers favoured in-class support from a specialist colleague over other forms of centralised or media-based support. These apparently conflicting findings highlight the importance of examining leadership

practice in relation to specific learning contexts, and indicate that primary school music leadership is deserving of focused research attention.

There is a clear distinction in primary school curriculum leadership literature between that which is research-informed but directed towards practitioners, and that which has more direct relevance to the research community. For example, O'Neill and Kitson (1996), in response to the needs of curriculum co-ordinators implementing the English/Welsh National Curriculum, compiled a volume that offered "a set of conceptual frameworks within which [conscientious co-ordinators] can better understand their own practice" (p.3). Although good quality teaching material such as this provides relevant and desirable support for primary school curriculum leaders, the paucity of complementary research literature in subjects such as music, (for example studies of music co-ordinators' actual practice and experiences), underscores their marginal status and offers fertile territory for research.

3.4.2 Music leadership in schools

Music leadership in primary schools is attended to in a range of ways within research and practitioner-focused literature. These include both descriptive and advisory materials that emanate from music educators with diverse interests in teacher education, school teaching, and teacher evaluation and inspection, as well as the academic study of music education. The nature and practice of music leadership in primary schools is sometimes addressed explicitly and, at other times, alluded to more obliquely. For example, some commentators have suggested that less confident teachers are encouraged in their music teaching practice when teacher leaders model inclusive beliefs regarding the capacity for music-making, a common approach when working with children themselves (Beauchamp, 1997; Glover & Young, 1999; Mills, 1989). Glover and Young suggested that reliance on one music teacher in a school is likely to limit the breadth and variety of musical offerings to the children in that school, and stressed the important role for music coordinators in drawing out the musical interests and capabilities of other teachers:

> Music team work and joint responsibility for music focuses upon the musicality
> and creativity of each member and how it can be released. An egalitarian
> climate for music teaching is built on shared vision and principles and

recognises different abilities and interests shaping individual styles of teaching. The subject leader's role is to develop this 'differentiated teaching' rather than to monopolise (1999, p.7).

There is, however, little in the literature to guide music subject leaders in terms of effective processes for such professional development and encouragement of their teaching colleagues and it is in these situations that research in other sectors or subjects can support development in fields like music.

Overall, there is a dearth of studies that directly address the nature of music leadership in primary schools but, as stated earlier, an extensive primary music literature that takes an advisory and pragmatic stance (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006). In O'Neill and Kitson's (1996) volume on effective curriculum co-ordination, the chapter devoted to music (Wheway, 1996) provides a basic unpacking of music requirements that, although targeted towards the music co-ordinator, could be of equal value for generalist teachers tackling music in their own classrooms. Likewise, Mills' (1991) comprehensive account of music in primary schools has a pedagogical rather than a leadership focus.

The exception, as far as primary music leadership research is concerned, is Beauchamp and Harvey (2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005) who reported on their pilot study for a more extensive planned project to investigate Arts leadership and management in English primary and secondary schools. Although their early findings from the primary study were severely limited by both the small number of participants (three), and the research focus (to encourage music leaders to identify issues that were relevant for them), they were successful in highlighting aspects which contributed to a distinctive subject leadership profile for music. These included: the diverse makeup of music teaching teams; the range of roles from classroom teacher, to instrumental tutor, to extra-curricular music leader; and the heavy extra-curricular load and expectations.

When considering primary school subject leadership, it is clear that the subject does have an effect on leadership practices. In a longitudinal study of subject leadership in Chicago primary schools, Spillane (2005) found that clear differences existed across subject lines with regard to formal structures, and formal and informal interaction patterns. With a view to identifying the differences between literacy, mathematics and science subject leadership, Spillane's study investigated diverse subject leadership

practices in eight schools over 18 months to 5 years, with structured interviews conducted in an additional seven schools. Spillane reported that unlike literacy leadership which was organised through a range of structured networks and well-supported by senior managers, and maths leadership which was similarly well-structured but less supported by school administrators, science leadership did not receive formal institutional support and was organised in an ad hoc manner. Accordingly, he cautioned against generic understandings of primary school subject leadership that simplify issues, needs and practices, and disguise the distinctive features associated with specific subjects. Spillane's findings are consistent with Mills's (1989) observations that primary teachers with a leadership role in music inhabit a different professional and personal space from teachers who are, for example, literacy or numeracy leaders. She noted that, unlike mathematics leaders who are primarily concerned with coordinating the curriculum and advising their generalist colleagues, "music curriculum leaders tend to operate as specialists, not as consultants" (p.3). This raises the question of whether these observations from the United States (Spillane) and England and Wales (Mills) are also true of New Zealand primary school music leaders, and if so, how is this shown in their practice?

The focus in this section has been on research that explores subject leadership in schools. However it is important to recognise that teacher leadership in relation to teaching colleagues is part of a wider set of responsibilities. In the following section, research that is specifically concerned with music and arts teaching and learning will be reviewed.

3.5 Music Teaching and Learning

This section begins by providing a broad overview of research into music teaching and learning, followed by an examination of literature that explores the actual work of music teachers in primary schools, and other relevant studies of teachers of the arts. Research on learning in music and the other arts is then examined and the section concludes by presenting some alternative perspectives on music teaching and learning.

3.5.1 Overview of research on music teaching and learning

Research on music teaching and learning has travelled on a parallel track to that of the broad domain of educational research in terms of a gradual shift from decontextualised quantitative studies to the utilisation of qualitative research methodologies that take account of the wider learning context. Up until the last two to three decades, the predominant focus of music teaching research has been on how best to facilitate the learning of a broad range of performance and practical skills with research efforts concentrated on 'feeding into' music classrooms rather than 'feeding out of' them. Narrative or life story accounts have most often centred around exceptional performers and composers, and although inspirational music teachers such as Shinichi Suzuki (Suzuki, 1983) and Zoltan Kodaly (Choksy, 1988) have been written about in ways that emphasise the interconnectedness of music, teaching, and person, this approach has not expanded to include the work and experiences of everyday music teachers.

Taken as a whole, the predominant approach to music teaching and learning research has been to explore the 'inside' from 'without'. Researchers have described, analysed and evaluated multiple aspects of different pedagogical approaches; assessed children's musical development in a range of areas; and observed the 'what', the 'when', and the 'how' of music teaching. Teachers themselves have received some research attention but couched most often in terms of pedagogical advice that aims to improve practice. Although, at its core, teaching is a social and collaborative activity, there is a paradox in that teachers can experience a strong sense of isolation in their role and too little opportunity to find out how it is for others who walk in similar shoes. In recent decades, this need to understand from within has become a recurring theme in a great deal of literature about teachers and teaching.

Recent research carried out in Portugal confirms that the tendency to discount teachers' own experiences as music teachers is not confined to English-speaking western educational endeavours. In the introduction to their recent life histories study of music teachers' identity, Ocaña Fernández and Llorente (2007) noted:

> Various authorities in the past have told the teachers not only what they must do, but also how to do it, thus generating a subjective and unreal teaching identity, constructed from the outside. In this sense, our investigation involves relocating the figure of the teacher, granting them greater prominence and a new role: that

of an analytical and critical professional who is able to use an analysis of their own career as a source, not only of experience, but of pedagogical knowledge and understanding (p.2).

One finding from Ocaña Fernández and Llorente's study that is particularly relevant to this research is the significance of whole life experiences including family, educational and cultural context to the development of music teachers' overall professional identity.

3.5.2 Music teachers and teaching

Literature that relates to the work of music teachers and leaders in primary schools is now examined. The focus is on a range of aspects related to teacher development, both in terms of the specific requirements for generalist classroom teachers and music leaders, and in relation to career development over time.

Although the current research literature represents a far from comprehensive account of primary school music internationally, there are relevant studies that contribute to building a context for this study of New Zealand primary school music leaders. For example, Beauchamp's (1997) survey of English and Welsh generalist primary school teachers with a range of years of experience, aimed to develop a profile of their attitudes towards teaching music performance, composition and listening, and to ascertain the approaches to professional development and in-service support that they favoured. Relevant to this study is the finding that participants most appreciated face-to-face support that was delivered in a context closely aligned with their actual teaching contexts, and by a known rather than a visiting specialist. Beauchamp noted: "It seems apparent that for many, the best method of supporting [generalist teachers'] development as music teachers is to provide opportunities for them to learn alongside the children during music lessons" (p.83). Subject leaders may be well-placed to provide that kind of in-class support, with this approach being both a feature and a by-product of the Ministry-funded professional development that supported the implementation of the New Zealand arts curriculum (Beals et al., 2003).

In relation to the situation in Wales and England at the time, Beauchamp (1997) reflected:

In the light of the gradual diminution of the advisory service, and the cost implications of using the growing number of external agencies offering INSET support, the main responsibility for the favoured option by teachers, in-class support, rests increasingly with the teachers in charge of Music in individual schools. As these people are themselves busy class teachers it will be interesting to monitor the effect such a move may have on Music provision generally, and on the teachers concerned (p.82).

Given that in New Zealand, Ministry of Education-funded support for music and the arts was at its height in the early years of the millennium and was, at the time of writing, very limited, Beauchamp's comments raise questions about whether the equivalent teachers in New Zealand may also feel a burden of responsibility for the maintenance of the arts and the provision of professional support for their teaching colleagues.

The issue of whether music should be placed in the hands of specialist teachers at primary level has surfaced in the United Kingdom (Mills, 1989, 1991) in parts of Australia where specialist teachers are not the norm (Jeanneret, 1997, 2006), and is ongoing in New Zealand (Rohan, 2004). In a study that addressed concerns about the capacity of generalist primary teachers to implement the music component of the Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum, Rohan (2004) interviewed eight 'informants' who represented key stakeholders in New Zealand's music education community. Participants included leaders of the national music education body (Music Education in New Zealand Aotearoa or MENZA, formerly the New Zealand Society for Music Education), music teacher educators, music curriculum leaders with a national role, music advisors to schools, a practising primary school teacher and a school principal. All but one participant had at some time held either a specialist music teaching position or a primary school curriculum leadership role, and the resulting interview data blended both personal and political perspectives on the research topic. In relation to the breadth of content and pedagogical content knowledge required by music teachers, one participant described music teaching as a form of improvisation in which the teacher is required to constantly evaluate unfolding musical processes and make numerous decisions to facilitate children's practice and experience. Rohan's conclusion that a mix of specialist and generalist teachers of music would be the ideal solution for New Zealand, was at odds with earlier work in England and Wales in which Mills (1989) strongly advocated for music being taught by the classroom teacher.

In addition to the empirical data collected, Rohan (2004) also considered the research problems against a comprehensive array of national and international literature regarding music curriculum philosophy and delivery. Findings from her study were consistent with international concerns about the future of music education in primary schools. Chief among these concerns were the specialised content and pedagogy that underpins music teaching and learning in primary schools, and the need for planned provision by means of adequate teacher education and the employment of specialist music teachers working alongside generalist classroom teachers (Holden & Button, 2006).

The expectations and use of subject leaders in New Zealand schools is less formalised than in English and Welsh schools where subject coordinators are required to take on additional responsibilities and may be held accountable for student achievement gains in their subject area (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006). Although arts teaching is expected by the Education Review Office (Beals et al., 2003) whose reviewers are charged with monitoring educational achievement and effectiveness on behalf of New Zealand's Ministry of Education, anecdotal evidence from classroom teachers suggests that reviewers monitor arts learning less closely than learning in the core areas of literacy and numeracy. The emphasis on achievement in literacy and numeracy may also explain the tendency in New Zealand primary schools for the focus of music to be on the provision of specific activities such as the school production or extra-curricular music groups, rather than on the effectiveness of classroom music programmes.

Although research on music teaching has been conducted for a range of purposes and using a range of methodological approaches, few studies look deeply into the lives and work of music teachers in compulsory sector schooling (Cox & Hennessy, 2004) and those that do are more likely to be sited within the secondary school. For example, in a study of secondary music instrumental teachers, Baker (2006) identified a focus in participants' self-identity on the *music* rather than the *teacher* aspect of their role. As part of a longitudinal study that explored the changing views of Irish secondary school music teachers from preservice teachers through to later career teachers, Drummond (1999; 2001) identified that extra-curricular work was the source of both high stress and high satisfaction for teachers. He also noted that for over half the participants their

choice of career was most strongly influenced by individual instrumental or vocal tuition, followed by extra-curricular music activities which accounted for another quarter.

Cutietta and Thompson (2000) interviewed 25 experienced music teachers from all United States school sectors regarding important aspects of their teaching practice and how these had changed over time. Of relevance to this research are findings that shed light on shifting attitudes and priorities in the course of a teaching career. Participants reported that, whereas outside recognition had been important to them in the early days of their careers, they were now more concerned about "doing it for the kids" (p.42) and the elementary teachers in the study commented that during their careers they had become more integral to their school communities. Cutietta and Thompson (2000) reported that participants took delight from knowing that they had been a positive influence in the lives of former students. Although descriptions of music teachers' and leaders' contributions to the overall life of schools are rare, they occasionally emerge from more broadly-based articles as in the case of Gill Robertson (1995) writing about the licensed teacher she was mentoring "[who] was developing hitherto unsuspected musical skills in quite a few students and giving the rest an experience which was creative and fun" (p.65).

Given that the bulk of primary school teachers' work has traditionally been isolated in nature with few opportunities for teachers to observe other teachers in action (Lortie, 1975/2002; Nias, 1989), music leadership in the primary school brings expanded opportunities and challenges. In contrast to teacher leadership in most areas of the curriculum, music leadership is very often publicly displayed in the course of shared communal activity such as school assemblies, productions and the like. This public display of specialised music skills contributes to other teachers' perceptions of what it means to be a music leader and provides a benchmark against which less confident teachers may measure their own capabilities as music teachers or leaders (Mills, 1989; Rohan, 2004).

Some researchers (see for example Russell-Bowie, 2002) have identified the problems associated with a marginalised subject for which classroom teachers are poorly-prepared in terms of their capacity to teach for effective learning. Holden and Button (2006)

surveyed 71 non-specialist music teachers in twelve primary schools in one English Local Education Authority (LEA) and conducted follow-up interviews with 16 teachers. They sought participants' opinions on their confidence to teach music; support available for them in their teaching; their training, teaching experience and musical background; and their attitude towards music. One important finding was that participants viewed music as a 'specialist subject' and expressed vulnerability and a lack of confidence in relation to their capacity to teach it. With regard to support received, teachers in the study identified the following, in order from the most to the least frequent: commercial music programmes of work, school-based work schemes, textbooks, in-service advisory support, guides for teachers, their own personal resources, the school curriculum leader, audio-visual resources, and finally, support from a specialist musician or music teacher. Given the similarities between teacher education and teaching context in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, these findings would be of interest to New Zealand music leaders. They raise questions about the priority curriculum leaders should place on providing specialist support for generalist classroom teachers and the nature of that support.

Embedded in a more wide-ranging study of the role of emotion in teachers' lives (Day & Leitch, 2001) is an account of a young primary school classroom teacher with a music leadership role, whose personal and professional situation (critical illness of both her mother and mother-in-law coinciding with increased end-of-year music responsibilities) caused a strong emotional reaction to an unscheduled and immediate performance expectation of the choir by the school principal. What stands out in this account is the reported gulf in understanding between what is actually required for such a performance and the beliefs that managers, other teachers and the wider school community may hold about what is needed from both teacher and children. For those observing teachers with recognised musical strengths and skills, it may appear that leading music performances requires little in the way of energy or emotional investment.

Holden and Button (2006) endorsed the view that current policies (in the UK) and the National Curriculum place huge demands on generalist classroom teachers who must teach to a uniformly complex level across the full range of National Curriculum studies. They suggested that in order to raise children's achievement in music, generalist

teachers would require considerable additional support. Their study is relevant not just because it identifies areas of need for generalist classroom teachers of music, but because it highlights the kind of community of practice within which music leaders may be working. In some instances, the less-than-confident generalist teacher and the person with music leadership responsibilities may be one and the same!

Building on the premise that student teachers' growth as classroom music teachers is primarily affected by their previous experience as learners, the content of their teacher education studies, and the nature of their practicum experiences, Hennessy (2000) investigated the combined impact of university teacher education programmes and extended school practica on the development of ten primary teacher education students' music teaching confidence. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews prior to and following practicum experiences in order to elicit the participants' own views of their competence and confidence rather than the views of observers. Participants reported that few regular classroom teachers provided music experiences that went much beyond singing along to a tape and therefore the student teachers were neither exposed to models of music teaching nor supported to try out their own music teaching ideas. Other students were placed in schools with specialist music teachers who defined their role in terms of delivering classroom music to children rather than contributing to student teacher development. Where support and encouragement was provided by a strong teacher model, usually the teacher with responsibility for music in the school, students were able to lead worthwhile music sessions with children and subsequently reported significant growth in their confidence to teach music. Although this research was based in the south-west of England, the findings bear a strong resemblance to what we might expect to find in New Zealand primary schools. Relevant to this study are the underlying messages about the marginalisation of music within the primary school curriculum; the widespread perception of music as a teaching subject that requires specific skills, knowledge and understanding; and the need for intensive intervention to shift teachers' and student teachers' preconceptions about their lack of music teaching ability.

Other researchers have investigated the salient prior experiences of pre- and in-service music teachers. For example, McPhee, Stollery and McMillan (2005) explored what they described as 'crystallising' and 'paralysing' experiences in the talent development

of student music teachers in Scotland and Australia. Although they identified culture-specific factors such as social context for the Scottish cohort and internal/personal factors across both cohorts, it was also clear that quality music teaching and opportunities to learn and progress were viewed as important crystallising experiences by both groups of students. Building further on our understanding about the significance of teachers' own learning experiences, Georgii-Hemming (2006), in a study of five upper secondary music teachers in Sweden, explored the relationship between participants' personal experiences of music and their professional practice as music teachers. In spite of differences in musical background and teaching focus, she found that participants shared a desire for their students to experience the benefits and values that they associated with their own musical history and experience: "There is a vital relation in that what the teachers have derived from their own musical experiences – pleasure and play, skill, a sense of community, outlet for emotion – is what they want to pass on to their pupils" (p.233).

With reference to music teachers as consumers of research about their work, Hennessy (2001) suggested that they have little regard for research that either takes minimal account of the classroom as they know it or presumes to know what this world is or should be like. It is clear that studies about 'ordinary' classroom music teachers are frequently concerned with problems such as teachers' feelings of inadequacy to teach music (Beauchamp, 1997; Hennessy, 2000; Mills, 1989), or lack of preparation and confidence (Newton & Newton, 2006). However by focusing too much on the difficulties faced by generalist teachers trying to teach music in their classrooms, we may run the risk of obscuring the voices of teachers who experience the joy of sharing and bringing music to children.

Patteson's (2002) evaluative case study of a classroom teacher involved in the Teachers as Artists (TAA) programme in Canada provides a counterbalance to some of the more gloomy reports of struggling generalist teachers. Working predominantly in music, this teacher identified that music contributed to individual children's self-esteem as well as to a heightened sense of community within the class as a whole. These findings link to those of Finney (1999) who investigated the meaning and emotions that a group of young rock musicians attributed to their musical practice. He found that for participants

in his study, "musical expression is one of many types of expressive acts that mark out life as being real and worth living" (p.238).

As can be seen from the previous paragraph, any review of literature on music teachers and teaching will inevitably spill over to include references to music learning and learners. However, literature reviewed in the following section is more specifically focused on learning in music and the arts.

3.5.3 Learning in music and the arts

Research about music learning and learners, like that on music teachers and teaching, has had its foundations in quantitative and experimental studies concerned with measuring effectiveness. Where more qualitative methodologies have come into play, the research has continued to focus strongly on aspects of effective practice, and most often conducted from the outside looking in. Campbell's (1998) study of elementary school students' experiences of music is a rare example of exploring music experience from the 'inside out'. Campbell came to the realisation that although the place of music in children's lives is well-recognised, "we have seldom taken time to tap either the musical thoughts or the natural musical behaviours of children or to seek systematically the function of music in their daily lives" (p.5). In order to explore children's views of their musical worlds and to understand how their use of music sheds light on their personal lives, Campbell observed children's musical behaviours in 6 diverse contexts from schoolyards to toyshops, and initiated individual 'conversations' with 15 children about their music. Her text, *Songs in their heads*, combined a comprehensive report of the research, insights gleaned through two decades of elementary music teaching and broad reference to relevant research and theoretical literature. In contrast to previous research about children's music, much of which Campbell criticised as being "antiseptic, dry, and disconnected from children-as-real-people", this account is richly-nuanced, evocative and thought-provoking. The study is relevant to this research in that it reminds us that participation in school music (by students and teachers) involves more than just the acquisition of observable musical skills. It also involves thinking about music, valuing it, evaluating it, experiencing strong feelings in relation to it, and finding a place for it within one's wider life and sense of self.

Accessing the thoughts and feelings of students in relation to their experiences of learning in the arts was also a central feature of research conducted into the implementation of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (2000). As part of the implementation phase, O'Connor and Holland (2004) used an action research methodology to investigate the nature and breadth of students' learning in the arts in four contrasting New Zealand schools undertaking Ministry of Education professional development contracts. The study employed multi-method data collection including focus groups, observations, and reflective journals, and although the small sample size provided an indication only of patterns and trends, nonetheless, the findings suggested the value of further research in this area, not only for arts teaching and learning but in order to benefit practice in other learning areas. Specifically, key findings related to student learning included: cycles of learning characterised by active engagement and times for reflection; a predominantly co-constructivist approach supported by peer feedback; the distinctive nature of 'talk' within arts classrooms; aspects of risk taking within the arts learning context; and strong links between the arts learning context and wider curriculum and life contexts. Findings related to pedagogy included the centrality of the relationship between learning and learning environment; the collegial nature of relationships between students and teachers; and the nature of teacher reflection and its impact on students' artistic exploration. Given that both learners and teachers reported wide-ranging cognitive and affective benefits from collaborative arts pedagogies, O'Connor and Holland suggested that further investigations of arts teaching and learning could provide rich insights into alternative pedagogies that "invite the imagination, presence and engagement of participants in a more holistic way than traditional transmission models of learning. These disciplines are regarded by students and teachers alike as qualitatively different from other learning at school" (p.3).

Writing about the place of music in the curriculum, Pitts (2000) drew out the complex interplay of factors linking teaching and learning in music and emphasised their inseparability. Because children bring the totality of their prior music and non-music experience to the school music setting, Pitts suggested that what they gain from the school music experience is personalised and unique. She noted that the more engaged children are with music at school, the more they move towards levels of musical independence, and the more likely it is that these music experiences will have significance and meaning for them in their present and future lives. Although school or

classroom teachers of music are not the sole contributors to children's musical futures, they are particularly influential when they themselves are engaged at a personal level with the music offered. In Pitts' terms, "teachers should present their own musical beliefs and experiences with integrity, and the rest will follow: children will find their own sense of purpose if teachers are committed to theirs" (p.4).

In their review of arts integration in the curriculum, Russell and Zembylas (2007) observed that although there have always been teachers who work innovatively in relation to the arts "their voices are quiet, and their efforts are not always documented or evaluated" (p.293). They note the difficulties associated with evaluating arts programmes in relation to separate disciplines or integrated disciplines. Echoing Parker Palmer's (1998) notion that we 'teach who we are', Walker (2007) suggested that when arts subjects (including music) are taught well, the teacher's professional and personal qualities will be inextricably connected. With regard to his experiences in art classes as an adult non-artist, Walker (2007) analysed the characteristics of these classes that made them stand out from the many others he had taken. He suggested that the commitment of the teacher's self into the teaching context is further enhanced by the artistic content, thus enabling a unique and meaningful form of contact between teachers and learners. This drawing together of teacher, learner and learning content has particular relevance for this study:

> The art teachers I've been fortunate enough to study with have brought to their classes more of themselves as human beings than teachers in other fields… perhaps it's unavoidable. You can't make a drawing without seeing and feeling and expressing who you are. Nor can you respond fully to the qualities of others' work if you wall off parts of yourself… us artists are in this together doing the best we can… the best arts of my experience in learning… had the same quality of direct contact with people engaging in a profoundly human activity (pp.200-1).

Framed against these ideas of the teacher as a central contributor to deep learning in music and the other arts, McCarthy (2004) also warned that the structures and systems of compulsory schooling have the potential to strip music of much of its true worth and essence. Pitts's (2000) work is a reminder that the provision of music within the school system entails more than just a focus on teacher capability and the perspective of

teachers. She also noted that the place and importance of music in the school setting has a two-sided quality. While school music is only one contributor to a child's overall musical development, Pitts emphasised the need for teachers to be unstinting in their efforts to offer children the best possible school music experiences and advocated for an approach to music learning that privileges creative participation over the pursuit of formalised knowledge:

> Music is an important part of the curriculum with a role as indefinable as the place that music holds in so many lives. We need to be modest about the place of school music in the overall musical development of the child, and yet be ambitious about its provision, resourcing and variety, if all children are to have the opportunity to discover its potential for themselves (p.41).

3.5.4   Accessing alternative voices in music teaching and learning

Given that different educational stakeholders view aspects of the educational endeavour differently as well as holding different priorities for education, research efforts that cumulatively canvass a wide range of perspectives contribute to a more complete understanding of the phenomena under investigation. This point is well illustrated by Abril and Gault (2006) who, in their survey of elementary school principals' perspectives on the school music programme, found strong differences between music teachers, both generalists and specialists, and school administrators in terms of the learning aspects of school music that they recognised and valued. For example, whereas principals placed a high priority on the potential for music to connect to students' learning in other areas such as writing and social studies, active teaching for transfer was not an explicit goal of teachers in their music programmes. A second example concerned 'developing creativity', cited by principals in Abril and Gault's study as the most worthwhile learning outcome from school music programmes. Surprisingly then, while teachers rated 'creating and composing music' highly, this was regarded by principals as among the least important reasons. This discrepancy suggests that the kind of creativity valued by principals is not *musical* creativity but relates instead to the achievement of broader and non-musical outcomes.

In an analysis of advocacy for the place of music in general education, McCarthy (2004) highlighted the difficulty of communicating music's often profound presence in the life

of children and teachers. She commented on the absence of teachers' perspective in the research literature and suggested that the impact of these omissions is to disempower and marginalise teachers. An alternative would be for the stories of music teachers' practice to be enriched by scholarly treatment that involves "knowing those stories, explaining them, reflecting on them, and sharing them with the professional community" (p.36). There is significance in the way that stories are portrayed or, in McCarthy's words, 'framed', in that viewers will also bring their own flexible frames to the process. McCarthy suggested that:

> How we look, what we see, how we frame it and explain it to ourselves and others, originates in who we are, individually as teachers and collectively as a profession. We live in an exciting intellectual world with multiple frames for viewing and interpreting music education (p.37).

With regard to the integration of music and musicmaking within the individual 'self', Elliott (1994) also attested to the difficulty of disentangling the *doing* of music from one's whole state of *being*: "A people's music is not just something that people make, it is something they are" (p.197). The challenge for classroom practitioners is that the constraints of the school system can place emphasis on musical products at the expense of musical processes, a point taken up by Finney (1999) in his concluding remarks to a research report on young rock musicians:

> There is no question that school can be a place for proper music. The classroom can provide an authentic setting. However, this is as much a matter of how music is taught and learnt as what music is taught and learnt. Attention needs to be paid to the climate of the classroom whereby a mature dialogue between teacher and pupil and between pupil and pupil (playful encounter) is possible. In such a dialogue, all can speak their minds musically (p.243).

McCarthy (2004) reached into educational philosophy in order to support the music education researcher to adequately frame the mystery that is music, paying tribute to Dewey's contribution to our understanding of arts' contexts, their practical nature, their integral connection to the whole life of artists, and the need to connect the parts into the greater whole. McCarthy's notion of allowing teachers' stories to speak to each other points to a different analysis process – when one story or account is placed alongside another, is their power and significance increased? McCarthy, citing Bateson, asserted

that doing so leads to "that depth of understanding that comes by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side by side, learning by letting them speak to one another" (p.14).

3.6   Summary

This review of literature has focused on three major areas of research: namely, research related to arts and music curricula both internationally and in New Zealand; literature on teacher leadership; and literature on music teaching and learning in schools. With regard to the current curriculum context for music as well as other arts disciplines, empirical and theoretical studies have highlighted the marginal status of music and the arts when contrasted with aims and resourcing for learning areas such as literacy and numeracy. Although there has been considerable research attention from a policy perspective to music's reportedly marginal status, little is known about teachers' everyday experience of music within the wider curriculum context and school culture

With regard to research and literature on teacher and subject leadership, there is evidence to show that research findings may be transferable across sectors and between subjects. However there is also evidence that points to the importance of accounting for contextual differences. From this perspective, although there is range of disparate literature that links to the possible experience of primary school teachers with a music leadership role in their schools, there is little that can definitively show how they experience this role and what it means to them and their wider school communities.

Research on music teaching and learning also provides a range of insights into the experiences, aspirations, and concerns of primary school music leaders. Once again though, there is very little comprehensive evidence of what the role entails, or of how teachers choose to work out the role in practice.

Although Grierson and Mansfield (2003), among others, argue eloquently for conducting arts research from a critical theory stance, there is also a need to balance this with research about everyday practitioners who are at the forefront of music practice in New Zealand primary schools. It is clear from the literature reviewed in this and the previous chapter that there is a great deal that we do not know about the experiences of

music leaders in primary schools. Anecdotal accounts of music in primary schools abound, but there is a need to gather and explore teachers' stories in a systematic way. If, as Jorgensen (2003) contends, these 'musician-teachers' have special responsibility for the continuance of musical traditions and practices, it is vital that the lid is lifted on their practice, experience and understanding.

As we draw together the various threads of this review, a range of conclusions and questions surface. Eisner (2002) suggested that the journey to make a science of education has been overtaken by a more modest desire for practical wisdom to guide our dealings in the world. In this research, this means a suspension of grand theoretical narratives in favour of more provisional understandings that are sufficiently flexible to contain the variations of culture and context, person and policy that characterise 21st century schooling and education.

3.7   Research Questions

Although the existing body of research into teachers' professional and personal knowledge landscapes suggests that primary school music leaders' work grows from a complex mix of biography and experience, interwoven with social and political factors, this has not been investigated in any systematic way. In addition, there is a great deal of research and literature that identifies particular approaches to music learning and teaching that represent wise pedagogical choices for teachers, but little that has explored what such teachers already believe and practice in their daily work.

Reflections on the literature reviewed have raised some important questions.
1. Who are the teachers who lead music in New Zealand primary schools and how do they come to be music leaders?
2. What do primary school music leaders do and what skills, knowledge and understandings underpin their work as music leaders?
3. What is the significance of primary school music leaders' work?

On the basis of the above research questions, the next chapter of the thesis explores the methodological foundations of the study and provides a detailed explanation of how the research was carried out in practice.

CHAPTER FOUR
METHODOLOGY

4.1   Introduction

This study of New Zealand primary school teachers who fulfil music leadership roles in their schools was concerned with examining the teachers' personal and professional lives leading to and within the role; investigating the range of experiences that characterised their work as music leaders, and the skills, knowledge and understanding that informed this work; and establishing the value and significance of the role to key members of their school communities. The purpose of this chapter is to outline both the methodological foundations and the procedural stages of the research. This is reflected in the organisation of the chapter into two distinctive parts that address the methodology in theory and the methodology in practice.

The first chapter section begins with a general introduction to educational research approaches and methodologies that have relevance to the identified research questions. This is followed by a discussion of data collection methods and analysis, and a consideration of related ethical issues. Other challenges that confront music education researchers are explored, as is the researcher/research relationship, particularly in relation to how I positioned myself within the research.   The second part of the chapter, methodology in practice, comprises a full description of the actual research process undertaken.

4.2   Research Approaches

As reliance on experimental and laboratory-based research methods has given way to include an expanding range of qualitative research, music education researchers and practitioners have found themselves negotiating an increasingly diverse and complex array of relevant research literature (Colwell, 1992). However, whatever the field of educational research, and whatever orientation a researcher favours, congruence between question and method is an essential component of quality research. This

dynamic relationship between identified research questions, the researcher or person asking the questions, and the unfolding direction and conduct of the research is, in itself, the focus of a considerable body of literature (Anderson, 1998; Berg, 2007; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Delamont, 2002; Evans, 2002; Huberman & Miles, 2002).

Writing about good educational research, regardless of the research tradition it represents, Bresler (2005b) provided an account of how musicianship and key musical activities can parallel good research processes. Using the analogy of translating a written paper into a spoken address, Bresler linked the conception and practice of research with equivalent musical elements, challenging researchers to report research in ways that celebrate the artistic and aesthetic life and experience music represents. She compared a 'three-pronged connection' that represents the dynamic interaction between (1) music to be played, (2) the inner resources of the performer, and (3) active engagement of the audience, with its equivalent qualitative research approach in which the researcher (1) gravitates towards the phenomenon under investigation, (2) explores inward to understand how one's own self acts upon the phenomenon, and (3) orients the ideas towards an audience. Bresler (2005b) noted: "The process of research, like musical performances, involves the discovery and shaping of meaning for oneself as well as for others" (p.178).

Research frameworks such as those described above are underpinned by deeper concepts and beliefs concerning research philosophies and views of knowledge. Therefore the particular aims of this study will be considered in the light of these contrasting views of knowledge.

4.2.1 Qualitative research

As has already been shown, the history and development of educational research in general, and teacher research in particular, has reflected trends that predominated in closely aligned disciplines in the wider social science field. One important research tradition has required researchers to adhere to the rigorous demands of positivist research, to reflect supposedly objective views of knowledge and truth, and to utilise methods consistent with research in the natural sciences. However, in recent decades, there has been growing recognition that the complexity of human behaviour, experience

and agency cannot be fully represented through methods and approaches transplanted directly from research in the natural world. Contemporary qualitative researchers are more likely to believe that knowledge of the world, ourselves and our relationships is a product of our experience of these things and the meaning we draw from them, rather than an objective knowing which can somehow be isolated from human experience and interaction (Bresler & Stake, 1992). Research that 'measures' in clear and unequivocal terms is not fitting for that which is 'unmeasurable' (Bannister, 1992) in its complexity, character and significance. Therefore, this study, which was concerned with exploring the nature of music leadership in New Zealand primary schools, rather than with the prediction and validation of pre-existing theories, can be seen to fall within the bounds of a more qualitative research paradigm.

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) identified five common features of qualitative research, each of which had relevance to this study. First is a concern for context and the everyday *lived* setting in which the research topic resides. Secondly, qualitative researchers attempt to communicate key elements of both setting and study through rich *description*. With regard to these first two points, this study was concerned with teachers who lead music in their primary schools and with bringing their actual work within those schools to life. However the contextual parameters of the study were not confined to the immediate school setting but stretched beyond this environment to incorporate the influence of recent educational policy and curriculum developments, consistent with theories such as *ecological systems theory* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that acknowledge the layers of influence in all aspects of human life. Thirdly, researchers should demonstrate a *concern for process* at all stages of the study, thereby giving both academic and ethical credibility to the research. The fourth and fifth features relate to the *inductive* character of the analysis that reveals layers of *meaning* to subjects, researcher and reader as opposed to more objective measures of truth. Throughout this study I attempted to develop a research process that would allow teachers' own perspectives on the research topic to be fairly represented in the hope that other school music leaders could read the research report and recognise aspects of their stories and practice.

Bresler and Stake's (2006) succinct comparison of quantitative and qualitative paradigms in music education research provides a framework through which to review

research aims and select an 'appropriate fit' methodology. Their first characteristic of qualitative research concerns understanding individual cases and circumstances ahead of generalisability across a broad population. Therefore, rather than needing to strip research data (and participants) of their idiosyncratic characteristics, I sought to portray 'whole' teachers and musicians. However this did not preclude drawing comparisons where they were of real interest and relevance. For example, although there were similarities between research participants with regard to beliefs about the place of music within primary classrooms and schools, the circumstances through which the individual teachers' music leadership roles evolved were distinctively different.

Second, a qualitative approach is characterised by a non-interventionist demeanour as well as an overriding concern to hear and represent the perspective of teachers by promoting an *empathic* (Bresler & Stake, 2006) data collection environment. This enables researchers to attend to what participants bring to the research from both past and present contexts. For example, where participants had worked as music leaders in a range of school settings, they reported on variations in practice, or reflected on the impact of different school contexts on such factors as school leadership, resources, support (or lack of support) from colleagues, music programme content, wider teaching roles and responsibilities, and community expectations.

A third characteristic of qualitative research relates to the descriptive possibilities of the research report. As a qualitative researcher I was not bound by conventions that required me to 'park myself' in a corner, and extract and analyse data in a manner that precluded the influence of subjective meaning or perspectives. Description provided a richer and fuller means of conveying the complexities of the research settings, the diverse and interactive influences that the teachers identified, and the nature of the music experiences they facilitated for their students or colleagues.

Fourthly, qualitative research is more concerned with meaning than with objective truth and therefore is characterised by an interpretive stance throughout all phases of the research. This does not mean that a qualitative researcher is justified in adopting an 'anything goes' approach to conducting the study. In fact, it suggests an even greater responsibility for researchers to confront the meanings that they personally ascribe to participants as they reflect on interview and observation data. For the purposes of this

study, I needed to seek out the meanings (often implicit and possibly not intuited by the participants themselves) that informed their practice, decision-making, choices, musical content selection, and approaches to curriculum, and then to question the interpretations made (Barone, 2001).

Merriam (1998) presented a similar and congruent account of the characteristics of qualitative research in which she emphasised the primacy of the researcher in the data collection and analysis processes; the search for understanding in relation to the meaning participants construct of their world; and the overall inductive process and richly descriptive product. Each of these characteristics is teased out later in this chapter as I considered the following: my own position through the different research stages and phases; the messy process of data analysis; and, the shaping of participants' stories into a re-created account through the writing of the thesis.

The gradual trend, over the past four decades, towards qualitative methodologies that take account of the subtle and finely-nuanced social dimensions of music education, has not been without its critics. For example, Swanwick (1984) expressed concerns that the subjectivity of methods such as participant observation rendered findings almost meaningless. He also questioned the level of sensitivity required of researchers in order to adequately portray the intricacies of music education phenomena. In response, Bannister (1992) drew on ethnography to demonstrate the efficacy of ethnographic methods in enabling us to view both the familiar (through appreciating the complexity of underlying systems) and the strange (through the connections we make to our own experience and knowledge) in new and unexpected ways. In similar vein, Barone (2001) proposed that an important purpose for qualitative research is to encourage the formulation of new questions regarding taken-for-granted aspects of life. This suggested that a study of primary school music leaders would involve digging beneath the familiar surface, and require methods and methodology that could do justice to the complexity of the music leader's role.

The current study, with its aim of understanding and representing the work of primary school music leaders, and of building a collective story through reference to individual experiences and perspectives, clearly falls within a hermeneutic/interpretive paradigm. At a simple level, hermeneutics is concerned with interpretation of data (in its broadest

sense), in order to develop and communicate understanding. At the heart of hermeneutics is the realisation that the process of interpretation delivers a shared understanding: "Hermeneutics is an approach to the analysis of texts that stresses how prior understandings and prejudices shape the interpretive process" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.27). An essential component of hermeneutics is the desire to understand from the perspective of another, while at the same time understanding that our own lives will also act on that data to arrive at a shared meaning. In Brown and Roberts' (2000) terms: "We are always immersed in meaning and are unable to enter any situation free of the traditions that gave rise to us" (p.650).

The importance of clarity and transparency in interpretative studies does not end with the formulation of clearly focused research questions, but is also reflected in explicit discussions of data collection and analysis processes, and full descriptions of the conditions and contexts in which they occurred (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Roulston (2006) also emphasised that qualitative researchers can approach their research endeavours by questioning at the descriptive level of 'what is happening here?', a necessary first step to accessing deeper levels of meaning. An analytic orientation enables the researcher to move beyond description to consider 'what does this mean?' Likewise, theoretical development can occur as the researcher questions 'how can these data and results be understood and explained?' Consequently, the data collected for this study needed to enable descriptions of primary school music leaders and their work, and to provide a context for the more inductive and interpretative concerns that would take the research beyond the level of 'so what?' One of the key challenges was to understand the subtle but critical difference between asking 'what does this mean?' and 'how can this be understood and explained?' In order to support this work of analysis, reference to a toolbox of theoretical and analytical frameworks will be discussed in a later chapter section.

In this initial section of the methodology chapter, I have shown how the overall aims of the study place it firmly within a qualitative research paradigm. However in order to understand what this meant in practice, it is necessary to look in more depth at the formulation of the research design.

4.3   Research Design

In this section issues surrounding the development of a research design in a qualitative study are considered. The section begins by exploring, in general terms, the process of formulating a research and the timing of the process. This is followed by an in-depth examination of case study, narrative and life history methodologies in terms of their applicability to the overall research focus. I then show how these three aspects were synthesised to form a research design that reflected the particular research questions, participants, researcher and curriculum contexts that characterised this study.

4.3.1   An unfolding research design

Although traditional scientific models of research tend to proceed in linear fashion, qualitative social science research offers greater design flexibility for the researcher whose engagement with the research aims and questions is ongoing throughout the data collection and analysis phases (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; St. Pierre, 1997). My own search for an appropriate research design was reflected in Geertz's (1973) suggestion that the research effort develops from "an awkward fumbling for the most elementary understanding to a supported claim that one has achieved that and surpassed it" (p.25). Prior to embarking on the data collection phases I wrote the following personal memo which expressed something of the ongoing relationship between research and researcher:

> *I need to have confidence (but not overconfidence) through the process. It is a process of learning and discovery and I cannot from where I sit now (stepping into the data collection pool) anticipate the joys, frustrations, fruitful and fruitless paths that await me. I need to be open to what the teachers and their teaching contexts will reveal to me, to accept the process as one in which layers are peeled back to reveal new understandings.*

My early thoughts about research design focused on approaches such as 'grounded theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), in which the researcher undertakes a continuous cycle of data collection, analysis, and reformulation of research aims, leading to the generation of a theory that will 'contain' the research findings. However my overriding interest in the very personal stories of a small number of school music leaders made it likely that my data could only support the generation of quite

limited theories. What grounded theory did offer to the study was an inductive orientation towards the data rather than the foreclosing of possibilities through seeking out or applying an already-determined theoretical construct. Bassey (1999) described the formulation of *fuzzy generalisations*, "general statements with built-in uncertainty" (p.52) in order to indicate possibilities rather than absolutes in the development of explanatory theory. In addition, the attribution of meaning to these statements is dependent on reading them in the context of a research report. Other writers have used the analogy of a crystal to highlight both the multifaceted and the shifting perspectives that tend to characterise all phases of qualitative arts education research (P. O'Connor & Holland, 2004; Taylor, 1996). My reading and thinking around research design issues sowed the seeds of the 'theoretical toolbox' which will be opened for scrutiny later in this chapter, and will also inform much of the discussion in Chapter Eight.

Because I wished to explore individual stories in some depth, I made a decision early in the process to discount survey methods which could have provided a broad perspective on such diverse features as teachers' music qualifications, the tasks contained in the music leadership role, and time spent undertaking particular aspects of the role. My concern was to draw out the experiences, achievements and challenges facing individual music leaders as one substantial piece of the larger picture of music in New Zealand primary schools, and as a contribution to the international music education picture. Although I began the research with preconceived notions of what was important and significant for the research population, in the course of the interview phase I found that participants' stories presented a more complex and, overall, more favourable perspective on being a school music leader than I had anticipated. In the light of unexpected data, I needed to refocus my interview aims and questions, sometimes in quite subtle but, nonetheless, important ways.

Bearing in mind Becker's (1970) contention that the perspective we take on a 'problem' has an impact on our view of the problem, I needed to explore possible research orientations or frameworks to guide the conduct of the study. In the early stages of the project I felt a pull towards the Foucauldian use of discourse (Foucault, 1972) and the dynamic interaction between both language and the phenomenon it describes. In Foucault's terms, discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (p.49) resulting in the continuous social integration of language, behaviour

and relationships. Considering the nature of music as discourse (Mansfield, 2000) would have required me to unpack concepts of *music* and to explore its social, political and cultural meanings, to problematise *music* and to explore how its (marginal) place in the curriculum reflects back on both music itself and those who exercise leadership functions within the institutional setting of a primary school. Although this is an area of importance in the wider field of music education, I was concerned, given the lack of research interest in primary school music leaders to date, that such a research orientation could serve to further marginalise these teacher leaders. My decision to explore the work of primary school music leaders from a hermeneutic/interpretive stance was, therefore, both considered and intentional.

Case study, narrative inquiry, and life history research each offered useful frameworks for addressing the research questions but, taken alone, lacked all that was required to tell the story that was beginning to take shape in my mind. The solution was to draw from all three approaches in order to provide a more wide-ranging account of the lives and work of primary school music leaders.

4.3.2 Exploring case study

Case study research can be conducted around individuals, cohesive groups, institutions or communities, or indeed, any system that is bounded and able to be defined as a specific entity. Stake (1994; 1995) identified three types of case studies which he termed *intrinsic, instrumental and collective*. Relevant to this study are the two latter categories, defined respectively in terms of (i) a case study focus on a single issue or concern, and (ii) a collection of several instrumental cases. In this study, there is a question with regard to whether the research design is formulated as a set of individual case studies or in response to the overarching 'case' of primary school music leaders. Although the individual stories are vital and each has the potential to be expanded into a more substantial 'case study' in its own right, the focus was primarily on exploring the collective case of primary school music leaders and developing a fuller understanding of how their leadership developed, what it entailed, and its significance and contribution on a range of levels.

With regard to the value of 'case', Eisner (2002) asserted that the relationship between generalisation and case is that the general resides within the particular and the generalisation itself is an everyday human construction: "What we have learned is that we can treat the lessons learned from case studies as anticipatory schemata that facilitate our search processes, for a case is not only about itself but an example of things like it" (p.381). What is important is that Eisner doesn't describe an individual case as a replica of all other cases but rather as a representation. Furthermore, it may be that in its own 'uniqueness', the case is representative of the unique qualities of other cases, again not shared uniqueness but in relation to different aspects or perspectives on the case. Although case studies feature strongly within the wider field of educational research, there is a suggestion that the efficacy of this method to represent complex lifespan musical experiences has been unrecognised, leading to case study being underutilised within music education research (S. O'Neill & Green, 2004).

Nias (1989) is helpful in terms of the issues around dealing with multiple accounts from a generic group. She wrote:

> Of course, it seems contradictory to argue that our understanding of an individualistic profession can be advanced by presenting what appears to be the corporate self-image of a hundred teachers. Nevertheless, unique though each of these teachers was in terms of personality and experience, they shared common views of themselves, especially in terms of motivation, values and ideals. Patterns emerged; it is these which are reported here (p.27).

Like Roulston (2006) who proposed deepening levels of understanding from description to analysis to theory building, Merriam (1998) emphasised the importance of identifying clear research intent when developing a case study. Where there is little previous relevant research to build on, the intent behind case study research may be that of description rather than linking findings to pre-identified theories. One important contribution of descriptive case studies is the provision of empirical data that can be drawn on at a later date for comparative studies and analysis. Given the lack of specific research in primary school music leadership, a descriptive outcome may have been a sufficient goal for this research. However, as Merriam suggested: "The more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be" (p.40). My expectation was that the combined stories

of participants would lend themselves to more in-depth analysis and interpretation than a single case would have allowed (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

While cautioning against generalisations drawn from single or multiple cases, Carter (1993) contended that all scientific reports and accounts have a storied nature which places 'scientistic' accounts of phenomena on an equally tenuous footing with their qualitative and interpretative cousins. However she maintained that this should not prevent researchers from seeking out "explanatory propositions with which we can make sense of the dilemmas and problematics of teaching" (p.10.) She further defined these propositions as characterised by their non-formulaic nature, their connectedness to everyday classroom practice, their potential clarification through story and their capacity to change and grow in the light of new stories.

Although the research intent suggested case study as a suitable interpretive framework, the focus on individual participants' stories as the core data for analysis and interpretation pointed to a need to explore additional research approaches in the overall design of the study.

4.3.3 Exploring narrative inquiry

With its strong emphasis on experience, and on the continuity of individuals' social and personal lives, narrative inquiry, (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, 2000, 2002), offered a possible approach in which to explore the lives and experiences of primary school music leaders. However, whereas much of classic narrative inquiry involves long-term engagement in the field with teachers, this was a luxury that the realities of my situation did not afford and also one that I did not pursue from choice.   Moreover, requirements of participant commitment, the marginal nature of music in the primary school setting, and the exploratory nature of the study made classic narrative inquiry with a single teacher inappropriate.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested that narrative inquiry requires a commitment not only to the individual stories of participants but also to narrative as a process of research. Drawing on Bruner (1986), Butler-Kisber et.al (2007) reminded us that "storying is a fundamental way humans come to understand, structure and express their

conceptions about the world" (p.224). Embedded within my data are stories: the stories of children, the stories of teachers as children, the stories of teachers about children, the stories of teachers about teachers and so on. A significant component of my researcher toolkit was to construct and reconstruct, to imagine and narrate the bigger story of music leadership. In this respect, although firmly grounded in the data, aspects of the analysis involved intuition and imagination (Higgins, 2007) as I brought the experiences of participants to life, and shone light onto experiences and understanding of primary school music leaders in a range of contexts.

Narrative accounts have a particular strength because they often illuminate the experiences of those who are lower in the hierarchy. Teacher stories do not necessarily cohere with official rhetoric and this potential dissonance and tension between official policy and lived experience provides fertile ground for research. Studies such as this can contribute to a more comprehensive account of primary schooling in New Zealand in terms of both teaching and curriculum. Although Becker (1970) suggested that universities may be too ready to accept the versions of the truth that have an 'official' stamp, this criticism does not hold up against some traditions of critical research from within New Zealand institutions (see for example Grierson & Mansfield, 2003). Nonetheless, Goodson (2003) also observed that institutions like universities have a propensity to take care of their own interests ahead of those of their research partners and participants. He counselled researchers to be aware of the potential for stories from below to be 'turned' to suit the purposes of institutions and policy makers. One prevailing view of the story from above is that it is somehow more complete or more comprehensive than the views from below.

Narration, of itself, does not bestow agency on the teller of the story. Goodson (2003) emphasised that "stories and narratives are not an unquestioned good" (p.26), and suggested that their efficacy is increased when they are located within a social and historical context. However Barrett (2002) maintained that valuing of personal stories and experience is critical for teachers' own understanding and growth as well as for a wider recognition of the complexities of teachers' lives and work. Just as involvement in research can encourage teachers to reflect on and further develop their practice (Hennessy, 2001), there is potential for personal good when aspects of one's own and others' stories illuminate areas of our lives that require change and development.

Although this research can be described on occasion as having taking 'a narrative turn' (McCarthy, 2004), the research approach is more traditionally located within a sequential process of data collection, data analysis, and data presentation. In addition, given the claim that narrative inquirers pay insufficient attention to the wider context in which individual stories are played out, I needed to look beyond narrative inquiry. Other research approaches, more consistent with contemporary socio-cultural paradigms, pay much closer attention to the context because they see it as dynamically connected to the story rather than mere background, emphasising that education is both personal and political (Bresler & Stake, 1992). Flinders and Richardson (2006) cited Schoenfeld (1999) who pleaded for a deeper approach to qualitative research that goes well beyond the description of interesting problems. Goodson (2003) developed the argument further:

> By focusing on the personal and practical, teacher data and stories are encouraged which forego the chance to speak of other ways, other people, other times and other forms of being a teacher. The focus of research methods solely on the personal and practical is then methodological abdication, of the right to speak on matters of social and political construction (pp.53-54).

Both Goodson (2003) and Carter (1993) asserted that stories need to be 'located' as well as 'narrated'. They occur in time and therefore, those times, present and past, need to be drawn around research participants. Carter also asked "what does story capture and what does it leave out?" (p.5), an ever present reminder that I needed to recognise, justify and acknowledge the limitations of what was included and what excluded from the final research report.

4.3.4 Exploring life history

Approaches such as life history achieved some popularity in the early decades of the 20th century but suffered from the dominant need for research to be approved and validated by the scientific academy (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Becker (1970) suggested that, by virtue of its cohesive and contextualised framework, life history is deserving of higher status than less-theorised single life stories. He argued for the superior explanatory power of life history and its potential for application beyond the single case. Similarly, Goodson (2003) made a consistent case for collaborative approaches that respect and value teachers' points of view within wider historical contexts.

However, in Goodson's terms, representing genuine teacher voice did not require a move away from interpretation and collaboration, and he criticised teacher-as-researcher traditions that seemed to absolve academic researchers from hands-on teacher research. Instead he suggested that "broader perspectives may achieve even more, not solely in terms of understandings but ultimately in ways that feed back into changes in practical knowledge, public policy, and infinitely broader theoretical understandings" (2003, p.51-52). These arguments occupied a central place in my thinking as I progressed from my initial interest in primary school music leaders' stories to the process of identifying the questions and approach that would shape the study.

One clear advantage of a life histories approach is the capacity to provide complex accounts of how teachers change over time and within different teaching contexts. In focusing on teacher stories and narratives, we turn our backs on the so-called 'grand narratives' of educational theory that characterised the major disciplinary movements (Goodson, 2003). Nonetheless, although this study was centred on the everyday teaching lives of primary music leaders, the connections to wider networks of community and activity could not be ignored and are discussed more explicitly in the data presentation and discussion chapters.

Renewed interest in life histories in recent times has not been without its controversies including accusations that situation and context, the cultural layer, are privileged over the individual case and the personal perspective (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Other writers (see for example Smyth & Shacklock, 1998) have emphasised the importance of teacher voice being just that – the integrity and authenticity of teachers' own words rather than the words of others about them. Conversely, there are also claims that an emphasis on individual voice can lead to an uncritical acceptance of personal story. The need to avoid colonisation of the teacher's voice through the mediating text and interpretation provides a creative tension with the idea of teacher voice as one essential contributor to the overall scene of teaching and learning in schools (Goodson, 2003). The difficulty is that when we represent teachers' lives in text it is then the researcher's text that we read. Therefore, an ongoing challenge in this study was to maintain a balance between participants' voices and providing commentary that informed but did not override those voices.

I reflected long and hard on my desire to provide a medium for others to hear school music leaders' voices. As part of their everyday lives these teachers talked to parents and children, to their colleagues and their families. However their voices were not necessarily audible in public and political spaces, and on occasions, when audible, they were not necessarily listened to. My hope was that teachers would find it empowering and affirming for someone to record and reflect on their stories, and that this research would ultimately be affirming for the 'case' of music in our primary curriculum. In Watson's (1995) terms, the desire is "to give readers a notion of 'real' and rounded individuals" (p.308), ensuring that these personal stories can be linked to the parallel theoretical story which is unfolding, that of lives recreating themselves in relation to interconnected personal and contextual circumstances.

In summary, the methodological framework for this research was firmly rooted in a hermeneutic/interpretive tradition which values the perspectives and explanations of participants on the phenomena or questions under investigation. By drawing from case study, narrative inquiry and life history, there was sufficient flexibility to address a largely un-researched aspect of primary school life but in a manner that avoided what Shulman (1986) described as the:

> 'goulash' or 'garbage can' approach. It is a form of eclecticism run wild, with little or no discipline to regulate the decisions. In these studies, many forms of research are incorporated and thrown together with little thought for the differences in their purposes, assumptions or perspectives (p.33).

From case study research, there was an understanding that the broad system of primary school music leaders was the overarching unit of investigation with the individual stories contributing to a collective account of what it might mean to be a primary school music leader in Aotearoa New Zealand. From narrative inquiry, there was a focus on the depth of meaning contained within participants' individual stories and the linking together of personal and professional experience within the person of the teacher. From life history research, there was an imperative to locate the study in place and time, and to understand the wider structural context within which New Zealand primary school music leaders work. Having identified the research approaches which framed this study, the focus now turns to a more detailed examination of data collection and analysis.

4.4   Data Collection and Analysis

In this section, appropriate data collection methods are examined in the light of the overall research questions and design. Issues relating to sampling and to the place of the researcher are then explored, and the section concludes by addressing approaches to data analysis.

Answering the research questions required a focus on 'finding out about' primary music leaders and their work, a process that needed to deliver more than simplistic and incomplete accounts of life in classrooms. Waller (1932) emphasised: "Children and teachers are not disembodied intelligences, not instructing machines and learning machines, but whole human beings tied together in a complex maze of social interconnectedness" (p.1). This was a timely reminder that understanding the work of participants in the study was unlikely to be achieved by a one-size-fits-all, uni-dimensional approach to data collection and analysis, but required a more sensitive touch attuned to the unique characteristics and contexts of the individual participants. Of particular concern were the challenges associated with maintaining a dual focus on teacher leaders and music. This challenge was well-articulated by Walker (1987) who provided examples of psychological researchers working in the field of music education yet failing to acknowledge the unique characteristics of learning in music. The results were research outcomes de-contextualised from the essence of music and of no intrinsic value to music education practice.

Although data collection tools have proliferated in recent decades with improved access to a range of digital and electronic recording devices, addressing the research questions for this study depended on accessing primary school music leaders' thoughts and actions with regard to their music leadership roles. Consideration was given to including other participants, either children or teacher colleagues who worked alongside these teacher leaders, but I was concerned that widening the participant focus could also deflect attention away from the identified research gap with regard to presenting teachers' own perspectives on their work. The focus on individual teachers within the wider group of music leaders as opposed to building an aggregated 'type' indicated interviews and observation as appropriate methods for data collection rather than more global methods such as survey. In combination, the two methods provided

complementary perspectives, and an overall picture that was likely to be more richly descriptive and more subtly-nuanced than either method used in isolation. Issues and considerations associated with the use of each method are outlined in more detail in the following sub-sections.

4.4.1 Interviews

Given that the research questions pointed to the need for individual, biographical, and experiential data from a sample of primary school music leaders, it seemed logical to access those data in either spoken (with the added option of recording and transcribing teachers' own words) or written text form. The idea of teachers writing their own stories was appealing but my experience with the initial research proposal made me wary of using data collection methods that required too much of teachers. I considered the possibility of focus group interviews on the basis that participants might appreciate the opportunity to place their personal stories alongside others' experiences and perspectives, with the contributions of other teachers serving as a stimulus for more detailed accounts of leadership journeys and experiences (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). However, when I weighed up the relative merits of group or individual interviews, the individual interview offered greater opportunities to explore individual stories in depth, thereby generating data that would reach to the heart of the research questions.

At one level, there is a core of realism in straightforward definitions of interviewing as a means of gathering information about the research topic (Berg, 2007; Spradley, 1979). However, we have increasingly come to understand that the interview is also a dynamic interaction involving an exchange of ideas, a process by which meanings are explored, negotiated and mediated in the social space that connects interviewee and interviewer. In this sense, interviewing requires the active engagement of both participants, more in the manner of a conversation (Goodson & Sikes, 2001) that suggests a shared responsibility for the unfolding discussion rather than assuming that the interviewer must always retain control of the conduct and the outcomes of the interview.

The selected style and structure of interviews should reflect the type of data sought (Berg, 2007; Delamont, 2002). Unlike highly-structured interviews which use carefully-formulated questions to generate standardised responses to specific items,

semi-structured interviews are useful for ensuring that key topics are addressed and for helping teachers recall specific teaching events. Although it was important to traverse some of the same territory with each participant with regard to such significant themes as how the participant came to be a music leader, and the actual tasks and responsibilities involved in the role, this study sought to access the unique thoughts and experiences of primary music leaders. Given that the purpose of the questions was to generate responses in relation to particular topics and issues rather than to control the shape of the overall event, the interview approach selected was unstructured in the sense that the ordering and wording of questions and topic 'openers' was responsive to each participant's 'telling of the story' (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). The schedule of interview topics is included as Appendix E.

4.4.2 Observations

Including observations of actual music practice ensured that the essential context of music-making was neither obscured nor minimised in the data set.   Jackson (1990b) alluded to Dewey who suggested that we need to observe master teachers in order to try and capture how they work and what it is that sets them apart from other teachers. Although sympathetic to this view, Jackson was also aware of the limitations of observation alone, and asserted that one of the key purposes of interviews is to enable the researcher to access data that cannot be directly obtained through observation. Among the shortcomings of observation is its inadequacy to capture the shifts of attitude and feeling that accompany contextual changes, and its failure to reveal thinking and decision-making that underlie action. Jackson asserted that the breadth of discourse, both content and tone, provides important insights into experience: "talk is necessary, particularly talk about the professional aspects of life in the classroom" (p.115).

In his thoughtful essay on the need to educate rather than train researchers to exercise qualities of perception rather than mere recognition, Higgins (2007) suggested that the challenge is "not which message to choose or how to employ it, but how to notice [ ] the qualities of teachers and learners obscured by our cynicism or sentimentalism, the dimensions of classrooms that are hiding in plain view" (p.393). For example, assembly or large group singing is one of the most ubiquitous of school activities, one

of the most populated by all members of the school community, one of the most regular, one of the most routine and, potentially, one of the most overlooked. As I observed this practice and other school music activities, I sought to connect with and understand participants' perspectives, to place myself in their shoes and to see what they were trying to achieve. As I analysed and wrote about these observations, my goal became one of helping readers notice acutely and with understanding the teachers who lead, the models they provide and the sphere of influence they establish.

4.4.3 Participant Sample

Alongside making decisions that ensure the design of a particular study is appropriate for addressing the identified research questions, researchers need to consider the nature of their participant sample and issues surrounding participant selection. With regard to smaller scale studies, it is important for researchers to articulate the relationship of the selected participant sample to the overall target group or population of participants (Anderson, 1998). Logically, a random selection of participants from the total number of possible participants (in this case, New Zealand primary teachers who exercise a music leadership role in their schools), allows the researcher to build a more generalised picture of the research population than would be the case if only one such participant was studied. However, generalisation itself was never an aim or motivating factor for this particular piece of research. My interest was in understanding the individual circumstances which led particular teachers to be music leaders in their schools, how their personal and professional lives intersected in the course of their practice as music leaders, and what beliefs they held about the value of music for children and the wider school community.

A decision to go narrow but deep quickly led me into questions of sample size and participant characteristics. How many participants would I need? How comprehensive would my sample need to be? How would I know when I had enough participants or enough data? How would I go about selecting participants? Common sense told me that music leaders would fit at various places along a series of continua such as formal or informal music qualifications, years of teaching experience, and personal commitment to music outside the school setting and I expected that different music leaders would display both similar and different characteristics. Therefore, a number of

different teachers who worked in different school settings would be likely to confirm the existence (or not) of these similarities and differences.

Anderson (1998) provided a comprehensive list of sampling approaches, with Berg (2007) further refining these categories to four main types of 'non-probability' sampling. Three of these, convenience, snowball and purposive sampling, all contributed to some degree to my selection of research participants. Convenience sampling allows researchers to select participants who are easily accessible and close at hand. For a part-time researcher, aside from questions of researcher positioning and potential bias which are addressed in the following sub-section, convenience sampling provided a sensible means to build a research sample.

Snowball sampling describes the process of one participant recommending another as a potential participant. Such recommendations may reflect participants' desire to confirm important aspects of their own experience or to enhance the scope of the data. In my study, these suggestions were always couched in terms of the light that admired or well-regarded teachers could shed on the role and experiences of being a primary school music leader. Although Berg (2007) emphasised the convenience aspect of such 'chain referrals', an unexpected bonus in this research was the opportunity snowball sampling provided for understanding the network of relationships and professional development that existed within a relative-contained music leadership community.

Purposive sampling occurs when the researcher identifies particular attributes within the target population and consciously selects participants to ensure that these attributes are represented in the sample of research subjects. My initial sense was that middle-aged women with years of teaching experience were over-represented in the general population of primary school music leaders. Therefore, I began the data collection phase conscious of the need to ensure that men and younger women would also be represented in the study. This use of purposive or purposeful ((Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) sampling represented an attempt to broaden the research data in two opposite but related directions. Firstly, I did not expect music leaders with the same demographic profiles to exhibit identical characteristics or report identical personal professional journeys but I was aware of the possible impact of chronological and sociological aspects associated with age and gender. For example, two fifty-year-old women whose own schooling

took place within the context of a western classical musical paradigm and single sex secondary schooling would possibly have more in common with each other's musical journeys than with that of a twenty-five-year-old male teacher whose music education experiences reflect the performance music and broadened content orientation of the 1990s. Secondly, although theory generation was not at the heart of this research, there was a sense in which I attempted to understand and represent the broad parameters that characterised the overall pool of primary school music leaders in New Zealand. A purposive sampling approach allowed me to both define and expand the boundaries of what a broad and rich data set could look like.

With regard to the question of how much data are enough, qualitative researchers are guided by the concept of *data saturation* to identify when they have developed a sufficiently large data set (Flick, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Data saturation describes a point at which consistency and replication are evident in new data, thereby making ongoing data collection unnecessary. In their account of a grounded theory research project, Harry et.al (2005) cautioned that quality and precision of analysis may be compromised when there is too much data, and suggested that research that aims to generate new theory may require a proportionately smaller data set than research which has a goal of verifying theory. Given the exploratory nature of this study of primary school music leaders, the challenge was always to know whether or not there were new perspectives waiting to be 'discovered' in the next interview or observation. However there was also a level of common sense to be applied when common threads could be discerned within the uniqueness and idiosyncrasies of individual cases. The issue of data saturation as it relates to this study is considered in section 4.5.3.

In the process of clarifying the overall approach to the research in terms of data collection and participant selection, it has been impossible to ignore the influence that I, as the researcher, exercised in the overall design and conduct of the research. These issues of researcher perspective are addressed in the following sub-section.

4.4.4 Researcher Perspective

Finding my place and voice as a researcher, learning about myself and my own story (and history), about research, about teaching and about music was inextricably connected to the doctoral journey. In spite of attempting to background my own music education experiences and to focus resolutely on what was before me, (the teachers, the children, the music and the wider school contexts), I often found myself immersed in the stories.

The middle-aged educator who carried within her the spark of a singing seven-year-old, and of other equally powerful 'selves', was a (mostly) silent but identifiable participant in the unfolding story, in Lortie's (1975/2002) terms "an apprenticeship of observation" (p.61). The journey was not always a comfortable one and I sometimes felt insecure, gradually coming to understand that grappling with uncertainty is a significant, healthy, and probably permanent, quality of undertaking educational research (Evans, 2002). Hargreaves (1996) warned of the possibility that researchers may unduly romanticise teachers' voices. This was certainly something that I needed to address on multiple occasions and through all stages of the research.

4.4.5 Data Analysis

At the heart of data analysis is the need to organise data in such a way that meaning can be derived from it, findings represented through research reports, and the overall research appraised in the light of relevant theoretical and research literature. The messiness of qualitative data analysis is well-documented (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Delamont, 2002; Fielding, 2001; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) with Delamont (2002) emphasising the importance of reading the analytic literature as a guide to the process, not merely as a means to justify certain decisions. This increases the likelihood that analytic strategies will not be applied prescriptively, but, more fittingly, will be congruent with broader issues of research design and conduct (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Although not synonymous with analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Saldana, 2009), coding of data can be an important first step in the overall development of analysis and interpretation, and involves identifying patterns that may be derived from similarities,

differences, frequency, sequence, correspondence or causality (Saldana, 2009). Saldana further defined coding as comprising *decoding*, the process of unravelling the meaning inherent in data, and *encoding,* the assigning of codes or labels. Undertaking a coding process allows researchers to compare a range of responses from different participants and to seek commonalities and contrasts. In this sense, researchers are able to reconsider data outside their original contexts and within new contexts of *category*, bearing in mind that this process of recontextualisation (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) carries the risk of skewing the meaning of particular data by isolating them from surrounding generative material.

Other writers speak of coding as a potential means of data reduction, for pragmatic reasons of manageability, but, more importantly, in order to develop frameworks for understanding and the generation of theory (Evans, 2002). In this sense, the capacity to retrieve linked data is a means to an end rather than an end in itself, with coding operating as an heuristic device to aid thinking and the generation of ideas (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). In similar vein, Delamont (2002) suggested that data analysis is the process of "drawing out meaning" (p.176). The imaginative and intuitive nature of qualitative data analysis was also highlighted by Moustakas (1994) who outlined the following process: *immersion, incubation, illumination, explication* and *creative synthesis*.

The generation of themes and categories in qualitative research can occur concurrently with data collection and may be non-linear in the sense that researchers follow a particular direction for some time, then backtrack, only to rejoin the original path or perhaps even to strike out in another direction. It is also not singular in the sense that researchers frequently pursue parallel and apparently unconnected analytic paths with the same data set (Atkinson, 1996). Writers such as Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Delamont (2002), and Fielding (2001), among others, agreed on the value of researchers creating ongoing analytic memos in the course of data collection as a record of the hunches, responses, ideas and thoughts which will swirl around for the duration of the research. Harry, Sturges and Klingner (2005) also emphasised the iterative nature of the analysis, the possible influences on data analysis that result from being a relative insider to the research topic, and the importance of bringing "preconceived beliefs into the dialogues, rather than seeking to omit or ignore them" (p.7).

St Pierre (1997) alluded to the ephemeral nature of language and its limitations in describing things that we know to be so. The emotional data St Pierre referred to are of a more disturbing and loss-filled nature than the emotions that surfaced regularly in the course of the observation phases of my study. However the question remains, 'are words sufficient to contain this data collection opportunity?' St Pierre identified that some of the data in her study, although not brought into textual form, were, nonetheless, considered by her as she analysed. "Data that escaped language… exploded all over my study – data that were uncodable, excessive, out-of-control, out-of-category" (p.179). The problem as St Pierre defined it is that in the process of analysing the data, coding, categorising, cutting up, compiling, we fall back on the flimsy structure of language which has the potential to tell us everything and nothing, both at the same time! These ideas were particularly pertinent as I reflected on and systematically analysed the observation data. The impressionistic nature of some of the data carried levels of meaning, particularly in relation to affective and aesthetic aspects of the sessions, that needed to be included in the final research report in order to do justice to the breadth and complexity of participants' music leadership.

In approaching the analysis of data, I was mindful of the need to be guided by the research questions, the overall design of the research and the nature of the data collected. These different components required me to seek a thoughtful balance between generating themes from within the data and applying preconceived themes to the growing data set. At times this was in the nature of seeking a 'best fit' analysis, and at other times it required that I limited my attention to data that directly addressed the research questions.

4.4.6 Issues of quality

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have analysed approaches to assessing quality in qualitative studies, and suggested alternative interpretations that align with conventional measures of quality employed in critiques of quantitative research. In summary, they advocate for *credibility* as opposed to internal validity, *transferability* in place of external validity, and *confirmability* rather than claims of freedom from potential bias. Credibility requires the researcher to build a case which 'rings true' in the light of readers' own

understandings and experiences of the research topic. With regard to this study of primary school music leaders, all aspects of the study needed to be presented in sufficient detail for readers, in particular, other primary school music leaders and music education researchers, to make informed judgments on such things as the portrayal of the research context and participants, the suitability of data collection methods to the research questions, and the processes of making sense of the data. Transferability refers to the extent to which readers can apply the research findings to other settings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) note that "good transfer is based on similarity of situations, intuitively weighted as to what is important and unimportant in the match" (p298). In order to allow for transferability in this study, readers need the wherewithal to look beyond the surface features of individual participants' stories and situations to the underlying principles and similarities that inform aspects of the work, thus allowing for reasoned comparisons. Confirmability is supported when readers as well as the researcher have the opportunity to examine some of the raw data and to understand the analysis processes carried out on them. In this study, it has been important not just to describe these processes but also to illustrate them from interview transcripts and observation notes.

Piantanida and Garman (1999) developed a comprehensive list of criteria as the basis for evaluating qualitative research with the criteria linking back to both research processes and products. The integrity of a research project needs to be demonstrated on a range of levels including the overall coherence and structure of the research and report; the significance and utility of the research topic; the strength of the relationship between findings and empirical data; and the overall trustworthiness from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

My goal was not to systematically evaluate the work that participants were doing in their schools but rather to describe and document the space that these music leaders inhabited. The evaluative nature of that work is to be found, drawn out or intuited from participants' own narratives and my interpretations. However as Barone (2001) attested, given the contestable nature of researcher interpretations, the burden is also on researchers to provide full accounts of their research process and access to enough primary data that readers are able to devise alternative interpretations.

Harry, Sturges and Klinger (2005) stressed the importance of using multiple data sources to obtain triangulation in the data. Although I employed only two forms of data collection, interview and observation of participants, additional veracity was added to teachers' accounts by having multiple participants. For example, in Chapter Five I describe an instance in which one participant's account of her work with a beginning teacher was unknowingly verified by that same beginning teacher who happened to also be a participant in the research. At other times, aspects of participants' stories were consistent with accounts given by their fellow participants or with my own experiences as teacher, teacher educator and music educator.

The question of researcher voice is not just a matter of how the final research report is 'written up' for consumption by interested parties but is also intimately connected to a wider sense of 'writing' which refers to the whole conduct of the research (Watson, 1995). Flinders and Richardson (2006) expressed it as the importance of researchers writing their own voices into the research report and the critical importance of the reader being brought "in close contact with the setting, the participants, and interactions among these… The whole enterprise rests on the ability of the researcher to portray, illustrate, and explain" (p.330). Watson (1995) used the analogy of letting the reader "see the puppet's strings as they watch the puppet show" (p.303) to describe how the researcher writes enough of herself into the account for the reader to understand its impact on the data.

Considerations of quality raise a second important question. Not only do we need to ask 'how can the reader know or judge the integrity of the research?', but also 'how easily can the writer evaluate her own written account?' With regard to the second question, Watson (1995) contended that social scientists need to turn the spotlight on themselves in exactly the way they do onto participants. One approach is to analyse the researcher's use of language, being conscious of possible manipulation and open about how it occurs. He suggested that although researchers may use rhetoric in an attempt to persuade by the character of the writing rather than its substance, opening their complex personal logic to scrutiny enables readers to track the way ideas are formed in the mind. Balancing voice and personality provides a foil for the problem of researchers becoming too intrusive and self-important, and a dose of "humour and gentle self-mockery can act as a subtle rhetorical control mechanism" (p.310).

In writing my account of primary school music leaders' work, I wanted the writing to have value not only for other music education researchers but for teachers themselves, and for those whose decision-making affects the lives of teachers. I aimed to report my findings in such a way that readers were encouraged to apply these understandings to their own situations, to reflect in new ways on familiar music education contexts, and to explore alternative explanations and understandings of the data I presented. There needed to be an element of grace in the writing, quiet confidence coupled with a readiness to reopen the data for new and contrasting interpretations.

4.4.7 Ethical Considerations and Principles

A vital aspect of research preparation is the need to consider all aspects of the research process in terms of ethical treatment of both participants and research topic. Central to the discussion of ethics is the guiding principle of 'doing no harm' and this is a key focus of Massey University's own ethical code. Protection of participants' identities, full information about both the purposes and processes of the research, and transparency in terms of the use and reporting of data, were all addressed in the initial ethics application. The overarching research topic for this study is relatively benign, but nonetheless, there is always potential for participants' involvement to trigger complex and destructive responses. With regard to the uses to which our research and writing can be put, Hargreaves (1994) and Smyth and Shacklock (1998) warn of the sleight of hand that can be applied to teacher perspectives by political and bureaucratic masters in order to deliver already-determined reform agendas. Strict adherence to ethical and transparent processes provides a measure of protection for researcher and participants.

An important point to be considered was the capacity to exploit my relationships with music educators for my own benefit. For me, there was a clear end in mind, an advanced degree and a 'rite of passage' within the academic world. The counter to this was my motivation to illustrate and celebrate the stories of music educators who bear responsibility for an important aspect of children's lives and whose practice potentially brings joy and fulfilment to individuals and school communities.

Having addressed important theoretical questions relating to methodology we now turn to the actual conduct of the research. This is the basis for the following substantive chapter section.

4.5   Methodology in Action

In this section, the research process is described, beginning with the application for ethical approval and an account of the pilot interview. I explain how potential participants were selected and approached and describe ethical issues and considerations. This is followed by an account of the data collecting phase including variations to the procedure. The section concludes with an explanation of data analysis processes and the writing of the thesis.

4.5.1 Ethical Approval

In preparing the initial application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee or MUHEC, I was guided by the prevailing principles that underpin ethical research. In summary, these are: an overriding concern that participants should not be harmed by the research; the importance of obtaining informed consent from participants; responsiveness to participants' desire for anonymity; and a conscious orientation towards openness, fairness and truth in the analysis of data and the reporting of findings.

My belief was that the proposed research was benign in nature with little possibility of discomfort or distress for participants. However, my personal experience of the marginalisation of arts subjects across all education sectors alerted me to the potentially stressful role of music leadership in primary schools. I expected that some participants might take the opportunity to share frustrations and concerns about their role, or anxiety about their capacity to fulfil the role. I was also conscious of the need to respect participants' confidences by ensuring that sensitive or critical anecdotes, comments or concerns could not be traced back to particular participants. In the course of the research, there were occasions on which I needed to exercise ethical judgment regarding decisions and actions. These are described in detail within the appropriate sub-sections of this chapter.

Approval to proceed with the study was obtained from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee in January 2006, as Southern B, Application 06/06. Once the data collection was underway, further communication took place with the Committee regarding the difficulty of meeting some requirements in the observation phase. A subsequent variation to the approval was negotiated and agreed to by MUHEC early in 2007. This enabled me to observe teachers working with large groups of children (e.g. when leading whole school singing) without being required to provide individual information sheets and obtain written consent from all children and their parents.

In reality, my experience was that principals and teachers were less concerned about the use of approved processes in their schools and classrooms than the university required. This became a source of tension for me as I balanced the university's expectations with a principal or teacher's perspective on the process. This is not to imply that principals and teachers would have permitted me to act unethically but rather, that the realities of access and participation in an everyday New Zealand school environment reflected a high trust orientation towards me as a member of the wider educational community.

Ethical issues arose in the course of the research and needed to be confronted and dealt with. One related to the principle of anonymity, and whose rights should take priority when participants asked to be referred to by their own names in the thesis. New Zealand has a small population base and identification of individuals through minor contextual details would be easy. I therefore made a decision that the rights to anonymity of those in the wider school community took precedence over the rights of participants to be identified. On the rare occasion when an individual participant spoke critically about colleagues or school leaders, or when accounts of sensitive situations could have been traced back to them, I have been careful not to attribute the remarks to any particular participant, and, where necessary, have altered or omitted identifying characteristics of either participants or those about whom they were speaking.

In the course of the data collection phases I found that I was philosophically close to a number of the participant teachers. There were also, at times, ways of teaching and working musically that created dissonance with how I would do things, and one particular incident that cut across my personal beliefs like a knife. Watson (1995),

addressing this kind of researcher dilemma, suggested writing in ways that present the essence of truth without the constraint of factual concrete detail, in effect, manipulating the data "to produce a plausible account… and to maintain scientific integrity" (p.302). However in this particular situation, the factual detail was critical to any explanation and could not have been blurred over or manipulated. I needed to weigh up issues of honesty and transparency in the reporting of findings against questions about the relative benefits of reporting or not reporting the incident. In the end, I took account of my assurances to participants that my role was not one of judgement, and I opted not to raise the matter in the follow-up interview or report on it in the thesis.

4.5.2 Pilot Interview

In order to confirm the choice of research methods, I conducted a pilot interview with a recently-retired primary school teacher with over four decades of music leadership experience. Because the retired teacher and I were friends and former colleagues, the pilot interview provided an excellent opportunity for me to gauge the impact of prior relationships on both the content and the fluency of the interview. Following the taped interview, I listened to the complete recording, transcribed the first half hour and completed a content analysis of one page of transcribed data. Many of the data obtained were consistent with professional conversations and interactions I had shared with the trial participant on previous occasions and in a range of contexts. In addition, she provided a rich personal account of her musical background, the circumstances that led her into the music leadership role, the challenges and satisfactions encountered along the way, and the importance of mentors both inside and outside the school system. Analysis of a small section of the pilot interview transcript indicated that data generated in the interviews would represent the everyday experience of primary school music leaders, and address the research aims and questions. I was also pleased that the pilot interview yielded new and unexpected material about a participant who was both a colleague and friend. Consequently, I felt confident that the unstructured interview format was a sufficiently-detailed yet flexible enough framework to enable participants to describe and reflect on their individual journeys to music leadership and their unique experiences in the role.

As part of the pilot interview, I asked the teacher to complete a graphic representation of her role as a music leader within the primary school, showing such aspects as the scope of the role and the various tasks and responsibilities it entailed; the strength or nature of the interactions with key people e.g. students, senior staff, families, colleagues; the relationship between the music leadership role and other teaching responsibilities. In contrast with the ease with which the participant talked about her experiences and beliefs, this task was achieved with difficulty. I received little more than a set of headings which were a mere shadow of the fully-fleshed account given in words, the equivalent of a drawn outline in a child's colouring book compared with a maturely-realised adult artwork. Completion of the pilot interview confirmed that the interview methods chosen were well-suited to the research aims and questions and that the option of a graphic representation of music leaders' work was probably not worth pursuing.

Use of an unstructured interview format to address key topics provided relative consistency in terms of the content of data gathered, while at the same time engendering a relaxed approach to the interviews. This process enabled comparison of data across cases in order to identify differences and similarities, and allowed the unique circumstances and perspectives of participants to be revealed. Data gathered during the interviews both confirmed and challenged my preconceived beliefs and developing theories. The inclusion of the observation phase offered the possibility of generating additional new data with which to work and enhanced my understanding of the participants' individual experiences as music leaders and of the collective picture their diverse experiences represented. A number of the participants were already known to me, but I could not recall seeing many of them actually working in their music leadership roles. Those I had seen were in different contexts where my role was not an observation role.

4.5.3 Participant Selection and Approach

This section outlines the practical processes involved in identifying and obtaining participants. Initial participant selection criteria involved consideration of both school and teacher characteristics. Different indicators of diversity in the primary teaching population and the specific groups of teachers that might be included in the study were noted. It seemed important to ensure that at least some male teachers were studied as

well as some teachers who identified as Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand. A decision was also made to seek participants who represented a range of ages, years of experience and levels of seniority within the profession. A final consideration was the musical and music education background of the teachers, allowing the inclusion of teachers with formal and informal musical qualifications, those with a strong performance base and those with specialist music making interests such as choral or rock music. Although generalising findings to the wider population of primary school music leaders was never an aim of the research, nonetheless, the research aimed to capture in broad terms a sense of the richness and diversity that I believed would be widespread among New Zealand primary school music leaders.

Some primary school music leaders, colleagues, friends or former students, volunteered to take part in the research. This informally-expressed interest paved the way for initiating the formal process of seeking consent to approach the teacher. Some of these teachers also suggested former colleagues who they felt could share valuable insights and perspectives on the music leadership role. Among the final sample were two participants who were suggested by more than one other participant in the study. When a school principal identified more than one teacher in a music leadership role, for example in one large school where the music leadership roles divided across junior/senior school lines, all potential participants were approached.

With regard to the issue of data saturation, I was guided in my decision to limit the number of participants to ten by the realisation that although new cases (from about the sixth participant onwards) were contributing new detail to the data set in relation to their work as primary school music leaders, at a structural level the collective stories were remarkably consistent. Nonetheless, I continued with the data collection in order to include teachers who represented a range in terms of demographics, teaching experience, musical background and school context.

As noted earlier, my initial expectation was that primary school music leaders were predominantly middle-aged women with similar backgrounds to my own. As Table 5.1 shows, this impression was not borne out in the final sample although the relatively small number of participants does not allow for overall generalisation about the demographic features of music leaders in New Zealand primary schools.

My personal involvement in the study as a fellow music leader, albeit a university-based teacher educator, can be justified in Cochran-Smith's (2005) terms by the differences between outsider researchers' insights and those of insiders: "there [is] potential for rich and different insights when the teacher educator's own professional work [is] the research site and his or her own emerging issues and dilemmas [are] the grist for systematic study" (p.223).

I was conscious that it would be valuable to interview some teachers who were unknown to me and who lived outside the area I had worked in as a music advisor. I felt that this would provide a perspective from teachers who were not aware of my particular music education interests and viewpoints and who were not influenced by any unspoken power imbalances; for example, the possibility that I may have an evaluative role in their music leadership practice at some time in the future or even that they may be silently judged by me as a former teacher and supposed 'expert' in the field. I approached broadening the range of participants in an informal manner. Teachers needed to be close enough that I could visit them up to three times without having to travel long distances and to also add something to the range and breadth of participant and school characteristics. Interestingly, the only teachers who did not give consent or who did not respond to my initial approach were teachers with whom I had only a passing acquaintance. Although this meant that I wasn't able to introduce a less familiar perspective into the data set, it reassured me that teachers who did know me were at ease about what the research process required of them.

Along with participant characteristics, the characteristics and demographics of the schools in which teachers serve were also considered. Unlike countries such as Australia and the United States in which state governments regulate and oversee a largely autonomous education system, New Zealand has a national curriculum which is principally administered through central government structures. The result is a reasonably even and standardised system with most variation accounted for at school rather than district or regional level. In addition, the Ministry of Education utilises a school classification system which attributes decile ratings on the basis of the school community's socio-economic profile, 1 representing schools with the lowest and 10 representing schools with the highest socio-economic indicators.

The character and makeup of the school community and teaching staff, the physical location of the school and other factors relating to the teaching and learning programme all impact on the overall school culture. Experience suggested that school decile rating would represent a more significant variation of school type than would teachers selected from schools across the geographical regions of New Zealand. Other school variation exists in relation to urban, suburban, small town and rural schools; schools with special character such as religious schools or schools that have a formal relationship with university teacher education providers; the overall size of the school in terms of numbers of pupils; and whether the school is a full primary (Years 0-8 of compulsory schooling), contributing primary (Years 0-6) or intermediate (Years 7 & 8) school.

As I built the sample of participants, I kept note of school characteristics and towards the end of the research was intentional about selecting participants to 'fill the gaps'. Once potential participants were identified or volunteered to participate, initial contact was made with the school principal and Board of Trustees for permission to access the school and make a direct formal approach to the teacher concerned (see Appendices A, B & C). The role of the principal as an intermediary between researcher and potential participants was not without its challenges and highlighted the complex nature of whose approval was being sought and for what.

When access to approach a teacher was granted, the preferred approach was to phone the teacher concerned and arrange a meeting at which I could outline the research, answer questions and leave the teacher with the information sheet and consent form (see Appendices C & D). At times during the initial phone call, it was difficult to restrict the contact to making arrangements for a later meeting. On one occasion, the teacher seemed ready to begin discussing music leadership issues straight away, and at least two teachers indicated an immediate wish to participate and asked me to post the forms. I agreed to this but emphasised that (i) they should feel free to contact me for clarification about any aspect of the research and (ii) they should feel under no pressure to participate. One teacher did phone back to ask a little more about the observation phase and the kinds of activities I might want to observe. However it was clear that by this stage the teacher was thinking ahead and already considering possible observation scenarios. Another participant was reluctant to even accept the information sheet and

consent form, emphasising the trusting professional relationship that already existed between us. I found it difficult to insist on the ethical requirement and in the end made a comment along the lines of "humour me. I have to do this". The wider explanation for this teacher's relaxed approach to formal consent may be that music activity in primary schools takes place most commonly within an open performance arena. For example, parents' attendance is usually welcomed at school assemblies, a common site for teachers' music leadership practice. Teachers who are music leaders are used to exercising this role among friends and strangers, children and adults, colleagues and visitors.

Adhering to the ethical requirement for time and space between receiving information about the study and consenting to participate was problematic on two occasions. In each case, I had arranged to visit teachers after school to talk to them about possible participation. With time set aside to meet me and having made an on-the-spot decision to participate in the research, these teachers were keen to start talking about their music role immediately. On the first occasion, I was unsuccessful in stemming the conversation and had no means to record it. Although I returned for a formal interview, I felt that the quality of the recorded data, in effect, a re-telling of the original spontaneous story, was diminished. On the second occasion, I went prepared with my tape recorder in the car. After a lengthy discussion in which I answered the teacher's many questions about the project, she stated definitely that she wanted to take part. Given that our combined busy schedules had already made it difficult for us to find a suitable time to meet, I suggested that we could 'talk now' and she readily agreed. These different situations highlighted the potentially awkward relationship between approved ethical processes and teacher pragmatism.

4.5.4   Conduct of Interviews

Details of the research phases completed with each participant are included in Table 5.1. Typically, each participant had an initial interview, was observed in a music leadership activity, and then had a follow-up interview. Teachers were relaxed about where the interviews would take place, and were often insistent that I set the time and place that would be most convenient for me. Some interviews took place in my office and one in my own home. The remaining interviews were conducted at the participants' schools,

either in their own classroom or office or in a shared space such as the staffroom or a resource room. Because most interviews were scheduled at the end of the school day, it was not unusual during school-based interviews to be interrupted by other teachers, cleaners or parents. These interruptions did not seem to unsettle participants who often just carried on talking or stopped to explain why the tape recorder was running. I interpreted this relaxed demeanour as reflecting teachers' ease and familiarity with the subject matter of the interviews.

The schedule for the interviews (see Appendix E) was there to guide our discussions and was a prompt for me to cover important content in the course of the interview. I did not use prepared questions or probes but allowed the interviews to cover the key areas that I wished to explore as well as others about which teachers were passionate and enthusiastic. Many of the transcripts, particularly those from the follow-up interviews, include professional conversations that arose naturally in relation to an aspect of music practice. These included such topics as repertoire choice, the relationship between tunefulness and singing technique, the use of live or CD accompaniments, and beliefs about the appropriateness (or not) of auditioning for school performance groups. For example, one of the participants and I considered possible repertoire for a specialist chorale group, and another had an extended discussion about the challenge of finding appropriate music listening material to develop into user-friendly units of work for less confident teachers. We weighed up the merits of particular listening programmes and we discussed the potential of specific pieces of music for classroom use. These conversations fed back as data into Chapter Six which dealt with specific aspects of music leaders' work and the thinking that underpins that work.

Analysis of interview interactions showed that at times there were significant changes in terms of focus and momentum. In summary, the levels of focus within the interviews can be described as follows:

1. Clear interviewer/respondent relationship in which I asked the questions and participants responded. There may have been supplementary follow-up questions.
2. Conversation, sometimes about more personal/less research-related matters such as the broad field of education, but often about music education matters. This was helpful for establishing rapport but also building the sense of belonging to a

collaborative community in which we seek to understand more of the phenomena of music education in primary schools.

3. A forum for participants to tell and expand on their own musical and teaching stories. There was minimum input from me as they described certain aspects of their role in detail, thinking it through and making sense of it as they talked.

4. An opportunity for professional discussion and the sharing of pedagogical ideas and knowledge in order to push the boundaries of what is possible and to learn from each other. Although this was not a planned part of the research process, these discussions provided additional insight into participants' professional knowledge and decision-making.

4.5.5 Teacher Observations

All the teachers who had agreed to be interviewed also consented to take part in the observation phase and in most cases were very clear about which music leadership activity they wanted me to observe. Because two teachers suggested alternatives and left me to decide which I would like to see, I was able to make choices based on observing teachers in a variety of leadership contexts. In one case, I made a specific request to observe the teacher working with the school rock band because at that stage I hadn't observed any instrumental music. In spite of my suggestion that I would be happy to observe participants leading a professional development session with other teachers, no participant chose this option.

My stance was one of non-participant observer (Anderson, 1998) and I attempted to remain physically detached from the music-making being observed. Sometimes it was almost impossible not to join in! Children were usually aware that I was present and in almost all cases (large team or assembly singing sessions with other adults present were the exceptions) I was introduced to them prior to the music event. For the smaller groups of children, individual information sheets were distributed and individual consent forms collected prior to my visit (see Appendices H, I & J).

Depending on the nature of the music-making I tried to make myself as inconspicuous as possible. For the larger group sessions in which there were more students and usually other adults present, I was able to sit off to the side and take notes. For smaller

sessions e.g. the rock band, the harmony group, and the classroom instrumental session, I sat closer to the children and observed without taking notes. I wrote up my observations immediately after the sessions in order to recall and record as much detail as possible. In the case of two teachers, I talked with them immediately after the observations and before writing up any notes so that the observation notes include aspects that were brought up in the course of these discussions.

From the outset, I was aware of the need to provide detailed descriptions of both the physical setting and the session sequence. I tried to write notes that would enable readers to build an accurate mental picture of the context and to play out the sequence of events in their minds. Although the focus of the research is firmly on the teacher, separating the teachers' actions from the outcome of those actions would have provided an incomplete account of teacher leadership in practice.   For this reason, another critical aspect of the note-taking was to record the involvement of the children and other teachers who were present for the session.

One element I hadn't accounted for prior to the initial observations was the emotional impact of watching teachers' and children's music-making so closely. I was unprepared for the strength of my reaction to the children's engagement with music, the teachers' engagement with the children, the music generated, and the overall tone of the sessions. I left virtually every session buoyed up by what I had observed, personally encouraged and uplifted by the joy and satisfaction emanating from teachers and children, by the democratic quality of the musical and wider relationships, and the respect that flowed between teachers and children.

4.5.6 Data Analysis

From the outset of the data collection, preliminary analysis began. In the first instance, it was relatively informal and involved familiarising myself with the taped interviews while I waited for the transcriptions to be completed. As I listened I asked questions such as "what is the participant saying here?" and "what is the participant's perspective on things?" and "what meaning does the participant ascribe to events and activities?" In the process of engaging with the data in this way, I was struck by how often my own perspectives and views kept coming to the fore. Stepping back from the analysis and

trying to bring the participants forward was a conscious process and enabled me to acknowledge some key beliefs or expectations that were not being borne out by the data. For example, one outcome of this initial engagement with data was to re-orient subsequent interviews away from a more exclusive focus on teaching career towards a greater emphasis on early life and experiences and their impact on the development of music leadership practice.

My initial expectation was that detailed content analysis (Berg, 2007) would underpin the overall analysis process, but my early efforts at such detailed data-splitting had the effect of reducing the data to units of meaning that failed to represent what I interpreted as the more subtle and finely-nuanced character of the transcripts and observation notes. Instead, as the data collection progressed, I undertook a form of open coding (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) in which I identified key themes that threaded through the interview transcripts and observation notes. This process was consistent with what Saldana (2009) described as 'first cycle coding methods' of descriptive and structural coding and together they contributed to refining and reducing the overall data set. In addition, I experimented with different interpretations of single narrative-like sections of data, as well as excerpts of data grouped around particular ideas or concepts and taken from a range of interview transcripts. Familiarisation with the data was ongoing throughout the data collection process and was facilitated by limiting the number of 'active' participants, those who were at some point in the interview and observation cycle, to two or three at any one time.

The use of analytic memos was an invaluable tool for identifying the key messages of the research. The following research diary entry, written in late 2008, provides an example of the shifts in thinking that came about through studied and prolonged examination of the data:

> *It has suddenly occurred to me that my whole orientation to this research has been in terms of the marginalised space that music occupies in the curriculum. To some extent this is true and it can certainly be eloquently argued if that is the purpose of some writing or research. However this research is about discovering the 'space' in which teachers work and to allow them to talk about that space. This is in the nature of a blinding flash for me.*

This section represented an occasion in which I consciously attempted to reorient myself, hermeneutically, towards the teachers' interpretations of the discussion content, rather than fit it into my pre-existing frame of reference:

> *I have listened, read, thought with the 'marginal space' blinkers on. I certainly don't wish to avoid this discussion because I am passionate about forging a new space for music – and this can become part of the discussion. So once I have analysed the 'spaces' for music, I can make a case for an enlarged or enriched space. However I need to hear what teachers are saying about the 'spaces' in which they work as music leaders. These are some of the questions that the data can answer:*
>
> *What are some of these spaces? Physical? Emotional? Temporal?*
>
> *How are they negotiated?*
>
> *Who has control in these spaces?*
>
> *What respect is there for these spaces?*
>
> *Have they changed over the years? In relation to curriculum changes?*

Following the above entry, I completed some exploratory writing about the significance of varied spaces to participants. Then came the realisation that I was attempting to impose an organising theme onto data that fitted more naturally within a different thematic structure. For example, the concept of emotional space emerged in relation to a whole range of roles, responsibilities and experience such as how to deal with performance expectations placed on school music leaders, and the emotional investment made in supporting children with special learning needs' membership of extra-curricular music groups. Likewise, temporal space was raised in relation to such diverse issues as the time required to arrange parts for instrumental ensembles, how the participant negotiated with the principal and other staff to schedule school singing at a more appropriate time of day, and how to organise the time available for lunchtime choir rehearsals.

Another diary entry illustrates how familiarising myself with the data contributed to the kind of intuitive leaps to which Harry, Sturges and Klinger (2005) referred. One teacher's comment about the difficulty of focusing on the effectiveness and shape of a rehearsal while one's head is buzzing with everything else that needs to be remembered, resonated with other participants' comments and my own observations.

As I went through Sue's transcripts last night I was struck by the conversation we had following the Middle School choir practice. We talked about the pace of the rehearsal and I commented that it flowed very well and seemed to move at just the right pace to keep the children focused and motivated. Sue was pleasantly surprised and pleased to get that feedback. She commented that she wants the sessions to be relaxed and to move not too fast and not too slow but that it's difficult to gauge how that's going because her own head is so full of ideas and things she has to remember and impressions and noting stuff that needs to be worked on...

In the above passage, the teacher identified a range of matters that she attended to during choir practices: maintaining a relaxed atmosphere; keeping the practice moving at an appropriate pace; listening for what is happening in the singing and considering what that might mean for later rehearsals; remembering the ideas that occur to her while the singing is happening. I reflected on the busyness and complexity of the practice and related it to a well-known analogy.

I was reminded of the story of the duck gliding across the lake – smoothly moving over the water with no ripples and no apparent energy being expended. Look beneath the surface though and it's a completely different story – the duck's feet are paddling furiously in order to maintain the momentum and keep moving forward steadily.

From this point, I was able to translate the analogy back into the choir setting and move beyond description to interpretation. The experience of observing Sue, reflecting on that observation, and reaching a new insight could not then be reversed in subsequent observations. What I learned from Sue was in one sense not new, for I had experienced similar complexity in my own practice as a music leader. The newness was in bringing the idea of layers of activity to consciousness as an important aspect of practice, and ultimately led to the development of an important explanatory category in response to the question "what do music leaders do?"

When a skilled music leader is working musically with a group of children e.g. taking team singing, it can appear to onlookers that it is all effortless, automatic and as second nature as breathing. For the music leader there may be all sorts of things happening that are not evident to those watching and listening – these things may be emotional, cognitive, and physical.

Having identified the hidden nature of much of this activity, I went on to consider whether other aspects of the music leaders' role also go unrecognised.

> *In addition to the performance/activity leading efforts that are not recognised by colleagues and the wider community, there are also many lead-in/preparatory tasks and roles that have not occurred to them – the choice of music (and all the skills and knowledge that inform repertoire choice), the preparation of music, the approach to teaching new material, rehearsal organisation (from initial set up of the group through to communicating organisational messages to children and parents), decisions about all manner of things – musical, practical, organisational, people-related.*
>
> *One of the important messages of this research is to bring to the surface the myriad of factors which characterise the person and the role of music leader in a primary school.*

The above memo was the direct source for subsequent analysis and interpretation of observation data. Having identified different categories of action and task, I was able to organise observation data according to these categories, at times noting the presence of multiple, and often consecutive actions within the one task. The follow-up interviews generated additional data for categorisation with regard to the musical thinking or decision-making that informed particular actions or tasks.

In a later memo, I considered the possibility that although my data were not directly transferable to the wider population of primary school music leaders in New Zealand, it could be appropriate to think in terms of 'fuzzy generalisations' Bassey (1999), "general statements with built in uncertainty" (p.52). This term acknowledges that tentative theories developed from a case or limited number of cases and in relation to a particular research context and report, may potentially be applied to an extended range of similar research contexts.

> *There is no way that my research data can be seen to be representative of all teachers with a music leadership role in New Zealand. However, there are aspects of their situations which may lend themselves to the following speculation – that if **a** (music teacher with certain background such as sense of musicality, experience being taught and teaching music, personal delight in musicmaking) is placed in **b** (school in which there is the possibility of leading a performance group, where there is music of some sort at large group gatherings*

*such as assemblies), then it is likely that **c** (some satisfying musical events and opportunities for many or all children who come within the scope of the teacher's work) will occur.*

As data collection neared completion, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the approach to analysis that had served me well to that point.   Having been through the process of separating data, I needed to bring them together within a new framework, and then re-analyse them in the light of that new context, a well-documented process in the methodological literature (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Evans, 2002; Saldana, 2009). The new framework fell easily out of the three broad research questions and I was able to develop three comprehensive data sets in relation to (1) who the teachers are, (2) what they do, and (3) the significance of their role. Re-examining these data sets involved yet another cycle of coding around themes that then became the headings and sub-headings for each of three data chapters that follow.

4.5.7   Data source identifiers

The data presentation chapters include direct quotes from the interview transcripts and from my observation notes. The source of each reference is identified by the initial letter of the participant's name, followed by *Int1* or *Int2* which represent either the first/only or second interview respectively, or *Obs* which represents the observation session. The final number identifies the page from the interview transcript or observation notes. For example, the identifier *D Int2:15* refers to page 15 of the transcript from the second interview with David. The identifier *R Obs:4* identifies an extract from page four of the notes from my observation of Rosie.

4.5.8   Writing the thesis

As I wrote and thought about this research in terms of both the detail and the overarching process, I had an end in view, hopes for not only the impact of the product but the product itself, with these two inextricably entwined. Flinders and Richardson (2006) commended Kari Veblen's (1991) ethnographic study for the life and vitality of the writing and this model focused and motivated the creation and crafting of the final report.

Unlike studies that are clearly derived from a broad base of existing research or are closely linked to a singular theoretical position, this study's exploratory focus has been justified in terms of the relative paucity of research on primary school music education from the perspective of teacher leaders. In response to the 'branching out' nature of the research, there was a need to theorise the research from a range of perspectives and the notion of a theoretical 'toolbox' (Ball, 2005) provided a precedent for such an approach. A number of theories were brought to bear on the analysed data and this eclectic approach underscores a key message of this thesis, namely, the complexity of the work of primary school music leaders, and the mix of personal and professional skills and attributes that support that work.

4.6   Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline the theoretical paradigms that have informed key decisions regarding methodology and research design. Research orientation, design and methods have all been placed under scrutiny alongside other significant research issues such as ethics, quality, and the position of the researcher. In the second substantive chapter section the actual conduct of the research has been described.

Chapters One to Four of the thesis have set the scene for the unfolding research. In the course of providing the personal, theoretical, literature and methodological bases there have been fleeting glimpses of both data and discussion. However the full research story is revealed in the next three chapters, each of which focuses on one of the research questions, and in the discussion chapter that follows.

CHAPTER FIVE
WHO ARE THE TEACHERS WHO LEAD MUSIC IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS?

5.1 Introduction

In the previous three chapters, the theoretical, conceptual, literature and methodological bases for the study were established and they provide the framework for the three data presentation chapters that follow. This chapter, the first of the three, addresses the question 'Who are the teachers who lead music in primary schools?' At the heart of the chapter is the understanding that constructs of teacher identity reflect a complex mix of past and present experience, contexts and relationships.

Following a short introduction to the ten participants, the chapter is organised into three main sections which together build our knowledge of how music leaders in primary schools develop and are supported as members of the teaching community. The first section, Life Stories, explores participants' stories up until the beginning of their primary teaching careers. The second section, Teaching Career, is concerned with the dynamic nature of the music leadership role within the extended career paths of the participants. The final section, Connections Between Teachers, attempts to show how individual music leaders in primary schools do not work out their roles in isolation but are closely connected, often to each other, within a wider community of practice. The chapter concludes with a summary that draws the threads of each section together and leads the reader into the second data presentation chapter.

5.2 The Participants

It is important for readers to appreciate the individuality of study participants. For this reason, the chapter begins with an introduction to each of the ten participants followed by a summary table (Table 5.1) that records key participant characteristics at the time they were engaged in the research. In Chapter Four I discussed the challenges researchers face when research participants are already known to them. Writing these

short introductions was such a challenge. One difficulty was to disentangle my prior knowledge of participants from the interview and observation data gathered about them. In order to provide the reader with some insight into 'what I already knew', I have included material that sets out my prior relationship with each participant. However there was also a need to balance the level of detail of these individual accounts against the potential for participants to be identified. Therefore, participants were asked to read the introductory statements and the entries in the summary table that related to them personally, and were given the opportunity to amend them if they wished. Although the perspective presented on each participant is my own, the primary data embedded in the next three data chapters provide opportunities for readers to reflect on and critique these interpretations.

5.2.1 Bruce

I first met and taught Bruce when he embarked on a three-year primary teacher education programme. I had ongoing contact with him over those years, and, following his initial teacher education, through the years that he completed postgraduate studies. At that time there were opportunities to observe Bruce working musically with children and to gain an early appreciation of his skills as a music leader, both in schools and in the wider musical community. What I did not know was the depth and range of prior music experience he brought to these roles, the importance of particular teachers and mentors in his development as a musician, and the personal and musical thinking that underpinned his decision to become a primary school teacher. As someone who came to teaching midway through his working life, he offered a contrast to teachers for whom teaching has been their only career.

5.2.2 David

My previous association with David was in my role as a teacher educator during the time when he was principal of a large primary school. As an active school musician and champion of the arts, he has held an 'elder statesman' role within the wider community of music educators. I have a powerful personal memory of attending a school assembly in which David stood at the door playing his guitar, singing and acknowledging each class of children as they filed past him to take their places in the school hall. In an earlier research project I conducted into 'Singing Schools' (Boyack, 2003), some of

David's students spoke with pride of their 'singing principal'. As I prepared for this research, David was the kind of teacher I had in mind when I thought about teachers with rich stories to tell of what it means to be a music leader in a New Zealand primary school.

5.2.3 Fiona

My introduction to Fiona was when she began teacher education studies and selected music as her specialist subject. Throughout the pre-service programme, Fiona's strengths in and love for music were obvious. She has continued to maintain an active role as a performance musician in the wider community and we have met often in both educational and musical settings. Although Fiona brought instrumental performance strengths and varied musical experience to her primary teaching career, prior to the research I knew little of the origins of her musicality or of how it had played out in her actual practice as a teacher.

5.2.4 Ian

When I interviewed and observed Ian he was in his first five years of teaching having entered the profession as a history graduate and parent of young children. Prior to the research Ian was known to me only by name and a reputation for outstanding performance music practice with primary age children. Two other participants strongly recommended that he be included in the study because of the wealth of musical expertise and flair he brought to the primary music leadership role.

5.2.5 Leanne

Leanne has taught in the same school for a number of years and has been very much the leader of music there. I became aware some time ago that Leanne's music leadership work with children in her school was mirrored by her out-of-school involvement in musical shows and choirs. As part of a programme that enabled practising teachers to complete their education degrees, Leanne accessed music education courses that I was teaching. While she imparted the perspective of an experienced classroom teacher to those music classes, I developed a first-hand appreciation of the musical expertise she brought to her school leadership role.

5.2.6 Madeleine

Prior to the research I had had little direct contact with Madeleine but knew of her musical skills and experience. Two other teachers in the study who had worked with Madeleine recommended her as a possible research participant. At about the time I made an initial approach to Madeleine, she became director of a community choral group and, as a result, we were often involved in the same choral events. This increased professional contact provided a strong 'backdrop' to the interviews and observation.

5.2.7 Rosie

Rosie's and my paths have crossed over the years through various general and music education events and activities. I have also had personal dealings with Rosie and the image of her I brought to the research was of a warm, intelligent, gentle and artistic human being – the kind of teacher that everyone would want for their children and grandchildren. Rosie is a strong advocate for the use of Māori Language (Te Reo Māori) within mainstream school settings and although not Māori herself, her family has a strong affiliation with the Māori language. Like many women teachers, Rosie's teaching career was interrupted by years of fulltime parenting and she then moved back into teaching via part-time roles.

5.2.8 Sue

Sue has taught for more than two decades and has played an active part in the musical life of her schools. She and I have been friends for much of that time and share many musical interests. We have often talked about educational matters that concern us both, not the least of which has been primary school music education and the place of music within the primary curriculum.   Because I know Sue's family, the teacher education programme she completed and the schools she has taught in, I assumed that the interviews and observation would yield interesting but predictable data. Contrary to these expectations, important aspects of Sue's story came as a surprise to me.

5.2.9 Tom

Tom completed specialist music papers as part of his teaching degree. Along with other students he was a member of a choir I directed and my dealings with him tended to be at

the group level. Although Tom entered teacher education as a school leaver I was aware that he brought significant prior experience in the performing arts to his studies. Towards the end of the data collection phase I met Tom by chance and found that he was soon to take up his first teaching position. In addition to a regular classroom teaching role, he had also been designated as leader of the performing arts in his school. Interviewing and observing Tom at work a few months into his career provided a strong contrast with the more-experienced teachers who contributed to the data set.

5.2.10   Will

Like many of the other teachers in the study, Will completed his teacher education at a time when students were able to pursue specialist studies in a subject of their choice. Music was Will's choice and I was one of his tutors over those years. We also met in our community musician roles and, following his graduation, I was aware that Will's interest in music was strongly reflected in his early career decisions and moves. Given that he was still within the first decade of his teaching career, I felt sure that his experiences and insights as a music leader would enrich the data for the study.

Table 5.1: Summary of participant and school characteristics

Name Research Phases	Age & Ethnicity	Years of Service Current Teaching position	Type/decile[1] rating of school	Key musical interests & qualifications
Bruce • Interview • Observation of school choir practice • Interview	40+ Pakeha[2]	4 Classroom teacher in semi-rural school	Contributing school Decile 10	Musical theatre director Piano Choral music Music specialism in teaching degree. M.Ed with music education papers and thesis
David • Interview • Observation of junior school singing • Interview	60+ Pakeha	40 Principal of large urban school	Contributing school Decile 4	Church musician Guitarist and singer Music education initiatives Music specialism in teaching degree
Fiona • Interview • Observation of senior school classroom rotation • Interview	30+ Pakeha	12 Classroom teacher in medium size rural school on the outskirts of small city	Full primary school Decile 9	Wind, brass, jazz, and orchestral ensembles Music specialism in teaching degree. Instrumental performance diploma
Ian • Interview • Observation of school rock band plus follow up interview	30+ Pakeha	6 Classroom teacher in large urban school	Contributing school Decile 9	Rock and jazz bands and extensive community music involvement Private instrumental teaching Instrumental and dance ensembles Choral music
Leanne • Observation of school choir • Interview	50+ Pakeha	20+ Classroom teacher in suburban school	Contributing school Decile 10	Musical theatre Choir School production director Accompanist Piano exams to a high grade. Music education papers in degree

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1   The New Zealand Ministry of Education utilises a school classification system which attributes decile ratings on the basis of the local community's socio-economic profile, 1 representing schools with the lowest and 10 representing schools with the highest socio-economic indicators.

2   The term Pakeha is derived from Te Reo Maori, the indigenous language of Aotearoa New Zealand, and refers to New Zealanders whose ethnic origins are European.

Name Research Phases	Age & Ethnicity	Years of Service Current Teaching position	Type/decile[1] rating of school	Key musical interests & qualifications
Madeleine • Interview • Observation of senior harmony group • Interview	40+ Pakeha	20+ Relieving classroom teacher in suburban school	Contributing school Decile 5	Piano Choral and close harmony groups Piano exams to a high grade
Rosie • Interview • Observation of Year 2 music lesson plus follow up interview	40+ Pakeha	20+ Senior classroom teacher in medium size semi-rural school	Full primary school Decile 9	Guitar Kapahaka Choir School productions Piano/keyboard Piano exams
Sue • Interview • Observation of Year 3/4/ choir • Interview	40+ Pakeha	20+ Classroom teacher in large urban school	Contributing primary school Decile 9	Vocal and choral music Private piano teaching Music specialism in teaching diploma Piano exams
Tom • Observation of junior school singing • Interview	20+ Pakeha	6 months Classroom teacher in large school in small rural town	Full primary school Decile 5	Choral music Musical theatre Dance groups Rock band Music specialism in teaching degree Piano exams
Will • Interview • Observation of whole school singing • Interview	30+ Pakeha	10 Classroom teacher in rural school	Full primary school Decile 5	Accompanist/ church organist School music festival conductor Choir Music specialism in teaching degree Piano exams to a high grade

5.3   Life Stories

Given that the development of musical identity involves a complex blend of influential people, opportunity and personal attitudinal factors (Macdonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002), understanding the professional situation of primary school music leaders has required that we attend to and take account of their life experiences prior to the particular 'present' under investigation. In the course of completing the initial interviews, a key question asked of participants was 'How did you come to have a music leadership role in your teaching career?' The data gathered through this question reflected the multiplicity of ways in which primary music leaders develop. They highlighted both the unique stories that lie beneath the familiar façade of primary music leaders at work, and the common human experiences that encourage such growth and development. Although participants' engagement with music tended to begin in early childhood and was further supported by a range of music opportunities through their school years, such a summary cannot begin to communicate the rich variety and individuality of each participant's account. The data relating to these varied life experiences are presented in the following subsections: childhood, schooling, community, and teacher education.

5.3.1   Childhood

Participants' childhood music experiences contributed to their life stories in a range of ways. Not surprisingly, the importance of family members was a strong feature of many participants' personal stories. Over half of them made direct reference to a parent as someone who made music alongside them, provided a model of musical engagement or taught specific musical skills or repertoire. However this learning went beyond the mere passing on of skills and contributed to the development of critical emotional and psychological constructs around identity and belonging. Leanne recalled, as a three-year-old, being taught songs by her father and commented that she still (almost half a century later) remembered every word of those songs. She made poignant links between her love for music and her father, and her sense of loss for him as father and singing companion, following his death:

> *Music has always just been part of who I am. I've always loved music… my*
> *Dad had a beautiful voice and at home he would come in and he would*

harmonise when we were singing and you know I really missed him like
anything when he died... I suppose those sorts of things make up who you are.
(L Int1:12)

Other specific stories connected to a developing awareness and love of music itself. As a child, Bruce was taken by his father to the local operatic shows and recalled that *"it was just magic to me" (B Int1:1).* Sue, reluctantly recruited into the children's choir at church, sat with the altos *"because that's where my friend was and we sang 'Lift Thine Eyes' by Mendelssohn and I thought oh wow!" (S Int1:24).* She has remained a member of that church choir for close to three decades. The personal value and connection with music that developed in so many participants in the course of their childhood experiences was emphasised by Leanne who commented: *"If you're feeling upset about something or sad, I go back to when I was a little child, to play the piano or sing, helps the sadness to go" (L Int1:18).* Recollections such as these resonated across the years, directly linked at times to current classroom practice. As Rosie expressed it: *"That depth of feeling that we have for music, it's just part of you so you initiate it in every aspect of your life in the classroom as much as you can" (R Int1:1).*

5.3.2 Schooling

Participants' stories diverged and came together again as they shared memories of school music. Although David had no particular memories and Will didn't share any, Sue and Ian were unique in that they both chose not to be involved in music at school. In spite of his rich home experiences and well-developed instrumental skills, school music held no attraction for Ian:

No, I did no music at primary school; no I don't remember anything, no nothing.
I remember some singing at Intermediate in the class with one of my teachers
and at high school I just didn't get involved. It just didn't capture my attention.
I was playing in bands at the time but, I guess I just wasn't inspired. (I Int1:19)

All the other participants identified specific teachers as catalysts for their growing personal passion for music, and most of them also recalled the opportunities that school music contexts afforded for the growth of confidence and musical self-efficacy. Some participants gave detailed accounts of their school music experiences over extended

time periods, some focused on specific pivotal experiences, and others provided a broader brush account.

In his moving chronicle of one influential high school art teacher's career, Barone (2001) explored the question of teachers' enduring influence on their students' lives. In the spirit of Barone's work, the key music teachers of some participants are deserving of more than a cursory examination. Rosie spoke of one such teacher who made music with them and invited them into a world of musicmaking:

> *I had a wonderful role model when I was at intermediate and then high school level, and she was fantastic. She made music with us, she listened to music, she sustained it right through every single lesson - it was just so motivating. Everything she did with us involved an orchestra, creating our own music, our choir; so she was the backbone of formulating in my mind musical interest and love for song and dance. (R Int1:1)*

Madeleine recalled three very different teachers. Her primary school principal:

> *…was such an enthusiastic principal. With singing, he'd take singing and we'd all enjoy it. It was a very, very low decile school, lots of poor kids, including us… it was a nice school to be in and Mr B loved music and we loved Mr B, you know? He was this wonderful principal and he was short and he smoked but he had that twinkle in his eye of a person who loved kids. He had absolutely the right ethos for the children. And music was a big thing. (M Int1:17-18)*

As Madeleine speaks of her high school teacher, note how she identifies with him on a personal level:

> *I was definitely in the choir with OH and he was wonderful. He was this person with longish hair, completely messy, very like me in his messiness and very… I think, I don't think he was hugely respected among the staff of women because he was this man who was a bit absent-minded, but the most wonderful music teacher... He'd just sit there and put the music in front of you and not care if he didn't get the notes right because he was giving you the impression of the music. (M Int1:18)*

The absent-minded musicality of her high school teacher contrasted with a third music leader, the junior choir director at her church who was *"very uptight and very pedantic*

and very good. He was very good, he was a perfectionist and he was very, very good"
(M Int1:19).

By the end of her schooling, Madeleine had benefited from three different music leaders. When talking about her primary principal she connected the affective components of her school life such as the principal's love of children, his warm demeanour and the overall pleasant school environment with the joy of making music together. In her high school teacher she recognised a kindred spirit whose love for music, echoes of Swanwick's (1999) 'care for music', is the lifeblood of his teaching. The pedantic, exacting and potentially off-putting junior choir director was valued for his musical integrity.

In addition to acknowledging the particular influence of music teachers, often in the secondary years when it is possible for students to undertake specialist studies in music, school experiences enabled a number of participants to build specialised musical skills and provided an entrée into individual instrumental or vocal tuition. Although participants sometimes specified a beginning point for their learning, this frequently fanned out into a more complex multiple set of motivators for learning. Tom cited the opportunity to learn guitar at intermediate as the catalyst for very intensive musical learning throughout his high school years:

> *I had a teacher who taught us to play the guitar…I'd already learnt piano and*
> *I'd stopped doing that and I found the guitar as something to… get my musical*
> *juices flowing again, if that's what you want to call it. It kickstarted that, so*
> *throughout high school I took up any opportunities to learn an instrument... I*
> *learnt brass and strings and piano and percussion and all that type of thing, so I*
> *just kept learning and learning and learning, and found new instruments that*
> *kept me wanting to do more, so yes, I did music in third, fourth, fifth and seventh*
> *form… (T Int1:1)*

5.3.3 Community

Beyond their own schooling, each participant maintained an active musical engagement within the community. This signified the everyday place of music in their lives but was also the source of specific learning and experience that they could draw on in their

primary music leadership roles. Those who were church musicians learned about purposeful rehearsals and about how to accompany massed singing. Others were involved with instrumental tuition, to their own children, as part of primary school instrumental initiatives, and as private studio teachers, and this gave them a pedagogical perspective to build on in their classroom teaching.

In the year between finishing secondary school and beginning teacher education, Tom was part of a group of young people that travelled around the country performing in secondary schools and to community and church youth groups. Sue, Madeleine and David belonged to choral groups and Fiona played in a range of instrumental ensembles, and although not consciously building music leadership skills at that time, they all attributed their later use of teaching strategies and approaches to working with different leaders in community music contexts.

In addition to learning specific music leadership skills, the teachers also gained insights about performance that have continued to inform their work with children. Leanne, referring to her involvement in musical theatre, commented:

> *I found it really worthwhile as PD really for teaching choir and for being, I mean singing on stage and you're having to rehearse that much and you are doing things on stage and doing part singing… it gives you an empathy for what the kids go through as well. You understand what it's like and that whole coping strategy as well… but things happen sometimes on stage, it might be a costume that part of it comes undone or whatever and you just have to smile and carry on.*
> *(L Int1:12)*

5.3.4 Teacher Education

Participants in the study were graduates of a range of primary teacher education programmes ranging from a one-year graduate diploma course through to four-year conjoint diploma/degree courses. Many completed their teaching qualifications at a time when subject discipline expertise was a standard component of teacher education programmes.

For some participants, the decision to become a teacher was closely linked to the central place of music in their lives. Ian described how he worked as a musician for a number of years and then studied history with a view to teaching history and possibly music at high school level:

> But [I] got sidetracked and decided after having children of my own that I wanted to have an impact lower down, and you know it has been a fantastic decision really. (I Int1:1)

Although not employed as a musician, Bruce's out-of-work life was shot through with music. Prior to beginning his teacher education course he had had over two decades of involvement in musical theatre as both pianist/accompanist and musical director, and, in addition, took on a range of musical roles at his local church. Like Ian, he also expected to teach at high school level but the teacher education programme gave him a new perspective on musical development and learning:

> I'd always said, if I'd said it once I'd probably said it a million times, I wished I had gone teaching when I left school, so I made the decision to do just that. With the result at 40 years I came and started studying. And, it's interesting because when I originally made that decision I always thought that I would probably want to teach in a secondary school but during the course of studying here and particularly probably in those post-graduate years I realised that I had a real passion for getting young people involved and excited in music and a lot of people say to me now, you know, don't you want to teach secondary or are you going to teach secondary? In fact I was even head-hunted twelve months or so ago from a school, and the answer to that is, I don't think I want to do that now, I think I actually want to stay in that primary/intermediate level where you can get the kids and just get them motivated. I have just developed a real passion for it. (B Int1:2)

Participants identified a range of music opportunities that teacher education opened up for them. These included madrigal groups, recorder ensembles, solo and choral singing, piano performance, composition for children, and music history papers. Sue described:

> When we came onto Carl Orff and that sort of thing, that was just fun. Just playing around. It wasn't of course. There was a lot of learning that happened but to me this was just coming along and doing something I absolutely loved doing. (S Int1:27)

As well as the music-making associated with enrolment in specific courses, there was a rich out-of-class culture available for teacher education students. Leanne talked about the opportunity to take part in musical productions *"back in the days when there was time to do things like that at College." (L Int1:13)*

Even participants with considerable music experience enjoyed the different music focus that teacher education offered. Sue recalled that she:

> *Couldn't believe coming along and sitting down and for the first week the thing we got was Vltava. I thought so all I have to do here is sit and listen? Wow! … Dad had a huge LP collection - we didn't have television so every evening we used to sit down and listen to something… I hadn't really sat down and listened to what made them exciting… so I started to read the back of LP covers then. (S Int1:27)*

Given Bruce's extensive prior musical knowledge and experience, I asked whether he had considered focusing on a subject other than music:

> *No, probably because I wanted to pick up as much as I could and most of what I had done was either work with choirs or work in theatre basically, so I really did want to do a lot of the music here from the school orientation I guess. It's all very well to be able to lead a choir or do a school production, but all the other side of it, the curriculum music, doing the soundscapes, what you can do with kids in school at different ages and things like that, I really wanted to pick all that up while I was here. (B Int1:6)*

This response alludes to the breadth of what constitutes 'music' in the primary school context, and to the diversity of musical skills that teachers utilise in their role as music leaders, areas that will be considered in greater depth in Chapter 6.

In addition to the musical experiences offered in their pre-service programmes, participants continued to enjoy active musical lives as learners, teachers and performers. As they began their primary teaching careers, music was inextricably linked to their personal lives and it seemed inevitable that it would become a part of their professional lives as teachers. In the following major section, the musical component of participants' careers is examined from the perspective of their initial entry into the

profession, and in terms of its dynamic and changing nature within their unfolding careers.

5.4 Teaching Career

Taken together, participants' stories contribute to a rich cumulative account of what underpins the upfront work of primary music leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand. Contrary to quite widespread perceptions held by their teaching colleagues, not all these teachers had had formal training in music from a very young age. Certainly musical opportunities had been put in their way through their family, school and community lives, but, more importantly, they had grasped these opportunities, actively pursued music for themselves in their own distinctive ways, and been shaped by their love of music itself. Rosie, having been inspired by her high school music teacher, spoke of this in quite profound terms: *"And from there, I grew up with that concept and being involved in church too, with church choirs and those experiences helped mould me into the person I am" (R Int1:1).* Music had seeped deeply into the lives of these teachers and we are left to wonder how this in turn will shape their lives *as* teachers.

Beginning teachers take a complex array of experience, expectations, hopes, ideals, attributes, possibilities and concerns into their first teaching positions. Participants addressed these as they talked about how they first came to take on music leadership roles.

5.4.1 Beginning teaching

It was evident that a variety of interweaving pathways and circumstances drew teachers into the role of music leader in their schools. However all participants shared a goal, from the beginning of their careers, that music would be a part of their teaching persona and identity. For at least four of the participants, being a music leader was an intentional and expected aspect of taking up their first teaching post. For others, the process was more gradual and involved opportunities opening up across more than one teaching position as well as serendipitous events that occurred alongside the ongoing development of generic and music-related skills and confidence.

From the outset, both Bruce and Ian identified themselves and were recognised as beginning teachers who could be expected to take on a leadership role in the curricular

and extra-curricular music programmes in their schools. Close to the end of his teacher education programme, Ian had made a point of assisting in the extra-curricular music activities offered at the school in which he was completing a practicum experience. He believed that this participation in music was a contributing factor in his subsequent appointment to a beginning teacher position in that school. Likewise, as a postgraduate student, Bruce took on various relieving and extra-curricular music roles in different schools in his local community. Within a relatively short time, a part-time teaching appointment with responsibility for leading music expanded into a full-time position in one of these schools.

At Tom's interview for his first teaching position, the selection panel showed a particular interest in his music leadership skills and abilities. Having been told *"Yes, we'd definitely like to have you" (T Int1:1)*, on arrival at the school he discovered that he was to be responsible for leading all the arts in the school. When I observed and interviewed Tom for the study, he had been in his job for a term and a half. Although happy and settled in the role, he noted that it was demanding to have arts leadership responsibilities on top of the challenge of being a first time classroom teacher. In contrast, Will, who also emphasised his music strengths when applying for his first position, described how his senior teachers limited their expectations of music leadership from him and emphasised that his primary responsibility was to his own class. Nonetheless, he still found himself leading large group singing, accompanying the choir, and providing in-class music teaching for other classes in the school.

Tom and Will's experiences as beginning teachers with music leadership responsibilities point to an expectation that teachers, beginning or experienced, who have a musical background will contribute in some form to the curricular or extra-curricular music programme. Sue commented that at the time of her first teaching appointment, as soon as music was seen on her curriculum vitae there were a series of 'will you take…' questions asked as in *"will you take team singing? and will you take the choir?" (S Int1:1)*. Fiona suggested that beginning teachers don't always feel that they have the freedom to choose to be involved or not: *"Sometimes as soon as they find out that 'oh, you're a music person', well yep, you're going to almost by default land the job, which is not such a bad thing though" (F Int1:21).*

Assigning music leadership roles to beginning teachers may reflect a lack of experienced teachers to fulfil these roles. Ian noted that within the senior syndicate of his large primary school *"we had a person start who has done some shows, so she can sing a bit, but everyone else is very under-confident in terms of music, and even within the school we're not flush with people"* (I Int1:1). However it is important to point out that this is not always the case. In contrast to schools in which there are few, if any, teachers confident in music, David commented that:

> *I guess [it] is a little bit of a shame in a way, that we have had some teachers come in who would love to do choir for example, but there hasn't been an opportunity for them to do choir as such, but they do their team singing or team choir - other people pinch the choir, and not everybody can do choir. (D Int1:11)*

Sue and Fiona's experiences as beginning teachers point to a perceived link between excellent personal music skills and music leadership potential in the primary school setting. However this should not always be assumed. Ian described that:

> *Before I got here I had done some private tuition in instruments but not a lot so I've learnt a lot about pedagogy and it has been interesting for me because I've found things quite easy.*
>
> Int: In terms of learning?
>
> *Learning, so very difficult for a person who has found it easy to learn to then break it down into small pieces, so it's been very good for me to be able to get right back to basics.*
>
> Int: So just having the musical knowledge and skills yourself doesn't necessarily mean that it flows into place?
>
> *No, no absolutely not. I suppose it's a bit like… I mean I also love to write. But that doesn't necessarily make me a good teacher of writing. (I Int1:1-2)*

Although all the teachers in the study began their careers expecting that music would feature strongly in their classroom and school life, over half eased into music leadership roles by working alongside current school music leaders. Leanne was enthusiastic about contributing to extra-curricular music activity in her first school but waited for opportunities to contribute to the wider musical life of the school rather than arriving uninvited at established groups as the 'new kid on the block'. Fiona and David referred

to the satisfaction of being guided into the role by a master/mentor teacher, in David's case, an intermediate school music specialist.

Almost all of the teachers identified doubts about their readiness to take on music leadership roles, even when the role had been conferred upon them. Sue commented:

> *Initially I remember I was very, very nervous about taking a whole team for singing because at Teachers' College they didn't really prepare me for team singing. I got a lot of background, personal development in music, and then just a little bit about assembly singing. And that was all that we had. (S Int1:1)*

They also emphasised their willingness to learn from others. Learning was enhanced by sharing the responsibility for projects such as the school production with more experienced colleagues; by actively seeking input from teaching colleagues with an interest in music and from support staff who looked after school resources; by closely scrutinising the work of more experienced music leaders in their own schools and the wider community; and, at times, by saying 'yes' to opportunities that stretched their own perceived abilities.

In summary, the data suggest that beginning teachers' music leadership situations are characterised by the following: their own and their senior teachers' expectations of contributing to music in the school; opportunities offered and accepted; a mix of uncertainty and enthusiasm; a strong learning orientation contributing to growing self-belief; and a range of appropriate support and encouragement.

5.4.2   Changes over time

Primary music leadership evolved and changed for participants in the light of their developing careers and different teaching positions. Some participants, because of family circumstances, experienced frequent moves from school to school; others had overseas teaching experience; three experienced participants had spent almost their entire career in one school; some were happy to stay as ordinary classroom teachers and others aspired to roles as music specialists, senior teachers or principals.

Apart from Tom who was not yet in a position to consider his changing and developing role as a music leader, the other participants reflected on their involvement in a range of music leadership experiences throughout their careers. Some of the teachers articulated

a clearly remembered chronology of teaching positions and events, while others defined their experiences in more idiosyncratic ways. However three broad patterns of practice identified by the teachers can be summarised as follows: *consolidation and stability*, a period in which teachers strengthened pedagogical content and subject knowledge leading to a stable identity as a music leader within the school; *extending the range of leadership activity*, a time in which teachers involved themselves in a broader range of music activities in their schools and built their capacity to fulfil music leadership roles; and finally, *music leadership within the wider educational community*, a stage at which teachers accepted new opportunities to exercise music leadership within and beyond their immediate school community. Each of these will be dealt with in more depth in the following subsections.

5.4.3 Consolidation and stability

A number of participants spoke of feeling unprepared for their early work as music leaders and of being anxious or uncertain about fulfilling the expectations placed on them. Those with less experience tended to take personal responsibility for every musical outcome. Sue described how *"when you first start off it's all about you. I remember quite acutely, if we weren't doing well it was my fault. The rest could do nothing wrong. Whereas now I think, 'it's one of those days'"* (S Int2:22). As participants looked back over their careers to date and reflected in depth on specific occurrences, they identified that much of their growth and development was achieved through sustained practice and trial and error.

Over half the participants highlighted gains derived from working hard on music within their own classrooms. Fiona commented:

> *It's all good for your own development in terms of just practising doing it well, because even beginning teachers, even if you're really strong in music you've still got to learn how to teach the children when you are first starting teaching.* (F Int1:21)

On occasions in his first year of teaching, in addition to the work with his own class, Will taught music in other teachers' classes, something that was often easier than working with his own children who were much more familiar with him. He found it a relief to remove himself from all the other factors and curriculum pressures that

crowded in on music times and to focus instead on a clearly-bounded music session with children who *"don't necessarily have the same sort of preconceived ideas of you as your own class might"* (W Int1:4).

Although music was a part of his early classroom teaching, it wasn't until his appointment to an intermediate school position that David *"really got into music in quite a big way"*. Asked about the catalyst for this, he attributed the shift to identifying and responding to a particular need:

> *There was nobody doing any music in the school at the time. And secondly it was that I enjoyed it so much and I thought that 'I can do this', and I also could see from the point of view of my career as well, that it's a good thing to do. (D int1:4)*

Fiona identified a number of key factors that influenced her developing practice as a music leader. These included: time for confidence to build to the point where she could speak out with authority to teacher colleagues; supportive teaching environments in which her skills were acknowledged and she was given opportunities to lead; and the value of teaching in a number of smaller schools:

> *Sometimes it's a good thing being the only person who does the music because it gives you a chance to kind of push yourself out there, and you can take those risks and push your own development, where it is pretty easy to sit back and let someone else do the work if there's two of you there. (F Int1:22)*

Rosie consolidated her music leadership skills during a break in teaching service while she cared fulltime for her own children. She loved playing her guitar and singing and would offer her services in her children's classrooms. Working in that voluntary capacity she met teachers who were not confident to use their singing voices. They appreciated the support and the resources she provided for them to use, and at the same time she was aware that it was excellent professional development for her. By the time Rosie was appointed to a part-time position and later a permanent fulltime position in that school, she was already established as a teacher who could take a leading role in the musical life of the school.

This time of consolidation was not without its potential frustrations, particularly for teachers working in a more mobile and less permanent employment environment. Madeleine described being appointed to a school in which one teacher maintained firm control of all the music leadership roles. Another participant described the frustration of wanting to take on a particular extra-curricular role that currently 'belonged' to a less skilled teacher who nonetheless relished the role. On one occasion the participant took care of the extra-curricular group during the regular teacher's extended absence, and in that time worked hard to address some of the musical issues that impacted on the ensemble's performance standard. When the permanent teacher returned, she immediately commented on the improved sound, asked 'what have you been doing with them?', and resumed her own leadership of the group. These examples highlighted the sensitivity with which most participants treated their less-skilled or less-experienced colleagues.

5.4.4 Extended practice within the school

The music leadership activities participants embraced within their schools incorporated both regular classroom/curriculum music and extra-curricular groups, with only one participant, Madeleine, confining her role to that of extra-curricular music leader. Having used their own classes to build pedagogical content knowledge in music, and having achieved recognition in upfront music roles, some participants looked outwards towards their teaching colleagues. Ian, relatively new in his career, appeared to be emerging from the period of consolidation and questioned how he could support his colleagues to develop their individual music programmes. Support from participants was at times quite broad such as offering colleagues assistance with their classroom music programmes, and at other times, more specific such as offering tuition for guitar accompanying. Sue and Rosie both accepted that different teachers responded according to their particular needs or situations, with Sue suggesting that the most important thing was to provide support in the way of resources and to respond as and when required to specific requests from other teachers. For Rosie, there was occasional disappointment when teachers didn't pick up on offers of help but, nevertheless, a strong respect for the right of those teachers to control their own development.

Two participants referred to the pleasure of being involved in curriculum exchanges or rotations. Will enjoyed teaching recorder to children who were older than his own class, and found it satisfying to introduce them to something they had never tried before. For Fiona, classroom rotations provided opportunities to extend children's music learning into areas, for example music notation, that were difficult to address within the regular classroom programme.

A number of participants described the process of becoming music curriculum leaders as a gradual one. Following on from earlier work organising resources and teaching materials, these teachers became increasingly proactive in working with new materials and resources and incorporating them into lesson and unit plans that other teachers could be supported to use in their classrooms. Because of the difficulty disentangling the practice of leadership from the detailed tasks music leaders undertake, this particular aspect of leadership will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 6.

5.4.5   Music leadership beyond the school

A further development of music leadership skills occurred when teachers found themselves in a position to contribute to events and activities beyond the boundaries of their own school. Arts and music festivals involving clusters of schools are a well-established tradition in New Zealand and Bruce directed performances such as these from the outset of his teaching career, his confidence to do so reflecting his prior music leadership experience.

For Rosie, her conducting experience with a multi-school choir left her *"on a high for months"*. She described how she had watched other conductors at similar events over the years: *"I've looked at these role models and thought 'I'd love to do that one day' and it's been my personal goal to achieve that" (R Int1:2).* When the music teachers from the different schools in Rosie's area met to plan their combined cultural festival, Rosie was aware that nobody had volunteered to conduct the massed choir. Some of the other teachers asked whether she would be prepared to conduct and, identifying that she likes to challenge herself, Rosie's response was to 'give it a go': *"I helped conduct, it was an amazing experience…500 children, amazing, I still reflect on the fact that it was so powerful. Wonderful for my professional development too" (R Int1:2).* Having

stepped up to this new level of leadership, Rosie was adamant that she would be prepared to do so again and would be more proactive about seeking such roles.

Having been involved with the direction of a massed choir of children in another town and in another teaching position, Will volunteered to lead the choirs from 13 schools at his district's music festival. Along with the choir direction, he was responsible for the overall organisation of the evening, selecting songs that could easily be accessed and learned by the contributing school choirs, making decisions about the interpretation of the repertoire and then visiting the schools to provide support to the teachers through the learning process. He commented:

> *That was a real highlight actually… Going around the schools, for the first time, and hearing other schools sing these songs I'd been teaching my kids… it was really neat. And we got them together in groups of about three or four schools at a time, at different schools, to do like a rehearsal. (W Int1:19)*

An additional responsibility involved bringing together and rehearsing the instrumental ensemble. Although the performance pianist accompanied the children at the rehearsals, Will's nerves were strained when the full ensemble was unable to practice with the massed choir prior to the first festival performance. He was not totally confident about his ability to hold the whole music performance together:

> *I hadn't had very much practice conducting and I was hoping that there wasn't some professional conductor sitting over there thinking 'What an idiot – what's he doing?' (W Int1:19)*

The festival was reportedly a resounding success. Will was buoyed up by the positive feedback from children, teachers and the wider community that came directly to him and to his principal and already agreed to lead a similar festival the next year. He was appreciative of the practical support from his own principal who attributed credit for the festival to Will *"and doesn't take credit himself… even though you hate to think, you've always been taught not to do that, it does make you feel good and it makes you feel successful and it makes you feel like you want to do it again." (W Int1:24)*

5.5   Connections Between Teachers

In the earlier sections of this chapter, patterns were drawn from the data to illustrate personal and professional experiences that had a bearing on participants' growth as primary school music leaders. These showed that in spite of differences in circumstance

or setting, there were commonalities in the career trajectories of primary school music leaders. In this final chapter section the spotlight is turned onto the educational communities in which this career development occurred. These individual music leaders did not always work out their roles on parallel, separated paths. At times they were closely and directly connected, and at others, they operated as strands of a web that delineated a wider community of practice.

Research about the apprenticeship of learning (see e.g. Lortie, 1975/2002) suggests that teachers' beliefs about teaching are shaped by their own direct experiences as learners. For participants in this study, it was not unexpected to find that the music experiences they provided for the children in their care reflected many of their own experiences as school children, the messages (explicit and implicit) they received through teacher education programmes, their practicum experiences in schools, and their other dealings with schools, particularly as parents or as extra-curricular music leaders. Illustrations of this in relation to particular music teaching and learning tasks will be examined in Chapter 6. However the purpose of these next sub-sections is to identify patterns of connection between the participants, connections of place and of time.

5.5.1 Connections of place

Sharing a professional space with other music leaders can be an important site for music leadership development. This may be in school contexts such as students on teaching practicum and their associate teachers, or in non-school contexts as members of musical groups or cast members for a musical show. When I interviewed Rosie, she described gaining the courage to step out as a music leader beyond the safety of her own school by progressively identifying with community music leaders. She reflected on applying similar principles through being an encouraging role model to beginning teachers who were interested in taking on music leadership roles, referring to two young teachers, one of whom was Fiona. Quite independently, Rosie and Fiona both acknowledged the importance of the other in their journey as school music leaders. Rosie described Fiona as a very talented musician and spoke about how they had worked together in the senior school setting up a range of workshops for children to learn guitar, ukulele and recorder. In a subsequent interview, Fiona gave her perspective as a beginning teacher:

[I] started at [name of school], which in some ways was really good because I was on a staff where they specifically appointed a beginning teacher. At the time that I was there they didn't have any other younger staff, and that was neat because I could play the guitar, I love music, and there was someone there to take the school production, and all that kind of stuff, that's kind of how it happened.

Int: So right from the start you were doing music things?

I was there, Rosie was there as well when I was there and so it was neat because she was my tutor teacher, so she kind of took me under her wing as well and so we collaboratively did a lot of stuff.

Int: She knew that you liked music?

I must have had, I would have had it on my CV so I think it must have been picked up from the start that 'oh this girl's obviously got a few skills in this area', and I'm pretty sure when I applied for the job that was one of things they were looking for and I ended up being in the senior school with Rosie as well, which was a real bonus, because you were able to do a lot with the kids. (F Int1:2)

These two teachers, one young and embarking on her career, the other experienced and well-placed to hold onto the leadership reins, provided congruent accounts of a supportive and collaborative musical relationship.

Rosie also spoke of the young teacher she was currently mentoring and alluded to the complex emotions associated with relinquishing a role she enjoyed:

We've got another particularly strong person who loves singing on the staff and she is going to help lead with the production this year. We've given her that responsibility. That's something too that because I've had so much experience leading a production for so many years I think it's really important for me to pass on my skill to someone else and that's starting to happen now, so it's really, really promising to see and she'll do it too.

Int: Are there challenges for you in terms of building up other people's skills? I mean it takes more time to work alongside someone else than to just get in and do it yourself doesn't it?

Yes, yes and that's been, you can be a really patient teacher, you need to be able to stand, or sit back and just wait for it to happen but at the same time provide a

role model, a good model for them to use so that they can develop themselves
professionally as well. It does take time and it does take patience. It doesn't
happen straightaway.

Int: And you see the benefit in passing on your skills and experience. Is there a
letting go in that too? You know in terms of the control, well I would do it this
way but…

Yes, yes I'm going through that process right at this very moment because our
wonderful colleague who has decided that she wants to write it. I said "that's
fantastic". I've let her go, I've let myself go from that because I would have
loved to have been part of that too. But because she showed the motivation and
creativity, because she is bouncing ideas off her so much, that 'you go girl, you
do it, and you create it and I'll be there and I'll sit down with you and we'll go
through it together before we share it with staff…' So it is, I don't find it that
difficult because I realise that I've got to let go for them to develop and grow.
You can't be too possessive.

Int: But sometimes is it that sort of 'I'm letting go of something that I really
love doing myself' to allow someone else to have that chance? So there is a
generous spirit at work in Rosie?

Yes but you know when we get together and have a look at the finality of it you
know in its final form before we share it with the staff, that can be my
opportunity then to add in, or 'have you thought of this? Have you tried this
idea?' So I can add in my little 5 cents worth. (R Int1:7-8)

In addition to her work with less experienced teachers, Rosie also shared some of the
music responsibilities with another teacher who was obviously a valued colleague:

I've got a music responsibility which means [other teacher] and I take it on
board, we allocate money towards purchasing equipment and have a budget that
we work under and… resource the school and keep it updated. (R Int1:4)

Later on, in response to a question about other teachers' use of waiata, she referred
again to this colleague:

I haven't noticed a super great deal but [other teacher], down the way, she is
amazing. She does things like the date in Te Reo Māori in the morning and the
waiata to follow up with, and that's protocol in her room. Yeah she does similar

things that I do as well and it's been nice to have her to work together and
bounce ideas off because we're teaching at the same level.
(R Int1:9)

What can we learn about the ongoing work of a community of practice by focusing on Rosie? Firstly, her story illustrated that primary music leaders potentially operate alongside many other teachers and musicians in the course of their work, and that these relationships can have mutual significance and value. Rosie described three distinctive qualities of relationship which I will refer to as expert, collegial and mentoring, with similar relationships being alluded to by other participants, and evident during the observation sessions.

When describing her own development as a music leader, Rosie spoke about how valuable it had been for her to watch more experienced choral conductors and choir leaders at work. As the school choir director, she was the teacher who accompanied the children from her school to the rehearsals for combined choir events. By sharing a 'musical place' for a short time with these supposedly more expert leaders, Rosie was able to build her knowledge of what was required, picture herself in the role and, when the opportunity arose, step up to a new level of leadership and fulfil a dream that had been growing in her. Sue, when questioned about how her musical leadership skills developed, also commented on what she had learned as a chorister from different choral conductors.

Another key relationship is that of primary school music leader with colleagues who also share responsibility for music in the school. Although Rosie was the acknowledged leader of music in her school, it was clear from her comments that she derived great pleasure from working with a like-minded colleague. Similarly, when I observed Bruce leading his large school choir, he had made space for another experienced teacher with a love of singing to be very much a part of the group, not a 'spare part' but an active contributor to the musical outcome.

Madeleine's experiences provided contrasting perspectives on the potential for collegiality among music leaders. On one occasion she was employed in a school where a strong music leader retained firm control of the extra-curricular music groups:

I was walking into a situation where I wasn't in charge of music and I was the pianist, which isn't really where I wanted to be. But she was a very competent choir director and, it's different shifting into a position where you're not doing it your way, like, she's the musical director and you're second fiddle. And, you know, I enjoyed working with her but it was her choir and it always felt like it was her choir. (M Int1:6)

However in a subsequent teaching position, Madeleine took over the choir with Ian and the relationship formed between them was clearly collegial in nature. Ian, in spite of his strong performance background, had little experience of children's choirs.

At least I assume he hadn't, because he sort of put himself, expressed that he was learning things by being in that situation. So I took over that choir and it was great because Ian had some input and I had some input and we worked well as a team without him being dominated by me because he had so much musical background himself, and without me being dominated by him because I had a musical background and specifically children's choirs, yeah, so we enjoyed doing that.

Int: So you were conscious that he was open, as a beginning school musician, to learning some of the skills that you had?

Yes, I think so. I don't know specifically what he learned, but you can find out if there was anything there. And I, I learned some things from him. I think it was mutual, enjoying taking it together because we both had different skills. (M Int1:6)

Returning to Rosie and her mentoring of younger teachers, there were subtle differences between the way she worked alongside Fiona and her support of the second teacher. In Fiona's case, Rosie's assessment of her as musically talented resulted in a rapid shift from a mentoring to a collegial relationship. However in relation to the young teacher taking responsibility for the school production, Rosie was conscious of providing an appropriate level of support that would ensure the success of the venture and strengthen the new teacher's developing self-efficacy as a music leader. David also raised the importance of mentoring, in his case, providing a model for a pre-service teacher education student who hadn't seen music happening in a classroom:

I said "I'll bring my guitar in" so I went in and modelled some singing in his

classroom so he could actually see somebody doing some singing with the kids

in the classroom you know, while he was here on teaching practice. (D Int1:3)

When I observed Leanne at work with her school choir, she was assisted by a first year teacher. This presented an interesting snapshot of the early stages of music leadership: Leanne provided opportunities for this beginning teacher to 'try on' various facets of the role in a safe setting that allowed for the gradual acquisition of leadership skills and attributes. Closely aligned with the notion of shared learning contexts is that of connections that are forged through time and it is to these that we now turn.

5.5.2 Connections over time

A primary purpose of this chapter has been to show how primary school music leaders develop their musical and leadership skills over time and in the context of unique but analogous experiences. As the different participants talked about their early experiences of music education and in particular their teachers and mentors, it became increasingly evident that these teachers and mentors themselves had been recipients of formal and informal learning and teaching related to leadership. A number of participants gave quite specific examples of how this continuity of practice stretched through time. Below are three contrasting examples which represented explicit connections made by the teachers themselves, or the links that I was able to draw between participants' memories and the observations of their music leadership practice.

Ian, the son of experienced community musicians, spoke of being disengaged with the music on offer during his own school days. His secondary school teachers were unaware that he was already an accomplished drummer who played in a band and he speculated about how different his school music experiences could have been had his prior music knowledge been recognised, affirmed and built on. In his current position he was conscious of children's wide range of musical needs, from children with advanced musical skills through to children whose interest in music was yet to be awakened.

I observed Ian leading a session with the school rock band he had established, an example of the kind of inspirational musical opportunity that was not available to him

as a school child.   My observation notes detailed how he used his considerable musical skills to scaffold the children's learning and development. When we discussed the session afterwards, Ian spoke about his own and his principal's objective that children's gifts and talents should be showcased rather than the teacher's. Nonetheless, although the children were making fine music, Ian's skills and knowledge were the glue that bound it all together successfully. The level of musicianship and the sense of cohesiveness would not have been possible without a skilled leader. In Ian's work we can discern links back to his own out-of-school music experiences and forward to the skilled young musicians in his care, connections not just from past to present but likely to stretch into the future.

In her description of her principal when she was a child, Madeleine highlighted the sense of congruence, the comfortable fit of people, place and activity she experienced as a child enjoying music. When I observed her rehearsing with her school's harmony group and talked with her about the session afterwards, this same congruence was evident in her own music leadership practice. This was her first meeting with the harmony group since their first public performance at assembly a few days before my visit. Madeleine told them how proud she had been of them and how the other teachers had said *'wow!'* at what they had achieved in such a short time. The children responded that they had been very nervous and it was a *'buzz'* to know that they had done well. As Madeleine worked musically with the children, in addition to demonstrating advanced choral leadership skills, she conveyed a sense of confidence, purpose and enjoyment in what she was doing. The mutually appreciative feel of the session echoed aspects of Madeleine's own schooling that she recalled with pleasure.

Although, at first glance, the final example may seem inconsequential, it represented the sensitivity and empathy that teachers carried forward from their own experiences into their music leadership work.   When Sue and I first talked, I was surprised to hear that music had not been a strong interest for her as a child. Although she could sing and was often encouraged to join school choirs, for many years she stubbornly refused to do so. Her standard response to pressure from teachers and friends was: *"I like to do other things at lunchtime. I was doing high jump and I was doing gymnastics and I was doing other things. I didn't do choir!" (S Int1:25).* Sue's subsequent understanding of young children's needs prompted her to organise the programme for her middle school (7 and

8-year-olds) lunchtime choir practice so that, as well as time to rehearse, the children also had time to run around and play with their friends.

5.6   Summary

In this chapter, data have been presented in relation to participants' life experiences, overall teaching careers, and connections within a community of music leaders. With regard to the life experiences that preceded taking on school music leadership responsibilities, participants identified layers of personal and professional influence that came about through family, school, community and teacher education connections.

Although participants' teaching careers showed variation in terms of actual career trajectory, there was consistency with regard to important elements that built music leadership confidence and competence. Following their entry into teaching, participants embarked on a period of consolidation before expanding their range of music leadership practice, with more-experienced beginning teachers in terms of music leadership moving more quickly into a range of music leadership roles than their less-experienced counterparts. Subsequently, a number of participants took on music leadership roles beyond their immediate school communities. The connections of place and time described in the final subsection serve as the weft and warp of the community of practice cloth. Data presented showed that primary school music leadership developed within a tapestry of familial, educational and vocational relationships that were drawn from past into present and contributed to defining a vision and goals for the future.

The focus of this chapter has been on revealing more about who primary school music leaders are and about how they came to be the leaders they are. At times it has been challenging to unravel the musical and leadership identity of the teachers without delving deeply into the nature of their work as music leaders. However, having set the scene in terms of the participants in this research, it is now timely to turn our attention to what primary school music leaders in New Zealand schools actually *do* in this role. This is the focus of the next data presentation chapter.

CHAPTER SIX
WHAT DO PRIMARY SCHOOL MUSIC LEADERS DO?

6.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter data were presented in relation to how participants in the study came to be primary school music leaders and the way their roles have developed throughout their careers. Closely entwined with the notion of *who* the teachers are is the question of *what* primary school music leaders actually do as they work out their role in practice. Given the very public nature of this practice, it is important to provide a more detailed account of what it involves, not just at the surface level but also in relation to 'behind the scenes' aspects of the work.

The two major sections of this chapter present interview and observation data in terms of the tasks and responsibilities that these primary school music leaders undertook, and in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that they brought to their work. The chapter concludes with a consideration of general patterns that can be drawn from the data with regard to relationships, role congruence and care for music. In combination, data presented highlight the complex nature of primary school music leaders' work and the wide range of attributes and experience that underpin that work.

6.2   Tasks and responsibilities

Teachers with responsibility for the leadership of music in their primary schools worked this out in practice at a variety of levels. These ranged from very practical tasks such as organising and maintaining music resource materials to highly-specialised roles like writing and directing the whole school musical production; and more relational, political, leadership and advocacy roles such as negotiating release time for extra-curricular activities. Table 6.1 provides a summary of all the tasks identified by participants or observed by me. These have been organised in terms of three overarching categories: namely, practical classroom and maintenance tasks, specialised practical tasks, and broad-based leadership and organisational tasks. Within these categories, tasks have been sorted as resource-related, teaching or leadership-related.

Table 6.1: Summary of primary school music leaders' tasks & responsibilities

	Practical Classroom & Maintenance Tasks	Specialised Practical Tasks	Broadly-based Leadership & Organisational Tasks
Resources - **Instruments** - **Ministry of Education Materials** - **CDs and packaged music Programmes** - **Audiovisual equipment**	Sorting & organising • learning to use the system already in place • devising/choosing & setting up new systems Maintenance • stringing guitars & ukuleles • piano tuning • repairs & replacements Preparing a budget for music resources	Creating units of work Creating longterm music plan and overview Preparing resource material and placing on intranet Using music technology for creating and notation Sourcing and purchasing specific resources for singing, playing, listening & creating music	Communicating with colleagues about all aspects of resource provision - encouraging, monitoring and overseeing Identifying areas of need and addressing these • suitable CD players for each teacher • class sets of instruments easily available Working strategically to ensure adequate provision of major resources
Teaching - **own classroom** - **team** - **whole school**	Choosing and accessing music repertoire and appropriate activities Downloading accompaniments Putting words on powerpoint	Classroom music programme • singing • playing • creating • listening Integrating music with the wider curriculum Using music to support classroom routines Singing – leader and/or accompanist • team • whole school • assembly Team rotations or music modules • instruments • notation	Providing team and schoolwide professional development opportunities • workshopping new resources for classroom use • trialling music ideas and materials in own classroom as personal PD then extending to other teachers Mentoring and supporting other teachers as classroom music teachers and team leaders Liaising with other teachers who have strengths in the arts, technology or other relevant curriculum areas

	Practical Classroom & Maintenance Tasks	Specialised Practical Tasks	Broadly-based Leadership & Organisational Tasks
Leadership - **curriculum** - **extra curricular groups** - **wider community**	Choosing repertoire Downloading accompaniments or music Copying words and music for children Putting words on power point Copying rehearsal CDs	Choir • all-comers • specialist • kapahaka Orchestra Single instrument groups Rockband Instrumental tuition Accompanist School productions or festivals • writing music & script • directing • accompanying • teaching • mentoring other teachers	Mentoring beginning teachers as classroom music teachers and music leaders Mentoring children with strengths in music Advocating for children in terms of opportunities for music making Putting in place systems for production and festival preparation Raising the profile of music within the school community

6.2.1 Practical classroom and maintenance tasks

As a resource-intensive learning area, music activity in schools generates a range of supporting materials which need to be organised and stored. The term 'resources' incorporates materials that are distributed to all schools through the Ministry of Education's resource development programme as well as those purchased or otherwise acquired by schools and teachers. These resources can be further classified in terms of musical instruments, both classroom and specialist; audio visual and technical materials and equipment; and curriculum documents and written materials. In recent years the latter category has expanded in scope to include increasing quantities of electronic resources as well as electronic storage and retrieval processes. For some participants, organising resources was the first 'learning point' in their role, and all participants were well-placed to speak about the myriad tasks that contributed to music resources being available and easily accessible for busy classroom teachers.

In Sue's first teaching position she inherited systems for organising resources and learnt to use them with support from other teachers and the school's resource person. This experience gave her confidence to reorganise the resources in her new school:

> *You can spend hours tidying them up, especially when people just go and bung them back in the room and don't look for the boxes or look for where you keep them. I mean we used to have a huge number of percussion instruments so what I did a few years ago was I decided that nobody was really coming and getting them so I got those big white plastic containers and made up percussion kits for each age level. The year ones have got their own percussion kit, so have the year twos and year threes and year fours.*
>
> Int: For the year levels, and just one kit then?
>
> *One kit which they have to share between three classes, which isn't totally satisfactory but at least they know it's there and it's being used a lot more than when there was just a box of triangles and a box of guiros and a box of wood blocks and there were always loads of triangles and hardly anything else.*
> *(S Int1:8)*

Embedded in this account were hints of the knowledge, thinking and decision-making that informed Sue's resource organisation including awareness of what was available

and its current use, and ideas about what would make resources more accessible to other classroom teachers and therefore better utilised.

Almost all participants in the study were responsible for ensuring the maintenance of resources, for ordering replacement or new resources, and for collating and distributing new resources issued from the Ministry of Education. As well as caring for music resources, incidental resource tasks frequently become part of the primary school music leader's 'portfolio'. For example, Leanne talked about her choir's upcoming community performance and the distribution of choir uniforms:

> *We gave those out yesterday and it was a huge job because they're all different*
> *sizes. We had to try on a shirt and if it wasn't right come back and then a skirt*
> *or whatever, and they've got numbers.*
> Int: And so you have to record those?
> *Yes, each one of those, and have named bags, and we are going to have a dress*
> *rehearsal tomorrow. And I'm hoping everyone will bring those things because*
> *you send the notices out and you find a few left in the hall! So we'll just see. (L*
> *Int1:7)*

The specifics of resource development varied according to the particular school context. For example, when Will and some of his colleagues checked the instruments in their school they found that nothing needed to be replaced *"which in some ways is because they haven't been used very often. Often when they have been used it's because I've got them out. That's the downside of that - some of these things could be used more often"* *(W Int1:20)*. In contrast, other participants found themselves responsible for resources that had not been well cared for, in Rosie's case *"basically a very ratty tatty box of broken down instruments" (R Int1:5)*. Like David and Leanne, Rosie had systematically set out to expand the classroom instrument resources in her school in the light of teachers' possible use of the instruments in their classroom programmes. She described how she and another teacher shared responsibility for resourcing the school for music, a task which involved working to a budget and making decisions about the purchase of equipment and materials. In response to a question about whether this was time-consuming, she replied:

> *No, no! The exciting thing about it is that you get sent brochures in the mail and*
> *information packages about music, so you can invest in buying neat stuff, neat*

percussion instruments and in the last two years we've been building up a nice supply to provide everyone, at least, with an instrument if we're all studying music together. That's really neat to have that opportunity, because, that's important. (R Int1:4)

One interesting aspect of many of the interviews was the frequency with which the subject matter turned towards specific music or resource needs. For example, Ian and I discussed possible repertoire for his specialist chorale, and Sue and I had an extended exchange about the challenge of finding appropriate music listening material to develop into user-friendly units of work for less confident teachers. We weighed up the merits of particular packaged listening programmes and discussed the potential of specific pieces of music for classroom use.

The provision of musical resources is not something that occurs at the whim of the primary school music leader but must be accomplished in line with each school's budgetary systems. Will described how his current principal responded to requests for new resources by opening up the whole budget and providing the larger context for spending in the school:

> *If you can justify things to him then he'll go out of his way to find the money to buy the resource you need. If you say that you need it he'll say 'yes'. It's amazing – 'I will find you the money to do that because I can see…' We've just replaced all the stereos in the classrooms with ones like that. Nice, big powerful ones rather than the little dinky ones that we had before that were tinny. So the kids will hear good quality music in the classroom. Or, if you want to take it outside, because you want to do dance on the courts or whatever, they can hear it…*
> *(W Int1:21)*

In Will's opinion, the principal's willingness to resource music in his school stemmed directly from his interest in classroom programmes.

> *He knows what's happening which is good, but it doesn't always happen that way. You can be doing these quality things in your classroom that people don't know about. And I guess, also, when you say you need such-and-such a resource or something like that, and they haven't seen what you have been doing, they can't see the importance of it. (W Int1:1)*

Resource development extended to structural systems not only for the storage of materials but also as a means to encourage music activity itself. Participants were aware that their own resources, in terms of both materials and professional support, could be made available to their colleagues. For Rosie, organising her personal collection of resources had been helpful:

> *You can revisit and go back. That is the beauty of having a good little system set up like that and you can show, people come in and ask you 'can you help with this?' and it's at your fingertips. (R Int1:11)*

In Rosie's school, a new building for multi-class and specialist curriculum activities was being completed at the time of my visit. This had motivated a revamp of resources associated with establishing:

> *a musical resource area which we are developing and putting you know, stations up for instruments and that will be ongoing for a little while yet. We wanted to make sure there was the resource base for people to access. (R Int1:5)*

Sue also addressed the need to support other teachers to familiarise themselves with new music resources. She identified the difference between her previous school in which, at the request of staff, work around new resources took place at dedicated full staff meetings, and her current position where it occurred in a much more fragmented way, mostly with her own junior school (Year 1 & 2) team. Sue described how the teachers experimented with the resources, listening to the songs that appealed and discussing how they might work with them:

> *Sometimes instead of playing around with the songs we say okay, let's look at how you would introduce a unit on beat or how would you look at rhythm or how would you look at pitch? So we look at the different elements and quite often I will write a unit at the beginning of the term and I will share that unit and then say 'right, here's the new resource, and here's how you can use it.' And we'll actually try out some of the ideas together.*
>
> Int: And have you found you've got a good response from teachers?
>
> *The junior school is excellent. They get on board and have a go. Some of them will only stick to ones that I've actually workshopped and use those ideas*

they're comfortable with, whereas others will come and get the resource from
me and try other things as well. (S Int1:5)

Aside from taking responsibility for the material resources that support the regular music programme in schools, a number of participants were very conscious of the professional development support they could offer to their colleagues. For example, in her current position as a member of a large junior school team, Sue had put in place a roster for team singing.   She had set up a file that contained overhead projector transparencies and accompanying tapes and CDs so that teachers could just pull out what they required for team singing. There was also a notebook to record the songs used in order to avoid overusing particular material, and she took responsibility for introducing new repertoire:

> *I make sure that there are new resources coming into the school every year so*
> *we've got a sort of turnover of songs. There are some old favourites though that*
> *we get every year. And that's quite good because the kids from the previous year*
> *like to revisit. (S Int1:2)*

6.2.2 Specialised practical tasks

All the participants apart from Madeleine placed great emphasis on their own classroom music programmes, sometimes a challenge amidst the prevailing curriculum focus on literacy and numeracy. Finding a place for music and all the other learning areas in the curriculum was a problem to solve. Most participants ensured that music was intentionally timetabled and all were skilled at slipping music into the programme in unexpected ways. Will noted *"I try to put it in at different times without it seeming like it's something different" (W Int1:2).* Ian also addressed curriculum tensions and constraints, in his case the tension between providing spontaneous music experiences in the classroom and the prevalent philosophy of teaching for identified learning. He drew an analogy between classroom singing and reading to children:

> *Where is the learning outcome? It's like reading aloud to the children, taking*
> *some time to just pick a picture book up and read to them. There is so much that*
> *goes on when you do that, but it's easy to think 'oh no, I'm not really talking*
> *about it and teaching them' so it's not really right. (I Int1:23)*

Although only a term and a half into his teaching career, Tom was enthusiastic about working musically with his own class:

> *I just love creating things, I love making little rhythmic things with the kids. Like last term I presented an assembly which I enjoyed. Most teachers hate making an assembly, but we worked and worked and worked hard and it was basically the talk of the town… any time I went downtown people had heard about it and these little five year olds up on stage and dancing and singing and doing rhythmic things. It's just something that a lot of people find hard work and they don't really like doing, but it's something that gives me a buzz. (T Int1:2)*

Participants found that their own classroom music programmes generated interest among less confident or musically-skilled colleagues. They then followed up with explicit offers of advice, shared tried and true resources, taught new musical skills or modelled music lessons to their colleagues. Will commented:

> *They do know that they can come to me for ideas about things, in the same way that I know who I can go to for ideas for visual arts or PE or something. I know those people that I can go to.*
>
> Int: So there's actually a culture of not having to be an expert in everything? It's ok not to be?
>
> *Yeah. It's something we've developed. (W Int1:24)*

An important aspect of the role modelling by participants was the inclusion of instrumental music in their own classroom or team programmes. A number of participants believed that by widening their own skills and repertoire of ideas, they gained credibility with their less confident colleagues and were then in a position to offer practical and workable suggestions for using instruments. Rosie described how she and Fiona (then a beginning teacher in the same school) *"set up little workshops, musical workshops and divided the children up, so I took guitar and she took ukulele and then another person we had on board took recorders."* (R Int1:6)

When I observed Rosie's and Fiona's lessons I was impressed by their use of simple routines for distributing and collecting instruments, a taken-for-granted but critically important aspect of leading instrumental sessions. Rosie provided opportunities for the children, in this case, 7-year-olds, to begin developing their own leadership skills: *"I'll*

do the calling the first time and then I'll get one of you to do it next time through", and made explicit reference to strategies for children who made a mistake or got lost: *"People who waited for the steady downbeat – that is a good strategy to use!" (R Obs:5).* At one point, when two children were not playing in time with each other, Rosie stopped them and pointed out the need to watch and listen. I made the following note: *"The result was perfect timing and no indication of embarrassment or concern from the two girls concerned (a culture of constructive feedback delivered in an unfussy and encouraging way). Rosie's comment: 'Fantastic! I'm very impressed'" (R Obs:3).*

Finding creative ways to integrate music with other learning areas was also seen as a productive way to build other teachers' confidence and willingness to develop their music teaching skills and ability. As Will's colleagues worked on their class contributions to the school production, Will provided specific support and a facilitative process:

> *They got into small groups and they had weeks to do it but they actually choreographed a routine, with music. So they were bringing the dance in and I was bringing the music in, and that was part of their fitness thing, they were doing like a skipping thing and they were skipping in circles and in lines…*
> Int: So definitely music/dance/PE; and I think that is the way that you can make it happen, by making those creative connections, but that is worthwhile PE stuff, it is worthwhile dance stuff and its worthwhile music stuff.
> *Yeah. If you learn these different moves, you learn these different skills, and then you put them together into a routine; but the other thing that I do with it is a ball throwing routine. So they might have some balls and they might be in groups of four or three or whatever and they throw the ball overarm, throw the ball underarm, throw it and it bounces… it's choreographed! And there's music going on and… [laugh] and they step once and they're doing it in time with the music, so it's giving them rhythm. And they love it! (W Int1:22)*

All participants in this research were involved in specialised practical tasks of an 'up-front' nature. In fact, this self-identified feature of each participant's work was the most obvious and characteristic function of being a music leader, and could be regarded as an essential requirement for identifying or being identified as a primary school music leader. However, even within this strongly consistent category of music leadership,

there was considerable variation in how the public specialist role was worked out in practice.

An obvious means of distinguishing between the different public roles is to identify those that relate to the regular classroom and school music programme and those that are of an extra-curricular nature. The regular classroom tasks included such things as leading team, school or assembly singing or developing and supporting units of work for the whole school or areas of the school.

The term 'leading' in relation to large group singing may include any or all of the following: a *preparatory* role which involves structuring the session by choosing and sequencing repertoire, and bringing together all the required materials prior to the session; an *up-front* role which could include introducing the songs, teaching new songs, giving feedback, providing a singing model, or accompanying the singing on guitar, piano or keyboard; a *support* role for the main leader by accompanying, organising technical equipment, or sharing some of the singing leadership tasks.

Will's description of school singing reflected the thinking and preparation that music leaders put into such sessions. He referred to a range of key singing resources in his choice of song material and linked the technology requirements (e.g. running a powerpoint presentation or operating the stereo) of school singing with ICT opportunities for the students in his own class. He also touched on the autonomy of the role: *"I can introduce any song I like, really, so we do a mixture of songs that you hear on the radio and Kiwi Kidsongs and older songs" (W Int1:20).*

When other teachers attended and participated, Will felt supported in his efforts and in his care for children's musical development:

> *Sometimes they say 'Would you mind if…' and they ask me [laughs] 'Yeah, that's fine' as long as there's enough [teachers], and it's not always the same ones, they're not always all there. But you can see that they support it and they sing along, they don't sit there with their mark book; because that would be off-putting for the kids and not sending the right example to them. (W Int1:21)*

Other teachers' support was also borne out by their willingness to re-schedule school singing from a late afternoon to a late morning slot:

Because it used to be, yeah, because our school finishes at 2:30pm so it used to be 2pm or something like that. It's getting towards the end of the day and sometimes it can be a bit of a nightmare to then get them back to class to get their bags and go. It's easier to do it before lunchtime, because then if you have any problems or anything – 'Guys, it's actually lunch time - so we're trying this song one more time' [laughs]. It keeps them onto it, but it's nice that it's actually valued. It's seen as something that is valued enough to put it into a morning slot.

And whose decision was it that it was going to be in that slot?

I think I brought it up at a staff meeting about how the kids are at that time of the day and how it's possibly not the best time and the principal took it from there and said 'Any other suggestions of times?' and we came up with 11:30am, the same day. (W Int1:21)

An important feature underlying school music leaders' public roles is the manner in which these complex leadership skills grow over time. As reported in the previous chapter, Sue expressed initial nervousness about leading assembly singing. Her subsequent development in this aspect of leadership was influenced by focused music advisory sessions and her own reflections. For example, she gradually came to understand the link between the overall purpose of a music activity and the choice of appropriate repertoire. This choice was related not only to the content of the song material but also to important musical qualities:

Really it seemed to me that they just wanted an excuse to all get together and sing and build that sort of community spirit through singing. But finding the right sort of songs that fit with a large group - because it's not the same as the classroom singing - It took me quite a while to work through.

Int: What do you see the differences as being?

The songs that they sing in team singing have to be clear really... a clear melody line and clear words. There are some songs in some of the resources where the words run together very quickly and if you've got a big group singing that I can't hear the words. And trying to train that group then to sing it very well takes a lot longer than if you've got a really accessible song. (S Int1:1)

Understanding of appropriate accompaniments for school singing also developed over time:

> *Quite often the softer songs you've got to be very careful if it's going to work with a big group. I used to start initially gathering them all in and sitting down with my guitar and just playing my guitar. But then I found out that my style of playing guitar isn't quite loud enough for a really big group. So I went to simple piano accompaniments and then of course tapes became readily available as resources and so they were great because then you can also get the rest of the team involved. (S Int1:2)*

In our discussions about the accompaniment of choral groups for shared singing and performances, participants described a range of scenarios and challenges. When making decisions about singing repertoire, teachers modified or discounted song material on the basis of possible accompaniments. This was another facet of music leadership in which contextual factors determined how different music leaders operationalised their roles.

Another consideration concerning accompanying is its relationship to the broader musical direction role. For example, David used the guitar to lead the singing at his large junior school assembly. The following observation note captured the scenario:

> *David led from the front with his guitar strapped on... strummed the guitar, sang the intros, 'toru, wha...' There were some tape/CD accompaniments but mostly David accompanying and leading with the guitar. Moved within a smallish space at the front but the guitar an extension of his body and was able to make eye contact, move around, move towards groups of children or stand within them to keep the energy and the 'connections' strong... Towards the end "boys and girls, I think we could sing our harmony song". David moved through the middle with his guitar to make a space down the centre and then to separate front from back...Some conducting from up the front to keep things together but mostly led with voice/body/guitar... (D Obs:2).*

When accompanying multi-group or school singing, the emphasis is primarily on maintaining musical momentum and this differs from accompanying a group in which there are particular performance goals and expectations that need to be communicated to

the group in the course of the music making. For example, Madeleine distinguished between using a guitar for team singing and for directing a group such as her harmony choir:

> *If I was in a permanent position, I would like a guitar with a pick up and I'd like to be able to use it more. In front of the choir you're going so hard to get that guitar sound so that they can follow the direction of the sound, [but] I can look at them with my guitar. (M Int1:10)*

For Madeleine, the best scenario in her choir leading role would have been the support of a second person who could play the piano.   She found it inconvenient not having a suitable piano in the rehearsal space for her harmony group, and made frequent hints to school management about the desirability of acquiring a new piano.   Using CD accompaniments freed her to direct the harmony group in a way that would have been difficult from behind a piano:

> *Being the person out front showing them 'when I pull my arms out it means breathe, get ready, look at me, look at my hands, keep your eyes on me'. All the things that they have to learn to be a professional young choir. (M Int1:10)*

However she was also clear about the advantages of the piano over CD accompaniments in that it allowed for key and tempo flexibility and enabled intensive rehearsal of problematic sections of songs.

Although neither Bruce nor Leanne had a second pianist in their schools, they did have another teacher who supported their work with the school choirs by providing an upfront focus for the children during rehearsals. These two situations shed light on the subtle differences of context that existed for music leaders in schools and for this reason merit a more detailed analysis. In the previous chapter I reported the first year teacher's support for Leanne during their choir practice and noted that she appeared to be 'trying on' the role of leading from the front. In contrast, support for Bruce came from a more experienced teacher and music leader. He, in turn, directly reinforced her role as he provided feedback to the children. The following are excerpts from observation notes of Bruce's school choir practice:

> *The piano is old and substantial with a sturdy wooden case. It is badly in need of a tune and Bruce was apologetic for that. An electric piano is used for performances. The piano was placed on one side of the hall – Bruce had his*

back to the children as he played but frequently turned around nonetheless and always got off the stool between songs – and the children sat in 4 rows facing the piano. Bruce was assisted at the practice by another, very experienced, classroom teacher. She has had a longstanding interest in the arts and is also a competent music leader. Her role at the practice was to conduct the children and keep them focused while Bruce accompanied on the piano. (B Obs:1-2)

The following feedback from Bruce reflected his overall control of the session but at the same time reinforced that the other teacher had a valid part to play:

We'll do it as we normally do… for goodness sake, watch [other teacher]. You people have to hold onto the note you keep before the haka and what you sing when you come back in. (B Obs:3)

The advantages of shared leadership were clearly articulated by Madeleine who had worked alongside Ian in one of her relieving positions:

Now with Ian, he could do guitar and I could do piano because the piano was in a place where I could, and he could direct so it was a different scenario. That was a good scenario. We could both work it the way we wanted to. We could do guitar and piano. So it was really nice to be in a situation like that. (M Int1:10)

Accompanying is an important aspect of music leadership in action but is very often a subset of a multifaceted musical leadership role. After observing Leanne working with the choir I commented to her that even though she was positioned off to the side the children responded to everything required of them:

Yes they've been doing it today.

What was that?

Oh in getting the children with their, with my part and trying to get them to stay on pitch, and to be really clear now of what their part is because it was quite new for them, learning their new part. They're getting much better now. (L Int1:2)

These comments highlighted the importance of music leaders engaging with what is required musically, teaching new material, communicating clearly, providing appropriate musical support, monitoring progress and giving feedback.

The observation notes for all participants contained regular references to the complex interplay of factors that characterised their active music leadership. For example, in

relation to a simple warm-up activity, I recorded how Leanne initiated the exercise, monitored how the children were performing and then modelled the required adjustment:

> *Leanne stopped them early in the exercise in response to some children moving up as though a major scale – 'this is one where we go up in bigger steps and then it hops down again' – she demonstrated, beautifully, and then got them to repeat. The musical/singing role model was a feature of Leanne's leadership throughout.*

A little later in the rehearsal:

> *Leanne prefaced the next part of the rehearsal with reminders about how the children needed to be in the performance context – 'we're going to go through from the start of the programme… what is it that people in the audience really like to see on the stage? Stage presence… You are stars! Feet a little apart so you're relaxed… we've got to be very well-disciplined and 'cope'… looking to the front, we're going to practise how we're going to stand on the stage'. (L Obs:2)*

These observations reflected Leanne's experience and understanding of the physical aspects of a group performance from the perspective of the performers themselves and of the audience. As they prepared to sing through "Any Dream Will Do" the following observation note was made: *"'I want goosebumps today please…' This kind of comment was consistent with a lot of attention paid to 'how' the songs should be sung – communicating the message and the mood – faces and voices" (L Obs:3).*

Music leadership responsibilities are not merely a case of the teachers *doing* the work. Participants spoke about the emotional impact of others' expectations. As Leanne commented:

> *You feel sort of nervous. I had two parents just as they were crossing the road come up to me and say "oh well Leanne you've pulled it off again." I thought "I haven't done it yet". "Oh it will be brilliant, it's always brilliant. We went to such and such" (I won't mention this other school one) "and it wasn't a patch on the [name of school] one." I said "but I don't know what it's going to be like" and "oh it will be great" and that puts more pressure on you as well. And then another person came over and said "oh we can't wait for it. We are so looking forward to it" and it does put pressure on you when you know that you*

haven't had the number of practices. We've only had, been able to have two for the group on their own and they've both been lunchtime ones and everybody hasn't been able to be there because they are kind of juggling their Year 6 duties and things and I said "well I just have to wish and hope that they rise to the occasion"… It's just you have to trust in them and it's that kind of slight feeling of not having full control. (L Int1:7)

Madeleine also spoke about the pressures that arise from a range of contextual factors, in particular the amount of rehearsal time available:

It's stressful because you've got so many other things in school that you have to also juggle. It's less stressful if you get time to prepare, or more time to use and… the best times are actually if you get allocated times in school time for the choir to have a bit of extra singing or whatever.

What does that do for you?

It allows the choir to have more than half an hour to 40 minutes of singing, because that… think of how much my adult choir takes - two and a quarter hours once a week, and then they do their own practice, a lot of their own practice to get up to speed and, you know, these kids have such a small amount of time compared with women who have had more experience than them.

So where you can get a bit of extra time allocated, that helps the whole thing?

Yes. It's rare these days. It's nice if it happens, but it's really rare… (M Int1:9)

Leading instrumental groups required an additional set of skills from teachers. Ian, Madeleine, Will, Bruce and David touched on some of the complexities and challenges associated with managing instrumental ensembles. These included such things as: auditioning for the ensemble; accessing and issuing instruments, and making sure that they are properly maintained and tuned; choosing and providing appropriate music, including writing parts for the available instruments and ensuring that these match the capacity of the instruments and the capabilities of the individual children; understanding the technical requirements of playing particular instruments which at times involves self-tuition on the teacher's part; knowledge of the notation conventions for different instrumental families, particularly when the ensemble includes transposing instruments like trumpets or clarinets; setting up the rehearsal space; being able to operate and adjust

sound systems where there are electronic instruments; and with all the above tasks accomplished, the actual leading of rehearsals and performances.

The following direct observations of Ian and his rock group illustrated many of the above features:

> *When I arrived the teacher and the children were setting up the room so that the instruments were in two long lines parallel to the wall with the piano, and the teacher was in the middle of the room facing them. One boy (I later realised that he is the pianist) was jamming away on the piano. Others were being set up with mikes (e.g. the violinist and the vocalist) and others playing away in a restrained manner on their instruments. (I Obs:1)*

This description not only reflected the children's familiarity with the set-up procedures but also mirrored the kind of atmosphere that could be expected when an adult band is setting up.

As the rehearsal progressed, Ian's responsiveness to the musical cues from the children was conveyed through comments such as: *"If your instrument sounds a bit loud to you you've got to be careful – maybe turn it down a little on your guitar";* his familiarity with instrumental playing techniques: *"If you hit it on the top of the cymbal it's a nice soft touch but if you hit the edge it crashes";* his physical involvement in the rehearsal as noted in the following: *Ian leaned across to his left at times to anticipate the bass guitar note and cue the player;* his interpretation of musical conventions: *"Don't forget to move to the E – when you see C/E that means a C chord with an E bass";* his capacity to draw on authentic performance experience as related in the notes: *There was also a discussion related to how the percussionist sometimes drops her drumstick. Ian responded 'be professional, marking time, keep your foot bass going while you pick up the stick and then move back into your part';* his knowledge of electronic systems: *At one point Ian called out: "STOP! (there was a painful underlying electronic squeal) We've just got a feedback problem – the mikes are pointing at the amplifier",* his engagement with and monitoring of the overall musical sound: *While conducting, he frequently stamped out the beat, and scanned all the time to check that everyone was with him (I Obs:2-3).*

In addition to paying attention to the multiplicity of performance details, the comfortable interactions between Ian and the children were illustrated by the following exchange:

> *Ian:*   *When I say 'drop it down a bit'…*
>
> *Children:*   *We slow…*
>
> *Ian:*   *What do I mean? I'm talking about dropping the volume, dynamics. In 'it's all because of you' I want it to be sweet. (He sings it all stretched out). (To the vocalist) you stretch it out like this.*
>
> *Children:*   *(Laughter) It sounds like a kind of drunk...*

And again when one of the children commented:

> *I think the instruments were too loud.*
>
> *Ian:*   *I haven't got a mixer so I can't control it – especially when you're playing when I'm talking (in response to their continuing to 'fiddle'). He then mimed 'Mute, mute, mute, mute' (laughter). (I Obs:3)*

The observation notes recorded: *"There's no let up for an instrumental group leader because they're needing to keep their attention in a whole lot of places at once" (I Obs:5).* This *attention* involves perception of what is happening musically as well as actual musical involvement, as illustrated by the following observation: *"Ian maintained a very steady beat, sometimes singing, sometimes counting, calling out the chords, foot stamping".* And in similar vein, Ian encouraged the children to stretch their musical skills: *"Ian had a one-to-one conversation with the violinist 'just play down the scale, doesn't have to be all the scale… this is a chance for you because usually you're locked into the music'" (I Obs:5).*

As the children packed up their instruments and headed out, Ian dropped into a chair and commented on how exhausting the rehearsal process is. He relayed his principal's desire and his own agreement that the children's musicianship should be showcased through the instrumental ensemble. Although the children were clearly making wonderful music, Ian's skills and knowledge were the glue that bound it all together successfully – the level of musicianship and the sense of cohesiveness would not have been possible without a skilled leader. This point highlights the tension that can exist between celebrating children's musical achievements while at the same time recognising and acknowledging the contribution of the music leader.

Madeleine described the hidden work of preparing music for an orchestra in terms of the wide range of musical skills required:

> *I remember writing music for the orchestra, so I wrote a variety of parts for a whole lot of different instruments. It was something that I spent hours doing, writing a variety of parts for different instruments and what their capability and what notes are in it that the children might know.*
>
> How was your background for that? Were you just learning that on the job because you could read music and harmonise and do all those things?
>
> *Yep, yep. I didn't find that hard. Composition is fine, because I did 6th and 7th form music and I was always, you know, top of my music class, and I didn't find music hard. Music was quite easy, compositions were quite easy – when I say easy you still have to write, in those days, you know, do everything. (M Int1:4-5)*

Some participants commented on how principals' aspirations for the music in their school need to be balanced by knowledge of what is involved:

> *I know my current principal would like an orchestra here and another teacher was going to see about doing something but it was only going to be as an extension thing for this term and there aren't enough children who know, who can read music. And you also can't do it in a term.*
>
> It's not that kind of thing?
>
> *It's not a term thing. Children can't learn that quickly. You could perhaps do one tune or something. (M Int1:5)*

Madeleine's comments underscore the reality that orchestras and instrumental ensembles do not happen without a huge amount of input from music leaders and that they cannot be successfully organised or sustained within a short time frame.

6.2.3 Broad-based leadership and organisational tasks

In addition to the tasks discussed in the previous two sections, participants identified more strategic ways of operating that contributed to the place and the strength of music in their schools. Some shared quite specific accounts of these less concrete and more abstract aspects of their leadership.

Acquiring new music resources was a matter of both decision making and finance and participants frequently found themselves searching for appropriate resources to meet particular needs. Once a teacher had been identified as a music leader in the school, colleagues offered suggestions about possible resources and this assisted with resource acquisition. Sue, who had an annual music budget to work with, was:

> *finding it harder now to battle for resources because the money is just not there for music…The priorities have gone to other things and our budget's been squeezed smaller and smaller each year and you've got to be ready to fight the budget round each year. You must have a plan, an action plan, already prepared before you go into the budget round, saying, 'this is what we're looking ahead to next year'. (S Int1:30)*

This strategic approach was particularly important when approval was being sought for the purchase of highly specialised or expensive resources. Sue described the drawn-out process of acquiring a new piano for the school hall:

> *For years I've been saying the poor piano had to be replaced, partly because the piano tuners have all come in one after the other and said "this is on it's last legs… this is going to need rebuilding. You are going to have to reframe and rebuild it," and I said "well, that's not really worth it is it?" So finally I went into the budget round this year and I thought I am not going to fight it. I'm just going to say "if you don't want another hall piano we need to look at other options." And this time I got my way. So sometimes it pays not to go in with all battle guns firing but just to say "All right, this is what we would like. This is why we would like it. If you don't want to do this here's another option."*
> Or you will have to come up with another option?
> *Yes. Well I had no other option to offer them, which they didn't actually like.*
> So in terms of resources you've got to be able to make a really good case?
> *You've got to be able to make a really good case. And they've also got to know that they're going to be used school-wide. It's no good to say I want this just for the junior school. It's got to be school-wide, but that can be hard. Occasionally I've got away with it because I've been able to build a really good case and say, "Look. The juniors would really like to have this because..." (S Int1:30-31)*

Will compared a previous principal who *"held all the purse strings and if he didn't believe in it, it didn't happen" (W Int1:17)* with his current principal who was in touch

with individual classroom programmes and responsive to requests which were couched in terms of 'goals'. Part of the strategy was to be pro-active by ensuring that classroom music work was made explicit:

> *If you put it down in your appraisal as one of your goals then you can also have professional development and do some courses as well and then share that with the staff, and then that has an ongoing benefit. (W Int1:17)*

Earlier in this chapter a number of participants' were reported as describing their own classroom music programme as a professional development site. It was also clear that they saw the potential for developing this further for the benefit of other teachers. Rosie's yearly music plan, often integrated with dance, provided a balance of music experiences and was available for other teachers so that they could incorporate her ideas, as appropriate, into their own programmes. At the time of the interview, she was working on making as much of this planning as possible available electronically:

> *Then with the resources that have been set up we're wanting to collate them on intranet and then teachers can go to that musical site and say 'oh right I want to get this sort of music' for whatever study and hopefully they might find it. And it will be more accessible if they can see the range of resources we have and that will be able to support them better hopefully. (R Int1:1)*

Teachers with music leadership roles often work actively towards building the school's overall profile as a musical school, or to facilitate the use of music in events that strengthen the school community. Rosie described an intentional process that paralleled her own developing role in the school from parent help, to relieving teacher, to permanent classroom teacher, and then to being a member of the senior management team:

> *First of all, we have regular choir practices and that's grown from year to year. Everyone likes seeing what we do and more children are coming on board with that. And we celebrate those achievements by performing in the community - we go out and sing to people, old people's homes around Christmas time, special times. And then every second year we have our production, a music production; and that's huge. And so that's been for as long as I've been here and we've continued that process through. (R Int1:6)*

At the time Will was appointed to his current position, the school was going through difficult times that resulted in a change of leadership. Following that year of upheaval, teachers recognised their part in building an improved school culture:

> *We thought, as a school, we want to show the community that we are together. Because it really brought everyone together, the ones who were remaining, together, and we said 'Let's do a school production' and we did it so that we had each individual class, and we've got seven classes, did a decade. So they did a social studies decade study for the term before... term three was spent learning all about that decade and they learnt about the music of it and the politics of it and the art of it. (W Int1:6)*

The result was a school production in which every class contributed an item incorporating all the performing arts. Will and another teacher developed a script to tie the different contributions together and in addition, Will wrote some special songs and recorded the accompaniments. The significance of this event to the school community is detailed in Chapter 7.

6.3   Teachers' musical skills, knowledge and understanding

Having identified the extensive range of tasks and responsibilities that characterised the work of participants in this study, it was important to explore in more depth the factors that enabled them to fulfil their varied roles. In the course of interviewing and observing participants, it became clear that the 'on top' roles these teachers undertook were an outward expression of their musical skills, knowledge and understanding. The following excerpt from the notes made during Leanne's choir practice is a reminder that evaluations of a final performance can mask both teachers' skill levels and the intensive, long-term learning that underpins such a performance by schoolchildren:

> *My overall impression was of a smooth, well-rehearsed process, and an excellent understanding between Leanne and the children of what was required in terms of behaviour and participation, as well as musically. What kind of work has gone on over the months and years to develop this level of understanding and communication? There certainly was a great deal made explicit by Leanne in the course of the rehearsal but there was also a lot that was implied and understood about what to do and how. (L Obs:4)*

Participants themselves were aware of the hidden aspects of being a music leader. Will noted:

> *There is so much that you do in your classroom that people will never find out about. Even within your own school people don't often know it unless you've got management within the school who feel like they can walk into your classroom and see what's going on. (W Int1:1)*

Both the interviews and the observations yielded extensive data about participants' pedagogical content knowledge. For example, Fiona was observed teaching a music lesson to a class of 9-year-olds (not her own class) as part of a series of subject rotations in the senior school. Following on from previous lessons in which they had explored rhythm and rhythmic notation, this session was devoted to pitch notation. The teaching was supported by the use of software that allowed Fiona's notation on the laptop to be projected onto a screen and the lesson began with an interactive revision of notation conventions already covered. As Fiona moved into teaching about clefs and notating pitch, she responded appropriately to questions about things that puzzled the children, affirmed children's correct observations about the notation process, and acknowledged the prior knowledge of others who were keen to progress more quickly through the work. The lesson proceeded with children working individually but seated in small groups where they could discuss, share and problem solve. Fiona moved around the groups and at times, stopped the class in order to address or clarify a common difficulty. Towards the end of the lesson, children had the opportunity to play their rhythms on the pitch of B and were supported by Fiona to play accurately and musically.

The observation notes recorded my growing awareness of both the intensive teaching and the diverse skill learning. Among the pedagogical strategies evident were: roving, monitoring, encouraging, use of verbal cues, praising, reminding, confirming: *"we're allowed to do that – that's how we learn" (F Obs:4)* . The children were engaged in reading, writing and playing music, feeling the beat, internalising the rhythm, and monitoring their playing to keep it musical. As they worked they talked quietly, experimented, shared ideas, and helped each other. The following observation note summarised my overall impression:

> *I am conscious that music teaching is time-consuming – in a situation like this, the teacher is attempting to cover in a large group/modular context, the kind of*

learning that would occur over years of weekly and individual/small group lessons in the out-of-school context. (F Obs:5)

This combination of expertise in both the discipline and how to teach it manifested itself in small and large ways and was often transferable across age levels. Although most of Will's teaching experience was with children aged 10 years and over, during a class exchange in which another teacher took his class for visual arts, Will found himself teaching music to 6 and 7-year-olds. This involved introducing music notation and related conventions in a problem-solving manner, as well as group sound exploration and composition:

I read them the story of the Three Little Pigs and so we had different sounds for different things – there was the first little pig and he had a sound and the second little pig, he had a different sound, different instruments and we created a kind of soundscape story. (W Int1:12)

In contrast, in his third year of teaching Will was appointed to a position in a high school, initially to teach the junior (years 7-10) music classes but subsequently across every secondary school year level. In relation to that particular high school, Will noted:

They tended to employ primary school teachers who were better able to cater to the needs of the students they had, rather than teachers who went in expecting that this class is going to be at this level and I'm going to teach them this, this and this. (W Int1:5)

The school benefited from the services of a teacher who could work flexibly with what the children brought to the classroom and Will enjoyed the opportunity to teach music to a level beyond his expectations of primary school teaching.

Will's reports of teaching music across the full age span of New Zealand compulsory schooling underlined the depth of pedagogical content knowledge within his practice. First of all, his understanding of music was reflected in the creation of appropriate learning sequences or pathways. His chosen starting point with young children was the use of body percussion enabling them to *feel* and *experience* musical elements of beat and rhythm within their own bodies before progressing to a range of classroom instruments. The introduction of musical notation revealed Will's understanding of the need to give children a purpose and a focus for learning, as shown in questions such as *"How can we remember these things?" (W Int1:12).*

Pedagogical skills and understandings were also a feature of Tom's junior school singing in which music provided not only the content of the session but also the tools for managing the large group of children. The following transition activity was a case in point:

> *Tom once again used the 'pate'/back of the guitar as a very effective means of gaining attention. Led into a "drive a car, drive a truck, drive a submarine" pattern which the children knew well and responded to instantly. (T Obs:3)*

Later on in the session some of the strategies Tom used to support the children's musical learning were noted:

> *Tom sang "banana wey, banana wey, bana" and the children copied the sung phrase. Quite tricky melodically and they weren't totally accurate but certainly were getting very close. Tom would sing, the children repeat. He added in a steady beat clap to sit underneath the slightly syncopated rhythm. "Listen to me, watch what I do… STOP!" Removed the words and focused on the body percussion. "Repeat this clap -1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 – remember eight claps, that's all." (T Obs:3)*

In addition to an energetic demeanour that drew the children's attention to the musical demands of the activity, Tom was also able to attend to what the children were giving him musically, and to respond with appropriate support. As noted earlier, Tom's relaxed manner and the ease with which he dealt with the musical needs of the group belied the underlying skills, knowledge and understanding that informed his teaching.

6.4   Patterns in Primary School Music Leaders' Work

Having described the details of primary school music leaders' work and the skills, knowledge and understanding that underpin that work, it is possible to discern underlying patterns and themes that reach to the heart of the music leadership role. The emerging themes: (i) relationships, (ii) congruence of personal and professional roles, and (iii) care for and stewardship of music are now introduced as a prelude to the final data presentation chapter which addresses the significance and value of primary school music leaders' work.

6.4.1 Relationships

In Chapter 5, the importance of relationships for the development of primary school music leaders, both in their early lives and throughout their teaching careers, was addressed. Relationships also emerged as a theme in the work that primary school music leaders undertook. In contrast to the place and function of music in the wider world, music in schools is largely social in nature. This was most powerfully-demonstrated in the final few observations of music leaders at work. The catalyst was a visit to Bruce's school on a hot Friday afternoon towards the end of the school year as the choir rehearsed in readiness for a Christmas performance. Reflecting immediately after the session I made the following note:

> *There was not a single word of 'telling off' from either teacher in the whole 35-40 minutes and neither was there any need for it – one child on two occasions put up his hand to complain about another child close by who was apparently annoying him. This was picked up on in a very low-key way with a reminder to the other child to stay focused. (B Obs:5)*

Similarly, the notes on Leanne's choir practice which was an hour in length and crossed over into the children's lunch hour, included the following comment: *"The singing was enthusiastic and a few children were beginning to get a little wriggly - very minor and not surprising given the length and intensity of the rehearsal - but they settled themselves down again and stayed focused" (L Obs:3).* These observation notes underline a shared characteristic of all the observations – the absence of misbehaviour and the lack of any obvious need for management or 'crowd control', this in spite of the large numbers of children, the length of some of the observed sessions, the sometimes uncomfortable settings and the close physical proximity of the children.

6.4.2 Congruence of personal and professional roles

A key finding from the analysis of the observation data was the congruence between participants' in school and out-of-school musical lives. For example, although a number of participants were observed leading choir rehearsals, differences in individual style were apparent. Madeleine, who also leads a community barbershop chorus, mirrored this interest in her direction of the school harmony group. This was evident in the musical style and content of the session but also related to her demeanour as leader

of the group. The emphasis on committing the 'whole body' to the music was supported by her own physical involvement in the music as singer and director.

Sue, an experienced choral musician in church and auditioned community choirs, identified that her own choral directors have been important role models for her work with school choirs. Both Sue and Leanne demonstrated a more traditional choral leadership style in terms of the structuring of their sessions. These followed a pattern of vocal warm-ups and introductory activities, time spent on new and less familiar material and finally the opportunity to polish and refine in relation to specific performance goals. There was a clear sense of leadership from the front, and this was supported by focused evaluative feedback and occasional consultation with the children about aspects of the performance.

Bruce was very much the 'musical director' in the way that he worked with his choir. The observation notes record:

> *The practice was characterised by high energy and a fast pace from Bruce – not*
> *over the top but very much a 'we mean business' attitude… The teacher is a*
> *hugely-experienced musical theatre musician and is very used to working with*
> *rehearsal groups. Something of this professional attitude seems to have rubbed*
> *off onto the children. Choir practice is working time and the pleasure comes*
> *from the singing, the involvement, the challenge of the music, the shared focus.*
> *(B Obs:5)*

Bruce had a clear set of goals for the practice/rehearsal itself and beyond to the performance. His manner was inclusive in that he shared his 'vision' for the sound with the children but he maintained control. It was apparent that the children opted happily into this scenario and it is likely that Bruce's record of leading them in creditworthy performances contributed to high levels of trust and cooperation.

Likewise, Ian operated as the senior member of the rock band, one of a community of musicians but with a greater knowledge and skill base than the others. This was certainly an appropriate demeanour in the context of a relatively small group, although it is possible that Ian would have achieved a similar feel even if he had been working with a larger number of children. The following excerpt from the observation notes is

typical of the need for leaders of instrumental ensembles to attend to a range of musical issues:

> *Ian demonstrates to the pianist how to play a rhythmic ostinato on the chords of the 12-bar blues. Piano player immediately joins in. Then Ian sets up the keyboard "I need an organ sound in there. Can we just hold the instruments for a minute?" Demonstrates on keyboard. Girl percussionist "Do I do one bass or two?" Ian "experiment. I have no idea what's going to happen…" (I Obs:4)*

The above exchange also suggested a willingness on Ian's part to share control of the music with the children and to allow consensus to develop around certain aspects of the performance.

6.4.3 Care for and stewardship of music

Participants' care for and stewardship of music emerged in a range of ways during the interviews and observations, with aspects of care evident in the investment of time and energy into their own class programmes, extra-curricular groups, performances and school-wide music activities. In addition, teachers showed concern for the children as developing musicians and for the quality of various musical performances and activities. Specifically, teachers cared about creating opportunities for children to be involved in a range of music making and learning, they showed concern that children's engagement with music should be constructive, they described situations in which they made extra effort to include children who could otherwise have been excluded from musical events, and they provided additional support over and above formalised music activities for children to develop aspects of their musicality. Examples of all these aspects of care are expanded on in Chapter Seven.

Some participants addressed the issue of whether or not music education in primary schools should be delivered by specialists rather than by regular classroom teachers who lack musical skills. Will articulated the two sides of a debate that extends beyond this study and into the international music education arena:

> *I think that there's some positive things about it. The positive things would be that if [music] wasn't happening much in the classroom or because people weren't confident with it, at least they're [children] then getting exposed to it. They're being exposed to it by someone who's confident with what they're*

doing… But I guess the negative side being that it must be seen by the children to be something, a different sort of subject that has to be taught by someone else rather than your reading or maths. You know. If my normal teacher can teach me these things, but this is different, this isn't one of my normal things? So I think that's probably, could be seen as a negative. (W Int1:1)

At the heart of his argument is the tension between increasing children's opportunities to develop musically because of the presence of a music specialist and a concern about how children might perceive music, and by association, their own potential in music, if it cannot be taught by a 'normal' teacher. This issue will be addressed in more depth in the discussion chapter.

6.5   Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present data relating to the tasks and responsibilities undertaken by primary school music leaders and to the skills, knowledge and understandings that underpin this work. A table which identified categories of tasks, was developed as a means of organising the complex data generated through the interviews and observations. In summary, the tasks and responsibilities identified by participants were categorised in terms of resources, teaching or leadership. These three categories were further refined according to the particular focus of different tasks. Some had a practical classroom and maintenance focus, others involved specialised practical tasks, and a final set were concerned with more wide-ranging leadership activity.

In addition to the descriptive data about tasks and responsibilities, data were presented to illustrate participants' reported and observed levels of skill and knowledge in relation to different aspects of practice. These data highlighted that layers of understanding, perception, decision-making, and emotion lay beneath the everyday surface of primary school music leaders' work with children and their teaching colleagues. Finally, three overarching themes, relationships, congruence of role and care for music, which emerged from the data have been introduced and will surface again in the final data chapter and the discussion chapter.

Taken together, Chapters Five and Six present important personal and professional characteristics of the participants in their role as primary school music leaders, and highlight key aspects of what the role entails in terms of tasks and responsibilities, and skills and knowledge. Having explored the questions of 'who' music leaders are and 'what' they do, the purpose of the next chapter is to present data that shed light on the significance of primary school music leaders' work.

CHAPTER SEVEN
WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL MUSIC LEADERS' WORK?

7.1   Introduction

The presentation of data in the previous two chapters related to both the person and the role of primary school music leaders. In this chapter, the data presented shed light on the final research question which is concerned with the significance of primary school music leaders' work. Whereas broader questions of significance will be addressed in the discussion chapter, the focus of this chapter is on presenting the views of participants as recorded in the interviews and in the observation notes while they engaged in the practice of school music leadership.

In this chapter and at other points throughout the thesis, music, the process of teaching and learning music, and the work of teachers who lead music in their primary schools, are all considered in relation to three different but related terms. At times, reference is made to the *benefits* derived from learning or involvement in music. Underlying such statements is the suggestion that engagement in music can add something identifiable and worthwhile to individuals or groups, consistent with the Oxford Online Dictionary definition of *benefit* as "an advantage or profit gained from something". Following on from the idea of *benefits*, the term *value*, defined by the Oxford Online Dictionary as "the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth or usefulness of something", is used to represent a less specific and more global understanding of music's place. Finally, at an even broader level of generality, music is discussed in terms of its overall *significance*, building on ideas not only of inherent worth but also as being worthy of further examination. These thoughts are encapsulated in the Oxford definition which equates *significance* as "the quality of being worthy of attention; importance".   The question to which the data in this chapter provide an initial response, is directly concerned with uncovering the extent to which the terms *benefit, value* and *significance*, have a place in the discourse surrounding the work of primary school music leaders.

The opening chapter section addresses the value and significance of music in their schools to the participants themselves. Subsequent sections move progressively outwards to explore the perceived value and significance for individual children, larger groups of children, other teachers, and the school and wider school community.

7.2   The Value and Significance of Music to Participants

Evidence was presented in earlier chapters regarding the importance of music in the personal and professional lives of all participants in the study. Their accounts of becoming music leaders in their schools and of the nature of that work linked closely to their comments about the personal value of their work. Those data have been categorised in terms of aspects from which teachers derived direct benefit, and aspects in which they experienced vicarious satisfaction through the perceived benefits to others. In reality, it was often difficult to separate the two.

7.2.1   Direct benefits to participants

In the course of the interviews, it became clear that for many of the teachers, the work they were undertaking in their schools contributed to the fulfilment of their own musical needs. Some participants attributed the personal rewards to the creative possibilities inherent in their work as music leaders, with one, Rosie, commenting *"I love it. It feeds you… the energy and creativeness" (R Int1:4).* For Ian, who at that time was not involved in any community music ventures, music-making at school provided an outlet for his musical impulses: *"I mean I'm not playing anymore, I'm not in any sort of band, and all my energy is going into that. And it is rewarding" (I Int1:8)*

Participants all expressed the view that music could be utilised to lift the tone and mood of the class and the energising power of music was a common thread in the transcripts. For example, Tom asserted:

> *It does energise me for the job… today we stopped and had a 'Jump-Jam' break and that energises me, it energises the class, the whole mood… because I was getting frustrated with the children who were just slow. They are slow on some*

days, but after the 'Jump-Jam' break we got energised, we got our work done
and I was a happy teacher and they were happy students. (T Int1:23)

Because extra-curricular music groups such as choirs and bands tend to rehearse during break times, a number of participants reported rushing from their classrooms straight to practice. Sue summed up the common experience of going into a rehearsal feeling depleted:

So when I'm dragging my feet over there with my file box thinking 'Oh, here's
another lunch time with all these kids' but once you get there…and the children
energise you, they're so enthusiastic and so keen to be part of it all. You enjoy
them so much that it's wonderful when they opt to come into a lunchtime activity
and share that music making with you. (S Int2:11)

Closely related to the power of music as an energiser and mood enhancer was its overall emotional impact for teachers. Sue associated this explicitly with the music itself, for example, the inherent quality of a song first thing in the morning, while Leanne recalled her feelings about the music-making of her first class, more than three decades earlier: *"I would walk into the classroom and they would all be singing with big smiles on their faces when I walked in and it was just… it was just awesome actually, it was just really cool" (L Int1:13).* In addition to these everyday pleasures, most participants spoke about feelings of intense satisfaction associated with successful performances. As well as the overall sense of achievement, there were, at times, quite specific and unexpected high points in a rehearsal or performance which Rosie referred to in terms of a peak personal experience: *"It's neat when you get that little personal buzz, you feel a twinkle down your spine. It just thrills you" (R Int1:14).*

A number of participants were aware of how their enjoyment contributed to a more positive experience for the children. Tom observed that: *"the way that I feel is that if I'm enjoying it, I'm doing it actively and getting into it… it's going to get the children enjoying it more" (T Int1:14).* Rosie touched on the complex interplay between teachers' and children's emotional states and their shared music-making, all operating as a mutually supportive system:

When you're dancing in a circle doing an action song, they're just laughing, oh
it's just so wonderful… and they're all happy, it's just lovely to be in an

environment where you're fostering that love of song and dance, you know you're seeing them being happy, that's just a great feeling of satisfaction for me. (R Int1:11)

In addition to general agreement among participants about the contribution music can make to creating a positive classroom environment, Bruce also commented on choosing songs to convey particular messages and emphasising the importance of communicating that meaning in the singing:

I just love songs with those sorts of messages about believing in yourself and following your dreams and you know looking after the world, and the environment and so does [another teacher], so we get into that. I guess a lot of that passion does rub off onto the children as well… Sometimes I have been known to be at the piano and I will just stop playing and I don't say a thing and the kids damn well know I'm crying. (B Int1:24-25)

This deep emotional connection to music was also described by Madeleine as a powerful motivator for working musically with children:

I guess, on the selfish side of it, you do it because you, it's inside you and you want it to bubble out because…it's like the spring isn't it? The spring from under the ground… so yes, it does give me pleasure. (M Int1:9)

Primary school music leadership is hard work but this was balanced for participants by the enjoyment it brought them as well as the recognition for their work from children and parents. Ian seemed unprepared for this affirmation: *"I guess just the response from the children actually is reward enough really and parents. It's been kind of a pleasant surprise if you like" (I Int1:18).* Sue also commented on the motivating effect of receiving feedback from parents: *"I got a lovely letter from parents saying 'our daughter goes around the house singing all the time since she's been in your class.' And that sort of feedback's wonderful" (S Int1:20).* And further on: *"When you see how much it means to some of those children and to some of the parents out there, why would you not put in extra effort?" (S Int1:36).*

The preparation put in by Tom and his class for their assembly item was something that *"gives me a buzz".* What was unexpected was that it became *"the talk of the town… Any time I went downtown people had heard about it and these little five year olds up*

on stage dancing and singing and doing rhythmic things" (T Int1:2). Ian summed up his feelings in the following way: *"I've done a lot of things in my life, I've played a lot of relatively big gigs to lots of people but the rewards are far greater for me with children" (I Int1:3).*

7.2.2 Vicarious benefits to participants

In addition to direct benefits from their own involvement as music makers and leaders, participants also described how they derived vicarious satisfaction from such diverse factors as: children's enjoyment of music; children's musical growth and development; the involvement and success of particular children, especially those who struggled with other aspects of life within and outside of school; and the recognition the children received for their music-making.

With regard to the enjoyment experienced by the children themselves, participants highlighted a range of specific aspects that pleased them. For example, it meant a great deal to Bruce that the children in his school choir showed their enjoyment of singing so overtly with their expressive faces, and he was particularly pleased that the choir had attracted so many boys. When there were not always other rewards to sustain teachers, children's pleasure was a strong motivator. Sue encouraged:

> *Stay enthusiastic, even if you feel like you're the only one with that love for music, keep that enthusiasm. Because the children love it so much.*
> So that's what would motivate you to keep on?
> *Oh definitely. When you see the children's faces, when you bring those instruments out or when you put In the Hall of the Mountain King on, you know, they love it.*
> Are you saying that over all the years that would be the thing that would continue to have motivated you?
> *Yes. It cheers me up too. It keeps me going too. (S Int1:12-13)*

Although participants often predicted individual or groups of children's likely levels of participation and success in a range of music activities, when success came unexpectedly, and to unexpected children, this added to teachers' sense of satisfaction. Fiona emphasised:

It's always nicer for the kids that in some contexts they don't get a lot of successes, but then you get them in an environment like that and they push themselves and go out of their comfort zone and do things that they wouldn't normally. And for those kids that's even more rewarding, rather than the kids that are always out there and always loud and you know they'll always give it a go. (F Int1:19)

Another source of pleasure were the children whose choice to even participate in extra-curricular music came as a surprise. Sue described two such children:

R - he's a macho little boy! He should be out playing soccer, but he has opted to come along to choir practice and he has come to every single choir practice. And the funny thing is he had a close little friend who wasn't in my class last year and T decided that he would come to choir practice and he came for three weeks then opted out. Well he's just come back with R, just before the end of the term and said 'Can I come back in? Would I be allowed to come and join R again?' So, R has obviously talked to him and he's now seen a performance in assembly and he's decided, oh yes, he does want to be a part of that again. (S Int2:5)

Making music with children was frequently the source of enduring relationships, with satisfaction around children's musical development not confined to their time at primary school. Sue described how she looked forward to one local high school's musical 'roadshow' and *"seeing them grow a bit more and that confidence that they get being up on stage is just terrific… You can sit there and go 'Oh yes, that one and that one and that one and that one'" (S Int1:36).* Ian also reflected on the journey beyond the primary school years: *"The thing for me that would be the most thrilling is say in 10 years time seeing where they have got to, just to see if any of them have really gone a long way" (I Int1:6).* Although realistic about the likelihood that not all the children would continue with music in the future, in relation to teaching guitar to her Year 5 class, Fiona commented:

Even if in the long run one or two of them think 'oh yeah I might take this on when I get a bit older', you know just as their own choice, you think 'well that was worth it then'. (F Int1:8)

7.3   The Value of Music to Individual Children

Participants were aware that many of the benefits they themselves experienced from being involved in primary school music were also shared by the children. Ian described music as being "*so much less in your head than that other stuff that you have to do... It's so good for the soul and so different from what often children are experiencing*" (*I Int1:20-21*).   However the primary emphasis of this section is less on these generalised benefits and more focused on the stories of individual children and the gifts that accrued from the presence of music in their lives.

Providing opportunities at primary school level for involvement in music can benefit a wide range of children. Will identified this as an important aspect of the overall role of schools:

> *I think that you have to give them so many different opportunities from many different areas for them to be able to have some success… that's what school's all about really. This does give you some basics – and it's the same with music. I'm introducing you to some different ideas and if you want to take it further, then you can. (W Int1:16)*

One important group identified were the children whose access to music tuition was directly attributable to the system operating in a particular school. Ian alluded to a misconception that music tuition is readily available in the community for all children who show an interest in it, an argument sometimes advanced for not timetabling music in primary schools. As well as the cost of private lessons being prohibitive for many families, he maintained that lack of exposure to music is a barrier for other children who, nonetheless, may be very talented musically. He gave the example of a child who was introduced to keyboard through the primary school's instrumental programme and was still learning and doing very well at high school four years later: "*That is definitely one boy that would not be playing piano, he didn't come from a musical family, and his little sister was in my room this year and she has just started learning keyboard too*" (*B Int2:8*).   In similar vein, David spoke of a student who had recently returned to his school to give a concert:

> *[He] started playing the piano with an after school programme on keyboard and now is developing into a very fine pianist and who knows? If he hadn't had that*

opportunity at that time, this young guy has found a gift which has been

nurtured and developed so, you know, music in school? (D Int1:15)

Where parents were in the position to follow up an identified interest or talent with private lessons for their child, it was often the opportunities made available by a primary school music leader that provided the impetus. Ian recounted the following story:

> *One boy who was in my electives group in Year 4, he had never seen the drums*
> *before, I got him involved in that. And then he went through and progressed and*
> *started getting private lessons and then last year he got a musical scholarship to*
> *a private school from playing the drums, so that was just fantastic.*
> Int: And you really can see that you've made a difference?
> *Yes if he had not met me, if I had not been teaching here he might not have done*
> *it so it's very tangible. And a hugely high percentage of my class take up*
> *musical instruments during the year if they haven't already which is a lovely*
> *feeling. (I Int1:3)*

Rosie described a boy who took up guitar in one of her elective groups and is now a very talented guitarist at secondary school level:

> *Yes and his Mum just says 'thanks so much for giving him that opportunity'. I*
> *remember that particular boy. I went and borrowed a spare guitar because we*
> *were one short and gave it to this boy.*
> Int: It paid off. You don't always know where it is going to lead?
> *Yes, he's joined a band and he's doing so well. That's a real inspirational story.*
> *(R Int1:6)*

There was general agreement among participants that offering non-auditioned performance groups contributed to ongoing music learning and development. Bruce was adamant that making his school choir open for everyone, including those who had not yet learned to sing in tune, had a marked impact on overall tunefulness:

> *I've got kids now singing in the harmony group that three or four years ago*
> *there was no way I would have thought they would be able to sing in a harmony*
> *group… because they do, their pitching does improve. They still might not be*
> *the most perfect in tune singers, they might miss the odd note but 99% of what*
> *they are singing they are singing in tune, and they are listening to their voice*

and they are pitching it… which just proves the point, the more you sing, the more you learn to listen, the more you can sing. (B Int1:25)

Where there were auditioned roles, such as for lead parts in school productions, participants demonstrated an open attitude towards children who seemed unlikely performers. Fiona described one situation in which her private reaction to one child's appearance was surprise and little expectation that the child would do well:

And she was the one that just blew me away absolutely, she was astounding… shy as anything and very nervous about getting up on stage… and she got to the night of the production and she was really nervous and we were talking to her before the show saying 'you're just going to be brilliant' and she got up and she was just astounding and you just went 'oh wow!' (F Int1:19)

In addition to the unexpected children who shone in an audition situation, other participants spoke about children who did not push themselves forward musically and needed to be identified and encouraged by a teacher. The important factor for these children was the presence of a knowledgeable teacher who noticed that they displayed musical talent. Sue described a very quiet girl in her class:

I suddenly realised she has a lovely singing voice, quite a folksy husky singing voice - I said would you like to do a solo in the school production? Oh, would she what! And it turned out she knew how to hold the microphone, her father's a folk singer. She said, "I'm only allowed to play the tambourine." I said, "Now you'll be able to go around and say 'I can do a solo dad'."

Int: So she had a solo?

She had a solo in the production and she just blossomed. So that was really exciting. And then she brought me along this CD of her father's folk band.

Int: So it's opened up her sharing something special?

Yes. So that's just this year - but that's happened over and over again. (S Int1:21)

Yet another group of children who benefited from the active presence of a music teacher leader was the group with identified strengths and experience in music. A strong music programme in their primary school provided a platform for them to share talents that otherwise may not have been revealed. Will suggested:

There's not always a lot of chances for people who are into those arty-type activities to shine and to show that 'Hey, this is what I'm really good at.' They never get to share with any of you 'I've actually been learning a musical instrument at home that you've never had the chance to hear, but because of that I can actually play this quite well.' I think I've had some moments in class that have been really nice, the kids who have been having music lessons have been able to share something… a lot of it is letting those kids shine, this is their thing. And, you know, the other kids are able to 'wow', and celebrate this success. (W Int1:16)

Participants identified being a musical role model as an important aspect of their music leadership in schools. Ian commented:

I encourage all of the kids who are playing things to bring it along and play it for me which they seem to get a buzz out of and I'm just trying to show an interest so that it encourages them to progress more because I think teachers can be quite influential, even more than parents sometimes. (I Int1:4)

Encouragement for children to share their musical knowledge and skills in the school setting was further enhanced when teachers showed an interest in making music with the children. Fiona recounted a story that illustrated both the possibilities for being a role model and the opportunity for children with musical strengths to gain recognition from their peers:

I remember another girl who started to learn to play the flute and I said to her one day "bring your flute along to school" and I brought mine along and I brought along some simple duets. We ended up sitting there playing, must have been in our lunchtime and I remember it ended up by the end of the lunchtime there was a big crowd of kids at the door, you know and it wasn't like "ha, ha what are you doing?" All these kids were just gob-smacked, just at the end like the hugest applause and that was just lovely.

There's a magic about making music with other people?

Yes and I tend to find that the kids get a lot out of that sort of thing, I mean especially because all the times that I talk to kids about what I do, and they know that I've been playing a long time and I play fairly well… that's really neat for them as well, quite rewarding. (F Int1:19)

A number of participants offered advanced performance groups such as a rock band or a harmony choir, and these provided extension opportunities for children with established music skills. The idea for Madeleine's harmony group came from a child who had been in the school choir the previous year: *"She gave me this letter which basically said 'we had such a wonderful time last year, is there any way that you could do a small choir group with lots of us and start one up?'" (M Int1:14)*. A key musical benefit for members of these groups was the opportunity to develop performance skills related to music ensembles. Ian commented that *"in private lessons you're not likely to find yourself as part of the group for a long time, and you may never, depending on how far you go, may never make an orchestra" (I Int1:5)*. However the auditioning process for these groups was a source of tension for participants as they balanced the need to maintain the musical standard with their overall philosophy of inclusiveness in a discipline where individuals are easily knocked back by perceived failure. In all cases, participants resolved this conflict by providing focused feedback and encouragement for the children who were not ready *yet* to move into the specialist groups.

All participants were asked if they could recall individual children for whom music had offered benefits over and above their actual musical development. For some children, the music component added a special dimension to their school day. Ian described receiving a card in which parents told how their child had:

> Fallen in love with music… *"they didn't like to come to school last year but now they can't wait to get to school". And I know it's not just music that it's about but it's got a great deal to do with it. I guess it's the approach so that learning is a bit more fun. (I Int1:18)*

Both Rosie and Fiona believed that the provision of music activities in their own classrooms helped them understand more about individual children's needs and personalities. Rosie noted:

> *You often find that the personalities that are the quiet little children, and they're responding expressively and moving to the dance, they're really enjoying it and you're bringing them out of their comfort zone and you're building on their self-confidence. (R Int1:3)*

Where participants developed strong relationships with children in their extra-curricular music groups, these often extended into the wider school environment. Madeleine spoke about how children:

> …write you notes at the ends of years, loving little notes to say "Oh, thank you, we've had such a wonderful time" but children in the playground… if you take choir groups or drama groups or whatever, the kids show you that they appreciate what you're doing with them… that connection is there because you have done the extra mileage of giving to them and they produce back in their drama or in their singing and they show their gratefulness for that… there is, very definitely, a relationship involved. (M Int1:14)

Children with challenging behaviours and with special learning needs featured strongly in teachers' accounts of the benefits of music to individual children. In the following example (identifier withheld for ethical reasons), although it is not possible to establish a causal relationship between music and the more settled behaviour the girl exhibited, there is evidence that involvement in music making was a source of pleasure and relaxation for her.   A detailed description of this child's history follows:

> The ten year old that I was talking about, hers is a behavioural thing but it's also an upbringing thing, there has been all sorts of things in the background and it's almost a thing like music therapy for her to sit and sing, and she absolutely loves the singing. In actual fact, she lives with her grandparents and her grandmother wasn't going to let her sing in the combined schools music festival. She came up to me and said I don't think I will take her and I said "Oh bring her, I said she won't be a problem she sits there like…" – "Oh really, really?"

Because the grandmother was concerned?

> Yes. I said, "No you let her come. We'll be on the side of the stage and if we need to we will go and get her and take her off". And this was a kid that screamed and kicked and there were episodes when she first came to school where she ended up getting locked in sick bay for her own safety while the grandmother came, just kicking and punching and all sorts of things. And she is not like that now. After 18 months at school she has completely changed but just loves the singing. And she sang and the grandmother said "oh gosh, I am absolutely amazed, I was watching her and she was singing and she is as good

as gold", and I said "well that's what she is like in the choir every Friday". And
so consequently she's sung at another choral festival and then the grandmother
said "well we can't have her in the school production" and I said, "Why not?
She hasn't been an issue through rehearsals", so she did it, she was fine, not a
problem. I think for her it is almost like a music therapy thing because she sings
a lot in class too, apparently according to her teacher she'll be singing under
her breath a lot, so she obviously enjoys the singing and enjoys the music but I
think there is more, it is obviously relaxing and calming for her as well.

Given that the focus of this chapter is the value and significance of primary music leaders' work, it is worthwhile unpacking the example given above from this perspective. Firstly, the teacher concerned made it possible, at a number of levels, for a child who presented with significant behavioural difficulties to be involved in singing. At a task level, he offered an inclusive school choir, he entered and prepared them for inter-school choral events, and he directed school productions that involved every child in the school. In addition, he noticed how a child, whose behaviour was extreme in many other settings, appeared to not only love singing but also to exhibit much more settled behaviour during rehearsals. In response to the grandmother's concerns about how the child would cope in a public performance context, he expressed confidence in the child and reassured her grandmother that he had a plan if things did not work out. Not only did the child experience the delight of taking part in a public performance but she was seen by her grandmother, and by others who knew of her history, to be, like every other child on the stage, *"good as gold".* When it came to school production time, once again the grandmother was concerned that the child would not cope, and once again the music leader backed the child based on his observations of her at rehearsal time. In addition, his knowledge of the therapeutic power of music provided insight into the child's in-class singing, something he could share with the classroom teacher.

Over the years, David was aware of a number of children who presented with behavioural issues and found a niche in music, blossomed as musicians and from that point of strength discovered a new place for themselves at school:

Probably our top guitarist in the school is a girl who, when she was in year
three and four, was the biggest rascal, and hugely difficult. She got into guitar

and now she can, well I just can't keep up with her at all, but her behaviour's
changed and she is a leader in our school. She plays guitar for kapahaka, and
the kid's whole disposition is different, so I'm quite sure there's a major impact
with regard to what music has done for her which has impacted on her self-
esteem and her standing in the school.

Given her a role?

Absolutely, which has changed her behaviours and all of that, and instead of
being a kid who will be going on to intermediate with teachers writing all sorts
of stuff, "watch this kid, behaviour's bad, her language is bad, won't complete
anything, and the future looks glum", to a kid who's got all this potential and
promise.

And you'll be saying to them, keep nurturing this?

Yes, in another couple of years she'll be just shining as an intermediate and
secondary school student. (D Int1:13)

Again, it is important to identify the direct link between the child and the work of the
school music leader. First of all, David had a central role in setting up a range of
instrumental tuition programmes in school time and out of hours, and this provided the
girl's initial access to guitar tuition. Subsequently, he identified that her guitar skills
exceeded his own, leading to the opportunity to take on a music leadership role as
accompanist for the kapahaka group. This allowed a subtle shift in the relationship
between the student and David and the other teachers, from one of antagonism to one in
which they worked alongside each other as members of a school music community.

A common thread in the above and other situations was the opportunity that music
provided to view children in a different and more favourable light. The power of music
to transport children to a different psychological space was also borne out by frequent
comments along the lines of: *"it just seemed to quieten them down somehow, it was*
something they really enjoyed doing" or, *"he was just absolutely fixed on the stage and*
pointing out all the things that were happening" (B Int:1 14), the latter comment in
relation to a child's demeanour at a concert, a child whose behaviour was normally a
cause for concern.

Participants' commitment to '*difficult*' children as evidenced by giving them particular performance opportunities often possessed an enduring quality that impacted beyond the children themselves. Sue described:

> *A little boy who had major behavioural problems, I got him to be the drummer in the drummer boy song at the end of year. Look, not only did he remember that but his younger brothers came along expecting to get that role as well because their older brother had had that role. "Oh can I be the drummer boy? Because [older brother] did it." (S Int1:21)*

As well as being convinced of the positive contribution music could make to all children who attracted special education funding, David also stressed that these children could equally be gifted and talented musically:

> *Especially the kids with autism, it's amazingly good for them, and they just love that rhythmic stuff and the drums and the claves and things and it is just great... In that whole special education area I think, some kids who are out there on the gifted and talented area as well, need that musical expression to be part of their experience. (D Int1:12)*

Where participants taught children such as these in their mainstream classes, they saw first-hand the benefits of a strong classroom music programme. In such cases, music was often one of a raft of strategies for helping children adjust to the social demands of the classroom, or to deal with aspects of their behaviour. Leanne spoke about a child on the autism spectrum who loved singing: "*when I was teaching this child, if he was very angry, or if I wanted to calm him down, we would do singing and that would calm him down" (L Int1:5).* In later years, Leanne supported this boy's participation in an interschool choral festival, in spite of opposition from other staff members who didn't believe he would cope. Although learning to cope with the pressure of the performance was at the heart of their preparation work together, Leanne was aware that there was an element of risk:

> *Even going against other advice I allowed him to stay and he outdid himself on the night and made me cry.*
> Incredibly satisfying when you have backed a child and they do the rest.

Yes and it's special for their families because they tend to, it's a hard road for them right through and so those special positive moments are like gold. (L Int1:5-6)

In addition to the above examples of individual children benefitting from aspects of their work as primary school music leaders, participants spoke about situations which had significance for larger groups of children. This is the focus of the following section.

7.4   The Value of Music to Classes and Groups of Children

In this section on the value of music experiences to larger groups of children, attention will be given first to specifically musical benefits. Following this, data will be presented that demonstrate the value of music in relation to other learning areas and significant aspects of school life.

7.4.1   Musical benefits to groups of children

It seems self-evident that effective music education practices in schools will enhance children's growth and development as musicians, although justifications for the inclusion of music often focus on its extra-musical benefits. Both the observation sessions and participants' reported experiences captured something of the breadth and variety of possible music learning, and there were many specific examples of how regular performance opportunities and participation in music activities contributed to children's ongoing musical learning.

As noted in the previous chapter, with the exception of one teacher, all participants placed a great deal of emphasis on the quality of their own classroom music programmes and identified these as important sites of personal learning for their music leadership role. Music listening and appreciation, performance purposes and contexts, music reading and writing, and issues related to singing development were among the specific areas of learning they addressed.

A number of participants were aware that they could influence children's music listening attitudes by their own careful selection of music for different purposes. Music listening to accompany work such as visual art not only contributed to a settled atmosphere but also provided an opportunity for teachers to introduce different styles of music. Fiona commented:

> [Music's] just so far spread in terms of the benefits for the children, in terms of their attitudes towards music and in being able to enjoy it in different contexts and have a better understanding if it comes to the listening aspects of music… If I'm going to have music in the background then it has to be a quiet environment so we can actually enjoy the music that's going on, rather than just go and talk during it… I find that the kids in my class now are becoming much more open to different types of music anyway.
> So you'll put different things on?
> Yes – whether it's jazz or whether it's classical or whether it's something way out there and then just spending a bit of time talking about what was it, and what sort of things did we hear. (F Int1:7)

The ongoing learning can be as simple as children developing confidence to sing alone in the classroom setting, a practice that also enabled teachers to evaluate individual children's singing development. Sue described how she used a particular welcome song that: *"has a little solo role in it too. It's really interesting to see at the beginning they're a bit hesitant about singing by themselves but by the end you've got to make sure everyone gets a turn"* (S Int1:13).

Some participants highlighted the importance of including performance opportunities, often associated with extra-curricular groups or whole school events like school productions, as part of the classroom music programme. Will suggested that although not every aspect of music learning has to have a performance outcome, children are more likely to value what they have learned if they can see a purpose for it:

> The reason we're doing it isn't the performance, but the performance is a way of sharing what they've done. And they actually value it more. Another analogy would be that they're in a sports team and they go to all the practices and they do lots and lots of practice but they never actually play a game. The parents never get to come along and yell at them from the sidelines and support them,

because all they're ever doing is the training. And I think it's the same with
music. In the past, I've taught some things in music and then I've felt like I
didn't take that far enough or I should have shared that because the kids don't
seem to value it… I've enjoyed these sessions we've done and I can see that
they've learnt something - but for them to value it, I think they need to perform
it. (W Int1:14-15)

As well as relating to specific music learning experiences, performances are a means of
aligning music learning with learning and assessment in other areas of the curriculum:
"They see everything else is for a reason, you know, they do a maths unit and at the end
of it it's assessed in some kind of way. They like to actually see that it's going
somewhere" (W Int1:15).
Ian drew an analogy with children learning to read and, as part of that process, needing
to understand:

> *That there is a payoff in actually being able to read. It's for this feeling and the*
> *same with music again. I think sometimes kids get so bogged down with the*
> *boring stuff that they don't experience the payoff… "goodness it sounds*
> *fantastic, I really want to put some time into this because just the feeling I get*
> *from being part of creating something that sounds good and improvising two*
> *notes, and I did solo. It was fantastic!" (I Int1:21)*

Will elaborated further on the multiple ways that 'performances' can occur.

> *I don't think it needs to be in front of the whole school. Some of the best times*
> *that we've had in our school sharing has just been one class sharing with*
> *another class… or just getting the parents. Or record it, so that it can be played*
> *back. That's another neat way of sharing, you don't have to be physically*
> *performing it every time because recording is becoming a major way and the*
> *technology has increased so much. I'm also in charge of ICT in my school so I*
> *like to link the music across to some of the ICT things that we're now able to do.*
> *(W Int1:15)*

As well as injecting focus and energy into children's work, adding a performance
component allowed children to demonstrate a sense of ownership for the outcome:

> *"When can we actually show someone what we've learnt?" and I think a lot of*
> *times they actually want to, even if they act like they don't want to… it doesn't*
> *even have to be a big thing. The performance might take five minutes. It might*

just be calling over the principal "Can you come over this afternoon and watch them?" then it's like "Oh! He's coming in ten minutes! Lets have one final practice!" and then they'll be "Oh, we've got to show him this!" and they've got big smiles on their faces after they've done that. That's not something I knew either, that's something I've learnt through doing it. (W Int1:15)

Performance was also an important aspect of extra-curricular music and Madeleine described the journey for her harmony group prior to performing their first two songs for school assembly. Initial apprehension, pre-performance nerves and a level of self-doubt, gave way to elation after a successful performance. For these children, there were opportunities to experience music-making challenges akin to those in adult groups and, over and above the mechanics of learning to sing, potential for a lifetime's involvement with music. Fiona was adamant that success at this level built confidence and sowed the seeds for later involvement in music:

> *For them to know that they are good singers and they are successful. They've done it, they've achieved it. And then you come to the big stuff like school productions. I mean there's no question the buzz and the benefits that the kids get out of that… there's so many to measure, you know if it's confidence or being on the stage for the first time or getting a chance for them to just stand up there and sing while their parents are in the audience, and for the older guys it's taking it a step further… (F Int1:8)*

Madeleine also emphasised the importance of self-belief and its enduring quality across time and context:

> *They suddenly have this belief in themselves and understanding of themselves singing. And they might go onto another school where the choir is not what they want or there isn't one. But because way back they had a successful experience and were singers, forty years later they might come back in a group like mine, a barbershop group or whatever. The Principal here has mentioned that at intermediate he was in a choir, he absolutely loved it. He still has all these songs that he remembers from his intermediate school choir, amazing eh? (M Int2:2)*

The inherent characteristics of music provided children with unique opportunities to develop a connected range of skills. Madeleine was definite about children's desire to sing well, and as the music leader supports them to do this, many other benefits accrue:

> *You know that you're sharing skills you've got that can make children sort of come alive. There's something that fills their eyes and that's where you have got to keep making it fun and that you can teach them skills while making them feel good, and they're very specific skills. The skills I'm teaching at the moment are the breathing, the pushing your ribs down, very specific skills, how to stand so that your body will produce the sound, that your face has to engage your audience, so it's engaging them and production of sound… (M Int1:8)*

She suggested that much of her role was to draw from children something that already belonged within them:

> *It's a natural feeling, and they want to let this sound out of their bodies just like they want to move when they hear music and only if they get the clamp down on them "gosh, you're a terrible singer" or "you look stupid when you dance" then their body closes down or their voice closes down and they live with that perception, many people, for the whole of their lives… Choirs can open up kids to…come out now and to have a sense of themselves all through their lives as people who do this. Some of the people I've got in my choir [adult community choir] "I haven't sung since I was in a choir at school" you know? Now they're in another choir. They are now enjoying something that if they didn't have that thread back to their school choir, would they have ever dared come to be in this choir? (M Int1:8)*

The musical development of the children in their care was obviously a source of great pleasure and satisfaction for participants. However, from the examples already presented, it is clear that the benefits to children extended beyond music to broader aspects of personal, classroom and school life. Attention is turned now to these broader benefits.

7.4.2 Additional benefits of music for groups of children

The social nature of music making in schools is a potential source of relationship development between teachers and children, something that was alluded to in a previous

section when participants identified strengthened relationships with individual children as a consequence of their work. Rosie's first involvement as a school music leader was as a parent who contributed to class and extra-curricular music programmes, a role that enabled her to build a special relationship with the children in her own children's classes:

> *It was a lovely way of bonding with the children, really getting to know them. Because in the time I've had with them we'd be having fun - dancing, singing and, you know, just to see the expressions on their faces - that was the right place to be. (R Int1:3)*

Participants were in agreement over the contribution of music to the overall classroom climate. Rosie explained:

> *Even today when we were finishing off our art I played some lovely soft songs that the children have been learning this term and they said "cool, let's listen" and they are working away and it lowers the tone of the classroom and it was just a lovely working environment. We don't have a lot of children who have harsh home experiences, they are all pretty well-rounded, loved children but I have taught in some schools where I found music has been, had a nice, soft influence over their working classroom environment. They've sort of settled down on task and rested with that. (R Int1:12)*

Music was also valuable for providing children with a change of pace during the day. Sue compared using music to the concept of 'brain gym' that many principals encouraged teachers to incorporate into their programmes:

> *You know, left/right brain thing. Well, an action song is like brain gym so to me it's getting up, getting us moving, and getting us feeling like we're here ready to work together.*
> What if they came in all swinging from the rafters?
> *Well an action song's good for that too. I'd just choose something a little bit more vibrant so they can just carry on swinging from the rafters for a wee bit and then you settle them down with a quieter song… I'll choose the songs there to match the mood. (S Int1:14)*

In extreme situations, music was more in the nature of a 'life saver'. David described one such context in which:

Singing in the classroom saved me as a teacher and I reckon saved the class as well… I got dropped into this class, and I have never seen kids like it in my life, and I had never believed that teacher stress was an issue before then either… waking up in the morning thinking 'do I have to go?', but I'm not the sort of person who is going to back off a situation like that. It was really, really hard work and I suddenly found that those kids actually liked music. It was the only thing. I couldn't take them out for a game because they'd squawk and squabble and swear…

It was out of control, out of the classroom?

I managed to find that they loved to sing and so we spent a lot of time doing music. I sometimes look back on that and think "how on earth would I have got through those weeks (it was about six weeks or something) if it hadn't been for music?"

It would have been that in the course of singing with those kids, that provided a way that actually built a relationship with them?

Yes, absolutely… and it wasn't being hammered with their maths or their tables or their whatever else. We still did all those things but we'd stop four or five times a day and just sit around and sing nice little songs and just have fun. (D Int1:6-7)

A small number of participants referred to a time when they had felt unappreciated for their musical contributions. In these situations, it was knowledge of what their music leadership role meant to children that provided the motivation to keep going. One participant related a conversation in which the principal appeared to minimise the teacher's work with an extra-curricular music group:

And I thought "Well, if it's that unimportant, maybe I won't?" but then I got so many enquiries from children who were interested and this year when I said we're putting it off for the production, I still got nagged at… "When the production finishes, you haven't forgotten?" so that keeps me going. And the parents are often so supportive. They love seeing their children perform, come on stage and do something special. [Identifier withheld]

In addition to the above examples, the ten observation sessions also provided data about the benefits of music to groups of children. At the practice I attended for Bruce's

school choir, the children stayed happily engaged for the entire forty minutes in spite of it being a warm Friday afternoon late in the school year. Having reflected on this particular practice, it occurred to me that each of the participants had engendered a similar atmosphere as they worked musically with the children and I returned to the different sets of observation notes. There I found comments such as *"there was excellent buy-in with smiling faces and a sense of shared enjoyment" (W Obs:2);* and *"the whole atmosphere was organised, relaxed, well-paced (not rushed and not pedestrian – time to do and work on what needed to be done and worked on). Comments were invariably constructive, appreciative, encouraging, specific, honest" (M Obs:2).*

Every session was characterised by a settled and focused atmosphere that in turn appeared to reflect the intersection of skilled teaching, a constructive and purposeful approach to the activity, and the music itself. The observation notes for Sue's middle school choir stated:

> *The whole practice was smoothly carried out, the children were enthusiastic and involved, the teacher knew exactly what she was doing and how to deal with any musical and management issues. I felt uplifted by the experience. She commented that the children were very good and focused and she put some of that down to my presence. Although that may be the case, the presence of a visitor could not have sustained such a level of engagement if the other components and dynamics had not been right. (S Obs:5)*

Although what I observed appeared to be generally true, Sue's and Bruce's responses suggested that the music setting is not a rarefied atmosphere but one in which the relationships are open and authentic. Bruce commented:

> *It's interesting here that you said we didn't tell the kids off once really which I don't know if that was a bit unique on that particular day because sometimes it does happen. But yeah the kids are pretty focused. (B Int2:1)*

The large group sessions were well-controlled but not regimental in character. At Will's assembly singing I noticed:

> *A small group of senior girls who were sitting near me sat and moved consistently and rhythmically to virtually every song. Many of their movements were of the 'handgame' variety and they appeared to be immersed in their own*

musical world. There was no indication that their movements/actions were designed to attract the attention of their peers – in particular the boys in the class who sat very near to them. (W Obs:2)

Likewise, this relaxed, relational focus was also a feature of Fiona's classroom lesson: *"this was intense teaching and very focused learning on the part of the children. Strong engagement with the learning material, opportunities for children to talk quietly, share ideas, try things out, help each other" (F Obs:5)*. A comment from Bruce highlighted the intentional way in which such an atmosphere is created:

> *I don't want choir to be an environment where it's very strict, I mean you don't want kids talking and all those things, there is certainly a lot of discipline, but I also like to have fun with them and like them to enjoy it and have a bit of fun as well, so it's trying to find that happy medium I guess. (B Int1:14)*

In over half of the observation sessions there were other teachers present and their involvement and approach was consistent with that of the music leader. Notes made during David's junior school singing illustrate this point:

> *Wonderful engagement from the children and the adults present… more of the same in terms of engagement, involvement, enjoyment written on faces, focus, tunefulness, adult enthusiasm… Words – they seemed to epitomise the inclusive character of everything that was done at the junior assembly and the 'belonging' response of the children. The song finished with David with his arms in the air – part conducting, part 'gathering in' of the children – and smiling at the children. He and they love this – the singing and the social connection! I had got distracted by the teachers working with their own classes – the usual 'stand up, nice line, back to class' kind of routines but a very relaxed and happy atmosphere, energised but not hyped up or out of control… A clear sense that what I had observed was familiar and loved – a place for all children, involvement by all children, teachers involved and comfortable to take part… (D Obs:2-3)*

There were echoes of these final comments in the notes from Rosie's lesson:

> *What a beautifully organised lesson and calm, involved atmosphere. There was no wasted time in the session and there was a lot of musicmaking happening. I*

observed that the children stayed very focused when they were not playing –
they indicated both trust and interest in the process. (R Obs:6)

Whereas a great deal of what happens in primary schools reinforces the differences in teachers' and children's roles, communal music-making provides an opportunity for both groups to come together with shared purpose. This was evident in the sense of community and togetherness observed during Will's assembly singing and Tom's junior music. As expressed by David: *"It's participatory isn't it? It's not like the teacher telling, or the teacher showing. It is the teacher **with** and that is a very different aspect"* *(D Int1:12).*

In addition to the social and relational benefits, participants spoke about the use of music as a tool for supporting learning in other curriculum areas. Madeleine had introduced choreography into some of her choir's song routines and this provided an additional layer of learning over and above the purely musical requirements:

> *They were fantastic singers. Their voice production has come so far. But to add*
> *choreography to it, and not even affect one's voice production…they were an*
> *amazing little group.*
> What are you getting from the kids as you do that?
> *The problem with a choir is often it stands there and it's a boring little choir*
> *because their peers as well as others require visual satisfaction from a*
> *performance and so this was bringing them into that dramatic code of singing.*
> *But they loved that even at the end knowing to freeze until their conductor*
> *released them… (M Int2:1)*

Fiona emphasised the cognitive dimensions of musical learning:

> *I'm in no doubt that music really supports academic achievement as well… it*
> *just helps children's academic improvement in general. We're doing an*
> *interesting thing at the moment. We have our module sessions once a week and*
> *it's an hour's work. I take all the year fives for music and we've done a lot of*
> *rhythmic work and things like that… understanding basic rhythm notations and*
> *recording our own and being able to notate them and count them out, how that*
> *applies to fractions and all the math parts of it. (F Int1:8)*

For Ian, music was both a direct and indirect means of promoting learning in his classroom. In the following example, learning about rhythm and the musical and expressive dimensions of a performance, was integrated with a creative activity focused on the language features of Blues poetry:

> *I've had them write Blues poems and they'll come up and sing them or talk them through following the format of a Blues structure, so you know it's teaching rhyming and rhythm and I was amazed the first time I tried that the kids, the gumption that they had, it was brilliant… I modelled what a Blues song sounds like and then I remember one of the boys vividly. He didn't sing it but he spoke it and he was just like one of those you know 'it's raining and the clouds are oh so high' and he performed it in assembly and I was amazed. (I Int1:9)*

A number of participants made reference to the connections between music and language. Ian described a range of activities such as exploring song lyrics as poetry, piano improvisation (from the teacher) as a motivator for creative writing, writing songs to support the study of values or *Habits of Mind* (Costa, 2001). He commented: *"It's experimental. No-one is telling me what to do but I'm just trying things that may or may not work, but they always seem to, there is always something that they get out of it"* (I Int1:9).

Rosie described the use of music to support Māori language learning:

> *I teach Te Reo through waiata. That's beautiful and the children in my room they just absorb it like little sponges, they learn it so fast it's amazing and the comprehension is there too. They're not just parroting off, they've got the understanding underneath as well.*
> They understand the meaning?
> *Yes, it's just they marry together beautifully, it's so easy. (R Int1:9)*

Ian was also innovative in his linking of music with mathematics:

> *I've written songs for the times-tables so I integrate into Maths and the kids love to sing those – it's not like those tapes you play that are kind of really boring – and so they are hanging out to do those and the progress in just basic times-table knowledge last year was outstanding.*
> You really did see that?

Yes, it was the first time I really, really focused on it, I made sure that I did it every day and wasn't slack and thought I'm a bit bored with that song now. And you know I had people go from 5% to 95% which again I'm experimenting, I'm still thinking now, how, in what ways, can it be used, music be used. In particular just to see if that was a glitch or whether that was going to happen again this year. Because we have the graphs, horizontal data graphs so we can tell. I could see that my class made more progress in times-tables than the other classes so I could see visually, I just wanted to see if that happens again. (I Int1:6)

A number of participants suggested that music learning and activity has value because it offers a different approach or way into learning. From this perspective it can provide a break from intensive cognitive work such as occurs in the timetabled literacy sessions. As Sue suggested:

Sometimes you've just had a really heavy reading time - you're going through all your reading groups and the kids are doing their task activities, all that sort of thing. And then to break up before you go into something similar. So that okay, we're going to do some singing or do some moving or do some listening or some playing before we go into the next big session.

Int: So it's kind of regrouping?

Yes. And saying 'give your brain a break from that. Let's do this (which is going to involve different sorts of connections) and then we'll go back to that stuff again.' (S Int1:15)

Bruce reported anecdotal evidence of children who had been struggling with reading making gains after their increased involvement with the school choir:

There is no quantitative proof but we've seen it happening... I think part of that is they are having to read to sing, they are being exposed to a lot of words in that singing, not just for the choir but for the school singing as well so there is a lot of singing happening and we are absolutely positive that the amount of singing that's happening out there is helping some kids with their reading abilities, absolutely positive of it. You see it with the New Entrants and my room particularly starting to happen, like all of a sudden kids would join the choir and some kids that might be struggling with their reading will all of a sudden just

take off. I'm not saying everyone but we are seeing kids where that's happening and it's almost been happening too much for it just be a coincidence that 'oh they are at that age and they suddenly take off and it just happens to be the age they join the choir' and I don't believe that at all. I believe absolutely the singing is helping some kids with their reading abilities. (B Int2:7)

David expressed strong beliefs about the importance of both extra-curricular and in-class music provision:

I still firmly believe that the classroom music programme is critical as well. Just as important, maybe more important than the school choir, and the school orchestra or whatever else… It's harder work because if you work with music in auditioned choirs or groups, those kids are there because they actually want to be there, or their parents want them to be there. Most of them are motivated and are able, whereas within a classroom you've still got to deal with the complexities of the classroom…

Making it work for everybody…

Making it work! For the ones who don't want to sing, some maracas or a drum or whatever else and for the ones that can't beat in time you find the quietest instrument that there is so there's involvement and participation. (D Int1:6)

What participants were able to achieve as part of their own classroom music programmes was an important bridge for encouraging development among their teaching colleagues, a point that will be picked up in the next section.

7.5   The Value of Music to Other Teachers

This section explores the benefits for other teachers that arise from participants' music leadership work. Although addressed to some extent in Chapter 5 in relation to primary music leaders' development over time, the following chapter section is concerned primarily with how their work has supported less confident teaching colleagues.

Unlike core curriculum areas such as literacy and numeracy which are an expected part of every teacher's teaching portfolio, the quantity and strength of music in primary schools is likely to reflect the skills and abilities of the teaching staff. Music leaders are very often the driving force behind a strong music presence in a school or team, and

other teachers may struggle without such leadership. Even with the availability of teacher-friendly resources and packaged music programmes, participants reported that colleagues who lacked confidence often needed additional support to put basic music teaching ideas into practice.

Although the title primary school music leader implies that such teachers would actively involve themselves in promoting professional development amongst their colleagues, this did not come across as a strong focus of participants' work. Nonetheless, most participants on occasions provided intentional support for other teachers and at other times gave more indirect support. Participants who assumed a professional development role more routinely emphasised the need for less confident colleagues to experience success as music teachers, develop realistic expectations of themselves, and learn how to build on children's confidence and creativity. Will noted a positive shift in his current colleagues' attitudes towards music and he attributed this to the success of school-wide performance initiatives. He reported that teachers had surprised themselves with what they were able to achieve:

> *"I didn't know that I could do that! I never knew that I could do this because I don't have this background knowledge"* and I said *"Well, sometimes it's not about that, it's just about what you can do and making it positive"* and often it's about using the kids' own creativity. You don't have to choreograph everything yourself - you provide them with some ideas and it can be creative musical type things…
>
> They underestimate themselves?
>
> *They underestimate themselves – "How can I teach this?" "You don't have to, you show them [the children] some basic ideas"… It's their confidence really, lifting their confidence because the kids are really confident and they're happy to do it; but they have to have the adults telling them that [the children] can do it and showing them they can do it and having the confidence in themselves. (W Int1:23)*

A number of participants reported high levels of satisfaction when they could support other teachers' learning through responsive and long term professional development initiatives. Sue described one such situation in terms of teacher, learner, musical content and context factors. She related how, at a time prior to the release of The Arts

in the New Zealand Curriculum document, glockenspiels were becoming popular as an alternative to recorders in that they produced a cleaner and more easily controlled sound. Having attended a music advisory course that included ideas about motivating teachers to introduce simple music activities using glockenspiels, Sue led some initial professional development at a staff meeting. Subsequently, teachers identified the need for ongoing pedagogical support:

> *I was very fortunate because the senior team at that stage were very motivated and I got release time to go into their classrooms, because they wanted to know how to pace the lesson, because they seemed to lose kids, they lost attention.*
> So you've all this learning material?
> *But how do you actually organise it and pace it was what they wanted to know. They've got a grip on the musical element or whatever. How do you actually organise it? So I went into each of the senior rooms and showed them a lesson, demonstrated a lesson. It was brilliant.*
> And the feedback from that was?
> *Very positive… they came away buzzing actually. So for a couple of years the glockenspiels were it. That's what the senior team were very keen on. (S Int1:17)*

Participants were often involved in collaborative ventures through which they supported their colleagues to try out new musical ideas. For example, Tom described working alongside another teacher in his team as she prepared an item for the school assembly:

> *Our theme is 'Exploring' so they presented their assembly around that. Then her class and my class did the song together because she is not into the music, so I got up on stage and did the actions...*
> So, [other teacher] had you there, but she also did actions?
> *Yes because in the song there's a haka and when the haka's going the boys have the haka to do and the girls have got another action. So she was over the other side of the stage, the girls were on that side, the boys were on this side. I was there to show what the boys did. We spent a couple of days in my class, in the mornings because she came and joined us for 'Jump Jam' so that she could learn that song, because it wasn't one that we did a lot and the skills… it's got quite complicated actions, so she thought she'd do that.*

That's an opportunity that she might not have had if you had not been employed?

Yes. People generally stick to what's known and common things and don't step outside that box. (T Int1:13-14)

Shared team and school musicmaking contexts were a primary site for other teachers to benefit from the presence of music leaders in their schools. Without exception, notes from the observation sessions recorded that teachers who were present at school and team singing sessions actively participated in the music activities, rather than just encouraging and managing children. In some instances, notably David's and Tom's junior singing sessions, parents who were present also took part in the singing. Tom indicated that the other teachers in the junior school:

… just want to be involved in it, especially [the teacher] who was doing the OHP, she just loved it. I haven't had to force them to do anything, but I don't think it's fair to be up here myself, putting myself out there, I mean - I look silly, I do some crazy things and to just have them sitting over there telling that kid off…

Withdrawn from the singing?

Yes, exactly. I think that if we're going to get the kids involved in it we need to be involved in it. (T Int1:17)

Asked about how he would respond if such a situation arose, he was clear about strategies he could use:

I'd separate the kids into groups and then "Ok, [another teacher] is going to take this group and we're going to…" we might come up with a rhythmic clap or something. So we'd put them all together and I'd separate the kids into groups…

Give them a responsibility?

Kind of force them into it kind of thing.

Although it can be difficult for new music leaders to put pressure on other teachers to change, Tom suggested that in his situation: *"It's kind of good because, for a few years, there hasn't been anything and so I've come in and not had to do something different from what another teacher did." (T Int1:17)*

Sue described how she involved student teachers in her class's music activities:

> *It's building a sense of community really. This is our classroom community and this is what we do. And you know, when we have student teachers arrive, which we have frequently, we'll often sing a welcome song to them and get them to come and join our circle. And I say look, even if you don't know the actions just come and join our circle. We'd like to sing to you.*
>
> That's actually putting music in a real live context?
>
> *And I think that's important, that they don't see music as this stand alone thing that we do at the end of the day or whenever we've got a few moments, but this is part of how we interact together. (S Int1:13)*

It is well-documented that teachers' reluctance to work musically with their own classes or within a team context very often stems from feelings of inadequacy (Gifford, 1993; Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret, 1997). This view was endorsed by participants who sensed that their less confident peers lacked both content and pedagogical content knowledge. Working on the basis that every teacher had curriculum strengths provided an entrée for Will to offer musical help to his colleagues: *"Just suggesting that maybe I could come in and do some introductory things with their classes and they could go into my class and do something, something different from what I do"* (W Int1:12).

Preparing resources for other teachers to use was a popular professional development strategy. As the teachers who usually received and distributed new music resources, primary music leaders looked for openings to introduce these resources to the full staff. Participants who had been teaching for a number of years reported reduced opportunities for professional development in learning areas such as music and attributed the shift to current curriculum priorities for literacy, numeracy and ICT professional development. From Sue's perspective, time that was once allocated in staff meetings for workshopping new music resources was no longer available, a situation she interpreted as a lessening in value for music.

Mentoring new teachers to develop as extra-curricular music leaders is dependent on the widespread presence of such groups in schools. Madeleine, reflecting on her own response to coming to a school without a choir, suggested that we are living in different times:

Where are the wonderful dynamic choirs that every school used to have when I was young? If I come to a school where there isn't a choir, I can see that wonderful bowl and I can see it full not empty. I can see the huge potential and I think that's what choir directors can do. If there is good modelling and help and support for choir directors, teachers who are scared and lacking in confidence, they can be helped to see what songs they can start with, what things are important to teach the choir, what sort of discipline can be achieved and for what reason, and therefore supported into getting that full bowl. (M Int2:7)

In spite of an apparent reduction in formal opportunities to build music teaching capacity in primary teachers, where there was strong support for music from senior managers, participants reported opportunities for professional development aimed at building teacher confidence and knowledge. David commented:

It's a matter of encouraging and supporting the music programme in the school, talking about it at staff meetings… and talking about the value of a lot of dance and things like this, particularly in the junior classes. I'd like to see it happening a bit more through the school, starting the day with some music and dance and as part of their early morning. (D Int1:11)

In Tom's school, the principal believed strongly that every teacher on her staff should be able to identify a curriculum strength or passion, a key factor in Tom's appointment as a classroom teacher with responsibility for the arts. An explicit aspect of this role was to organise music professional development for the remainder of the school staff, and he was alert for opportunities to fulfil this aspect of his role.

School-wide productions and festivals called for particular sensitivity to the needs of teaching colleagues. In planning for his school's performing arts festival, Will's aim was to structure the work in a non-threatening way that would also allow teachers to experience personal success. This involved a structure for each event that required all teachers to involve their whole class while still including an element of choice and specific processes for providing support:

The teachers had to choose something, even though for a lot of them it wasn't something that was their thing to have success. I see having success in things, not just in terms of the kids, but in terms of the teachers, because I like to see them happy and them going 'whoa this is so good, and such and such is

happening and this is happening and Johnny is doing this!' and I'm like 'This is
working!.' I have these ulterior motives for doing everything, for introducing
things, or suggesting things because I can see the big picture, that it's going to
have an effect on the kids and on the teachers. (W Int1:22)

Primary schools are dynamic and complex systems in which development in one
discrete area is likely to impact to a greater or lesser extent on other parts of the system.
Therefore, just as participants, the children they teach and the teachers they work
alongside can all be seen to benefit from the work of primary school music leaders, it is
possible that these benefits extend even further. Data that shed light on the wider
benefits of their practice are presented in the following section.

7.6   The Value of Music to the School and Wider Community

Participants in this study reflected on the significance of their work as music leaders
beyond the immediate scope of their own classrooms, their extra-curricular music
groups and their close colleagues. Although the breadth of influence was variable and
sensitive to a range of contextual factors, nonetheless, all teachers reported that they
recognised the value of their work within the whole school and in ways that reached
into the wider school community. Among these aspects of influence were: raising the
profile of music in their schools; influencing and, at times, shifting staff attitudes
towards arts teaching and learning; shaping the character of important school events and
performances; contributing positively to the school's profile in the wider community;
encouraging links with families, particularly those on the periphery of the school
community; and providing opportunities for families and others in the community to
contribute back into the life of the school.

Participants were in agreement that music was deserving of a place in the curriculum
and life of a school, and emphasised the need for knowledgeable teachers to lead it.
David stressed the interrelationship between what happens in the classroom and the
wider school:

It's interesting how if the class and the team music is strong, then your choirs
are really strong as well because children know about singing and they say
"yeah, I quite like this, this is a cool thing to do". If you can't get kids to join

the choir you need to look back to see what's happening in those classes. (D Int1:12)

This point was emphasised by Sue who commented on how her middle-school choir benefitted from the strong singing culture of the junior school.

They've just come out of the junior school and we do a lot of singing in the junior school. And the other wonderful thing about singing in the junior school is every teacher sings. It doesn't matter whether they can or not, everybody sings. So you get none of these people standing to the side with their arms folded totally disengaged - everybody gives it a go. (S Int2:4)

What happens in the classroom can permeate into the wider school environment in a range of ways, very often initiated by the children themselves. Fiona commented on the importance of music leaders whose work provides the impetus for a dynamic music culture:

All the little spin-offs… one of the classes they do on Wednesday afternoon… they'll use their recorders with other teachers and the kids just love it. It's nice to see them out there in the lunch times playing along and having a practice… there's so many positive spin-offs to doing it and you can't put any negatives on it either. But you know it does come down to that leadership thing. (F Int1:8)

Another aspect of this continuity of experience concerned the benefit that came to younger children through their more experienced peers. The following excerpt from the observation notes of Leanne's session touched on this point:

As the choir practice came to an end – happily, children buzzing and not appearing too tired – I noticed a number of junior school children peeking in from their classroom area. I thought about how this is where aspirations to sing in the choir begin… the choir children become role models for younger children in the school. (L Obs:4)

This continuity of experience can also be the basis for strengthening musical skills. Bruce commented on how he had noticed a gradual improvement in singing skills throughout his years at the school:

> *What is happening now is some of those kids have been in the choir for 5 years*
> *so they do it automatically almost. And there is a certain amount of assimilation*
> *from the younger ones as they come through and you're always repeating the*
> *same thing but you're probably not repeating to the same extent that I was the*
> *first year. (B Int2:4)*

In some cases, classroom music activity had promoted interaction between teachers and parents and provided a context for parental involvement. Fiona joked about parents' responses to the guitar focus she had in her own classroom for a term:

> *The number of parents that came in because they dropped off their kids with*
> *their guitars in the morning, and they're just like, "you've driven me crazy with*
> *this, my child cannot stop playing". I had a number of kids that by the end of*
> *the term they were just like "oh I can play all these chords by myself" and*
> *they'd gone home and they'd worked so hard on it and that kind of stuff, and*
> *that's really rewarding. (F Int1:18)*

Equally, some teachers suggested that the presence of music in school encouraged children to share their home-generated musical knowledge and experiences in the school setting. Sue described an instance of this occurring:

> *I've got a little boy this year, from Korea, who plays the cello. And he's got a*
> *miniature cello. It's just so wonderful. He can't play a lot on it yet but just to*
> *have someone come along and make sounds and bring along their instrument is*
> *terrific. And the parents were really excited that their child's been singled out*
> *too… Once you open up those experiences then the kids come in and they*
> *contribute.*
>
> And often those things wouldn't happen unless there was something that was a
> catalyst?
>
> *It's like anything, isn't it? You show an interest and the kids will want to talk*
> *about it. (S Int1:34-35)*

When family members recognise that music is valued by their children's teachers, it is not unusual for them to share their own musical skills. Tom spoke about the grandparent of one his children who, having seen the 'sasa-related' work he had done with the junior school, offered to:

come into my class and teach the proper 'sasa' – boys up the back moving
forward through the girls and that sort of thing. She represents Samoa with
sport so she's back and forth all the time, and she knows [the sasa] well. We'll
definitely, as well for me, I'd like to learn it for the future. She did it once before
here, probably 10-15 years ago when her kids were here, and she said the kids
enjoyed it. She's got the split log drum and she knows the tapping rhythms. (T
Int1:20)

A similar experience related by Sue shows the benefits for all concerned when families
have the opportunity to share significant aspects of their lives in their children's
classrooms, and when teachers' and principals' responses to those offerings reflect the
qualities of an open learning community. Sue described the outcome when a parent
came into the classroom and:

taught my little year ones a Cook Island dance. [The principal] came in and said
'that was just wonderful." He just happened to pop into the room because he
heard the music playing. He said, "How about you do that for an assembly?"
So then my Cook Island mother went away and made little costumes for my girls,
and it just looked fantastic… And she felt valued. The mother who taught them
that little dance, she felt very important. (S Int1:34)

The social nature of music-making can foster a heightened sense of community within
the school and an important focus for school-based community occasions such as
concerts, festivals and farewells. Bruce spoke about how, at certain times, the
children's musical offerings reflected more widespread emotions:

On Friday, our cleaner retired and she had been there for nineteen years and we
sang some songs for her. We sang the Irish Blessing and there are some of
those songs that we sing, that literally the kids and some of the parents too are
moved to tears. (B Int1:25)

In addition, the content of music can also be used to forge links with the surrounding
locality. When Rosie first began providing musical support to teachers in her 'parent
help' role, she and her own three children composed a song about their school
incorporating references to the local landscape. This song now has 'anthem-like' status

in the school, and is an integral part of the school's shared identity within the community.

Extra-curricular music groups served a number of valuable purposes. For example, in Tom's school, a range of music groups operating during break times supported school-wide goals around positive behaviour and enabled teachers and children to interact in different and constructive ways. In addition, groups such as choir or kapahaka are frequently the public face of their schools, and were seen by participants to contribute to overall school culture. Although extra-curricular performance was only one aspect of the overall music programme at Bruce's school, he was adamant that the school's reputation and profile as a 'music school' was the reason that some parents had enrolled their children in the school. Madeleine offered a slightly different perspective on the dynamic relationship that can exist between an extra curricular group and a school's identity:

> *The choir is not 'owned' by you but the whole school… when you do it in*
> *assemblies and you take it out of the school to the kindergarten or whatever…*
> *the whole school starts to take pride – "oh we've got a great choir…" and they*
> *start to take ownership and they start to want that choir to grow, give it value,*
> *give it more time and take a bit of pride in it… I think every new place I shift to*
> *holds such different potential but the same potential of getting it to a wonderful*
> *optimum fantastic choir… In a year or so that choir may become important to*
> *the school's labelling of itself. (M Int2:5)*

For a number of teachers, school productions were an intense and satisfying aspect of their leadership role and appeared to have ongoing significance within the wider community for performers and audience alike. Sue commented:

> *They're hard work but they're a highlight not only from the fact that*
> *everybody's working together as a common goal but also the satisfaction on the*
> *children's faces that we've achieved this. We didn't think we were going to do it*
> *but we've got there.*
> So the hard work is actually part of the satisfaction, isn't it, because it wasn't
> easily won?
> *It wasn't going to be easy. And we're pulling kids up to a standard that they*
> *weren't even sure that they could reach. Everyone's got a common goal and*

everyone's excited about it. You don't feel any more that you're battling on your
own and it's not really happening. You can actually see that it is happening. (S
Int1:20)

Sue also noted a trend in her school for previous students to return for the school
production, an indication that events like school productions contribute to an enduring
memory bank against which new experiences can be evaluated and incorporated:

And they sit there and they compare.

So they may or may not have siblings?

No. Often don't have siblings at the school at all. They want to come and see
what the school is doing this year. And it reminds them of what they did and they
compare it. 'Oh no, we did better in this,' and 'oh no, their dances were better
this time.'

It's kind of like they're hanging onto theirs as something special then?

Because we only do a production once every two years - so that means they get
to do three during their time - it has become very special. (S Int1:37)

On some occasions, school productions were valued not just for the performance
opportunities they provided but also because of their underlying messages. With regard
to their 'through the decades' school-wide production, Will commented on the
congruence between the content of the performance and the overall atmosphere
surrounding the work:

The whole message that it had, it was just really meaningful. And the teachers
were just so much together and the kids were proud of what they did and the
parents were blown away by what their kids had done. (W Int1:14)

Some, but not all, participants held that the nature of their particular music contributions
benefitted the school community in a range of ways. For example, Bruce identified that
his expertise had been instrumental in the success of the school choir which was
frequently invited to sing at a range of informal and official community events. In
Will's case, his ability to *"think outside the square"* was something that he could use to
develop small ideas into integrated experiences that incorporated worthwhile music
experiences but also bridged classroom and curriculum boundaries:

Whereas they would have an idea that was in a little box and I would go "Well, that would be a good start, but how about…" and I'd have this idea that would integrate it into other things. Or I would say "how about we?" and I would come at it from a different way.

So you could connect music to other things?

Just being able to transfer that right through the whole school there's such a positive atmosphere where you've got some kids really buzzing because they're enjoying the songs that they're singing, or the music that they're doing in the class, that is neat. (W Int1:11-12)

As well as having an outward focus in terms of music's capacity to contribute to a heightened sense of community, there was also a sense in which events that opened out to a wider community, whether within or outside of the school gates, strengthened the opportunities for music provision and participation. Will described the importance of his principal and teaching colleagues' support for their 'jukebox' school production:

I was just given so much to be able to do that and the community just coming in to see it, they were just blown away by it. The fact that we got all their kids up on stage to start with, and some of them were the sporty-types, but they learnt songs for it, we did songs that went along, we had 'We Go Together' from Grease and they all sang that as a finale. (W Int1:7)

Beginning his teaching career in a school where music was not an important part of the school culture, Tom was aware of the need to lay down foundations for the musical culture that both he and the principal were hoping to develop. After only a term and a half he could see the progress being made:

They're getting more into it. Last term, because we had swimming for the first five or six weeks we didn't do junior singing because we didn't have time. But from when it started until now there's been a huge change in… we only had a short term last term, so three weeks of singing and at the beginning kids were, especially the little, little ones, we weren't sure about them knowing what was going on. But all of the songs we've learnt are new, never been heard before, they were a bit wary about it; but now they're happy to jump up and move around, and even the staunch, because in the year two and three class there are some staunch boys in there and they're happy to… shake their tail feathers.

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[Laughs] And because I get up there and I don't just sit up there and let the kids sing, I like to get up there and move around and I might shake my booty a little bit… because I think if you show that enjoyment then it's going to come through in how they feel about it. (T Int1:14)

Tom further elaborated on what he perceived to be a shift in attitudes towards music in his school community:

I think it's becoming more valued as we do more things, because it wasn't something that people did. I've had parents ask me if I can tutor their kids guitar and one mother wants singing lessons and things like that… (T Int1:24)
The school is quite a central focus of the community?
Yes. Everyone in town knows everyone, everyone knows what you do, what happens. It's definitely a tight-knit community.
What did it do in terms of your profile?
In terms of my profile within town, people were saying "This guy is so good for the town, I hope he sticks around" that kind of thing, just because their young kids were into it… We invited all the parents of the people in my class to come along. We had 40 adults, all in the hall, which is… you usually get two or three people come to view an assembly. So parents came and parents talked and parents of my kids own shops in town and people just talk and talk and talk. (T Int1:2-3)

In contrast with Tom's focus on building the profile of music within the school community, music had been an important aspect of David's school culture for so long that in a talk about the school to student teachers he failed to even mention it. He described how his deputy principal questioned the omission:

"You never talk about music" when I'm saying what are the special things, because I don't see that as being actually special. She said "you need to say that" and I said "why? This is just what we do" but she said "it IS special." So this time when I talk to this group of student teachers and I know I did it to the last lot of teachers as well, I'll talk about the music as well, but I haven't generally done that.

Because what you're saying is that in a sense for you it's not special because it's normal? That's no more special than saying "well, at lunchtime we eat our lunch"?

We just do music, it's a part of what we do. (D Int1:16)

Referring to the issue of teachers who do not feel confident to teach music, David stressed that schools need to be reminded of the importance of all children having access to the broad curriculum:

It doesn't need to be the principal, it doesn't matter who it is but somebody within that school needs to have a passion for it, and to drive it along. But there's an awfully important role for principals to nurture it and support it and finance it as well. (D Int1:15)

David's personal philosophy with regard to the importance of the arts is worth considering in greater depth. He expressed that although literacy and numeracy are the foundations on which the curriculum is built, the arts have particular value:

When children are exposed to the arts for their own soul, for their own personal growth and development, for the opportunities for children to shine who don't necessarily shine sometimes in other areas of the curriculum, it's all part of life and living and has been right from historical writing hasn't it? Dance and music is well-embedded into people's cultures all around the world and yet I don't think in Western European societies, certainly in New Zealand, we haven't given the amount of status to the cultural subjects as they should have had.
I wonder why that is? Why do we recognise some other forms of doing and being?
Well, it's recognised within Māori culture and accepted with waiata and kapahaka and all of that as being really important to Māoridom and Māori people, but as European settlers I think we've lost something. And New Zealand primary schools are very much dependent as you well know… you can have a staff with nobody with any music skills and the kids get nothing… (D Int1:3)

It is fitting that the last word in this section should be given to David, the most senior of the participants in the study and an experienced school principal nearing retirement. For

David, music has always provided a point of connection with the children in his care, a time for singing and a time for laughter:

> *I always did some singing with the kids and it's something that I will do until I retire, because I can see good value in it as something that children really enjoy in regard to their principal because they tell me that! And I think it's just good. I mean, it's just relationship stuff and it's good from a community perspective as well if the parents see the principal involved in work with the kids and not just sitting in an office reading papers and answering the phone. (D Int1:8)*

Participants' perspectives on the significance of music in their schools have traversed wide-ranging territory with, very often, the exact same musical situation or event delivering shared and individual benefits to participants themselves, children, other teachers and the extended school community. Teachers in the study have stressed that although the complexity of the school context makes it difficult to provide actual proof of some of these benefits, theirs is an intuitive knowing that grows from the kinds of relationships and understanding music can engender.

7.7   Summary

The focus of this chapter has been on the presentation of data that highlighted the significance of primary school music leaders' work for children, teachers and their wider school communities. Participants were united in their belief that their work as music leaders in their schools is of value to them personally, to the children they teach and to their wider school communities. Although the data presented to support their views were unique to the individual teachers and contexts, there was strong agreement about the kinds of music-making that characterise primary school music offerings, and the range of benefits that can be identified through the provision of these music experiences.

The chapter drew on both interview and observation data and this enabled two important but related perspectives to be shared. First of all, when teachers reported their perceptions of particular benefits of music, these benefits were very often *evident* to the researcher who could hear, see and feel aspects of these in the course of the observations. Conversely, the presence of the researcher and the opportunity for

participants to read the observation notes after their music sessions and prior to the second interview, enabled them to see and hear their work through another's eyes and ears. In some cases, participants reflected on how this had heightened their own appreciation of the value and potential benefits of their work.

Data presented in this chapter and the previous two chapters represent the combined experience and perspectives of ten teachers, therefore the claims about how representative they are of the experiences of primary school music leaders across Aotearoa New Zealand are, necessarily, modest ones. Nonetheless, the findings are striking in that although the data are generated in different school contexts, and among teachers with contrasting demographic and teaching career characteristics, there is widespread consistency in relation to key experiences and practices.

In summary, data presented in Chapter Five shed light on both personal and professional factors that have influenced the identity and practice of primary school teachers with music leadership roles in their schools. Data presented in Chapter Six highlighted the range of activities that these music leaders undertook as well as the skills, knowledge and understandings that informed their leadership practice. Chapter Seven presented both participants' perspectives and material from the observation notes in order to shed light on the significance of participants' music leadership work for an expanding range of individuals and groups.

Having presented data related to each of the three research questions, it is now important to discuss those data in the light of the wider research and theoretical literature introduced and reviewed in earlier chapters. This will entail an initial discussion in terms of the research questions and the strands outlined in Section 1.4 of the thesis. However the substance of the discussion chapter will involve a synthesis across the three research questions in the light of three key themes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.1   Introduction

The aim of this research has been to explore the work of ten New Zealand primary school music leaders in terms of the personal and professional journeys and characteristics that have contributed to their role, and the nature and significance of their work. The previous three chapters presented data based on interviews with and observations of the ten participants. These data represented the teachers' perspectives and researcher's observations of the participants in relation to the research questions, the primary purpose being to provide a rich picture of the role of music leader, its breadth, character and significance. This aligned closely with Roulston's (2006) suggestion that qualitative research should begin at the descriptive level by addressing the question of 'what is happening here?' In addition to this initial descriptive purpose, the organisation of data within these chapters represented the preliminary analysis of patterns perceived within the data.

Following on from this, and in keeping with Roulston's (2006) ideas about seeking deeper levels of understanding, the overall orientation here is to further the analysis by providing a more interpretive account concerned with meaning and explanation.   In order to do this, reference will be made to a range of theoretical perspectives that can be brought to bear on the data, a 'toolbox' approach that reflects the lack of previous research in this area and therefore, the exploratory nature of the study. Narrative accounts of music teachers' practice lend themselves to scholarly attention which involves "knowing those stories, explaining them, reflecting on them, and sharing them with the professional community" (McCarthy, 2004, p.36). It is only through this level of attention that we can hope to understand the complex set of circumstances that contribute to individual music teachers' experiences, the commonalities and shared understandings that inform their practice, and the significance of their work (Cox & Hennessy, 2004).

The idea of theorising data from a range of perspectives is well-suited to the dual music and leadership-based focus of this study. Teachers' stories, both self-reported and observed in practice, form the heart of the research and lend themselves to the creation of "explanatory propositions" (Carter, 1993, p.10) which, rather than define widely-applicable truths, illuminate possibilities for ongoing exploration and understanding. The application of a range of theories to the data aligns well with the complex array of meanings that can be drawn from broad investigations of music within the primary school setting.

An initial commentary highlights links between the three research questions and the three research strands outlined in Section 1.4 of the thesis, and this is followed by three sections that together present a synthesised discussion of the data in relation to key theoretical perspectives and major themes. The first of these sections is focused on the person of the teacher and the dynamic interactions of teacher, learners, subject and context as participants worked out their music leadership roles. The next section is concerned with the broad context in which primary school music leaders work, and demonstrates how curriculum policies and priorities have influenced both the practice and the understanding of their work. The final chapter section introduces an additional theoretical construct, that of communities of practice, and shows how this theory holds significant explanatory power for the data gathered during the fieldwork.

8.2   Linking Research Questions and Strands

In the first chapter of the thesis, links were drawn between specific research questions and key research strands. An initial commentary on each of these pairings is now presented.

8.2.1 Personal and professional links

In response to the question "who are the teachers who lead music in New Zealand primary schools and how do they come to be music leaders?", participants' personal and professional lives were shown to be deeply entwined. This is consistent with contemporary educational research on teachers that suggests that a complex mix of personal and professional attributes contribute to overall teacher identity (Clandinin &

Connelly, 2002; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Parker Palmer's (1998) assertion that "we teach who we are" (p.2) was demonstrated time and again in this study as participants worked musically with children, and as they spoke about their practice as music leaders. The motivation to bring music into the lives of children in their schools had deep roots in participants' own musical experiences as children, and within their families, schools and communities. When Rosie spoke of what music in the classroom could do for the children she taught, there was a referent quality in her discourse, an element of 'I know that this is true because it is true for me'. Likewise, where participants voiced deeply held values in relation to education or school life, these also found expression as they worked musically with children. For example, David emphasised the centrality of healthy relationships to a well-functioning school community, an explicit value that he sought to model and encourage through every aspect of school life. As he played his guitar and led junior school singing, this core belief was brought alive through the warmth of his demeanour, his choice of words, direct eye contact and smiles to individuals, and an energetic presence that said 'I want to be here doing this with you!'

Given that all ten participants in the study were engaged in authentic forms of music leadership in their primary schools, it follows that each participant had experienced a process of *becoming* a music leader. This concept of a personal journey to reaching a professional state is borne out repeatedly in the literature on teaching (Day & Leitch, 2001; Zembylas, 2007). However, what is new in this research is that this more generic understanding is demonstrated through individual participants' *musical* stories which coalesce around three related points. First, the journey to becoming a music leader is both a musical and a social journey. Second, the important learning achieved on this journey is incorporated into the dynamic sense of *being* that continues to characterise primary music leaders in their role. Third, this continuity of practice, demonstrated in each participants' musical *present*, and bound to their rich musical *pasts*, will potentially contribute to their ongoing musical *futures*, and those of the children they teach. These ideas will be explored in more depth in Section 8.5 of this chapter.

8.2.2 The surfaces and depths of primary school music leaders' work

The data presented in Chapter 6 were a response to the question "what do primary school music leaders do and what skills, knowledge and understandings underpin their work as music leaders?" This question linked to the idea that underlying skills and knowledge sit beneath the familiar surface of teachers' roles and tasks. In addition to the actual tasks participants reported on, data from the observation sessions were also presented. In keeping with the view that qualitative research methodologies allow us to understand everyday phenomena in new ways, the observation and follow-up interview data contributed to a much fuller explanation of the work undertaken by these teacher leaders than their initial accounts provided. Enabling more than a surface response to the question "what do primary school music leaders do?", the expanded data set shed light on the deeper aspects of being a music leader and revealed that the participants' music leadership practices often resembled Eisner's (2002) concept of teaching as a form of artistry. Teaching as artistry requires that teachers are responsive to the multiple dynamics of the particular learning context, knowing when to intervene and when to stand back, not by applying prescriptive measures but in relation to their own affective and aesthetic sensibilities.

In order to understand how aspects of participants' musical work with children represented a form of artistry, we need to reflect on what teachers themselves brought to the encounter, in particular, "where they receive their satisfactions, what gives them their highs in teaching" (Eisner, 2002, p.382). This research offered just such an opportunity: to hear first-hand from teachers about their work as music leaders in their schools, and then to watch and listen as they brought their stories to life musically. How was artistry observable in participants' practice? Ian's session with the school rock group epitomised the concept in terms of content and process. Throughout the rehearsal, he ensured that the musical purpose was kept continually at the forefront, and, through his gestures and comments, reinforced music-making as both a present and future focus. It was evident that the children were equally attuned to Ian and the music. Their faces and bodies; their attentiveness to the intricacies of the ensemble – entries, dynamics, rhythmic shifts, expressive components, aspects of technique; the nature of their verbal and musical interactions and the questions they asked: all these attested to aesthetic engagement in response to artful teaching.

8.2.3   Ordinary and profound aspects of music leaders' work

In response to the final research question "what is the significance of primary school music leaders' work?" teachers spoke about ordinary and profound aspects of their work.

In an evocative account of the natural world, *The Sense of Wonder* (1956/1984), Rachel Carson wrote about everyday miracles, often invisible to adults whose focus is on the larger picture, but discerned by children who "notice and delight in the small and inconspicuous" (no page number). Captured in this idea is something of the paradox inherent in the final pairing of question and strand: namely, that although public and major musical events may be celebrated by outsiders as the most notable aspects of primary music leaders' work, apparently small events and occurrences were deemed to be of great significance for research participants themselves. The paradox is simply that such brief, barely discernible moments, consistent with Lortie's (1975/2002) "psychic rewards", carry potentially profound meaning for the teachers and children concerned, brushing lightly against the place music holds in their lives.

Looking from the outside, it is understandable that teachers would report high levels of satisfaction and acknowledge the significance of achievements like that of Rosie successfully conducting the combined schools massed choir, or Will leading a school production which involved every child and teacher, and which contributed to a sense of a positive future for the school. What is not so obvious is why relatively small events, at times involving a single child, should stand out so vividly in participants' memories. Take, for example, Leanne's recollection, from more than three decades earlier, of returning to her classroom after a morning break, and finding the children singing. At the heart of this example and similar experiences related by participants is one of shared joy in music-making. At a personal level, Leanne recognised and identified with the children's enjoyment of singing, and took satisfaction from knowing that she had contributed to their capacity for independent musical activity. Just as Noddings (2005) emphasised the importance of "young people [discovering] what refreshes and renews them" (p.89), participants recognised and delighted in their students' deep engagement in music-making. Because music was their own personal passion, there was particular pleasure in seeing the foundations laid for a lifetime of music-making for the children they taught, evidence of Waller's (1932) assertion that teaching involves guiding students into "a new world which gradually unfolds and takes shape" (p.235). This was

poignantly demonstrated through David's account of the 'troublemaker turned music-maker', an example that also illustrated his commitment to the overall growth and development of the children in his care, a readiness to raise expectations for what they could achieve in the future, and a belief that music had a part to play in this.

Although the research literature on teaching and learning identifies three distinctive aspects of *teacher*, *learner* and *learning content*, all contained within a *learning context* that is itself multi-faceted (Palmer, 1998; Shulman, 1986), it is vital to remember that these individual elements are also inter-related. The unravelling of who these music leaders are, how they came to be music leaders, the work they do and its significance: all are rich with possibilities for discussion. However, continuing to separate the components of music leadership has the potential to render each less than they should be, and therefore it is important for the ongoing discussion to theorise the research data in a more holistic way. The following two sections incorporate the research questions within the context of two key themes that have emerged from the data. The first of these themes is concerned with understanding the layers of complexity that characterise primary music leaders and their work, a level of complexity that may not be immediately evident to others, whether close to the work as in the case of teaching colleagues or parents, or more distant from it.

8.3   The Dynamic Nature of Primary School Music Leaders' Work

This section is concerned with three particular aspects of primary school music leaders' work with each aspect addressed in relation to a range of relevant theoretical material. Firstly, the separate and combined contribution of social and musical aspects in their development as music leaders is explored. This is followed by an examination of their music leadership identity, and finally, the role of emotion in their work is discussed.

8.3.1   Social and musical aspects of primary school music leaders' work

It has already been emphasised that the work of teaching involves a tightly-related trinity of participants: students, teacher, and learning content within an overall teaching context. Similarly, with regard to the musical and the social nature of the journey to

becoming a school music leader, it can be difficult to unravel where one aspect ends and the other begins. This interweaving of social and musical aspects was demonstrated in the range and context of participants' stories, suggesting that musical learning develops through experience within multiple settings, a finding consistent with research into the development of literacy teachers' subject identities (Drake et al., 2001).

One shared feature of all participants' accounts was their involvement in a world of active music-making, and for many, this reached as far back as they could remember. As noted earlier, when music-making was connected to important relationships, the particular quality of the relationship coloured the musical experience. For example, Leanne made vivid reference to her piano teacher whose harsh treatment ruined the pleasure of learning to a point where Leanne refused to continue with lessons. In contrast, her relationship with her father was threaded through with happy music experiences, and on the rare occasion Leanne's piano teacher was unable to attend a lesson, her place was taken by another teacher who was kind, understanding and encouraging. Leanne was adamant that the contrasting teaching styles profoundly affected her own philosophy of music teaching with the first teacher a strong reminder of how not to teach music, and the second a model for her own classroom teaching and extracurricular leadership of music. Leanne's story is also consistent with Zembylas' (Zembylas, 2007) ideas about the planes of emotional knowledge that contribute to pedagogical content knowledge, a point that will be explored in greater detail below.

Not only is the experience of music-making influenced by the nature of the relationship between music-makers; equally, the music-making experience in itself can have an impact on the quality of the relationship that exists between music-makers. This interdependence of experience and relationship (Noddings, 2005) surfaced in many participants' accounts of the significance of music in their teaching lives. For example, reference has already been made to David's story about the guitar accompanist for the school kapahaka group, a role that required excellent communication and shared understandings between kapahaka leader, accompanist and ensemble in order to achieve effective performance outcomes. Within this musical context, the student's previously conflict-ridden relationships with teachers were transformed into ones of shared purpose and understanding, and her whole demeanour and attitude to school and learning were also transformed.

Bearing in mind Hargreaves' (1996) cautions about carefully distinguishing between the unique and the shared in individual stories, and about attributing generic characteristics to teachers on the basis of single accounts, each participant's individual pathway towards becoming a primary school music leader embodied a multi-faceted journey that combined musical and social aspects. Most gained an early sense of themselves as musical beings and touched upon the aesthetic pleasure they experienced as children through listening and performing opportunities. Although some referred to particular formative experiences, such as Bruce attending concerts with his father and Sue responding to the performance of a Mendelssohn choral work, these were not isolated events but rather, occurred within the context of a wider everyday musical world. In Bruce's case, this included experience as a church chorister, individual piano lessons, and an intermediate school teacher whose personal contacts enabled the class to attend a wide range of performance events. For Sue, although she resisted most attempts to involve her in music at school, she had happy memories of belonging to a school kapahaka group at the age of six or seven, and also noted her father's collection of classical records as a significant contributor to her own life 'soundtrack'. Other participants reported a gradual and drawn out sense of *becoming* a musician. As previously noted, early experiences were not discarded as participants reached new levels of musicianship or as their musical identities incorporated more sophisticated manifestations of what it meant to be a musician. Rather, these became the foundation of an ever-developing identity as a music leader, an identity that for some participants was already finely-honed prior to beginning their teacher education programmes and teaching careers.

Ideas about the transformative power of experience are consistent with Dewey's (1934/2005) belief that "attitudes and interests are built up which embody in themselves some deposit of the meaning of things done and undergone. These funded and retained meanings become a part of the self" (p.275). Multiple musical experiences located within participants' wider social milieu of family, school and community contributed to developing musical identities that are themselves multifaceted and these are discussed in the following sub-section.

8.3.2 Primary school music leaders' identity

Within the field of music education, the construct of identity has attracted research interest from both psychological (Macdonald et al., 2002) and sociological (Roberts, 2004) perspectives, with each approach contributing to a broadened understanding of identity as both *developing* and *constructed*. As has already been demonstrated, music merges through memory with places, people and events, serving as "an unconscious principle of selection in the ongoing project of assembling an identity from the total sum of one's past" (Gracyk, 2004, p.16). If, as Drake, Spillane and Hufferd-Ackles (2001) suggest, subject matter is an important contributor to development of secondary school teachers' identity, it is also likely that primary teachers' intense identification with a subject like music will have a significant impact on those teachers' self-identity as portrayed through their work, their relationships, and where they exert energy and influence in their schools. All participants in this study shared a common goal, from the outset of their careers, that music would be a part of their teaching persona and identity. In this regard, their development as music leaders was less of a 'bolting on' of new skills and knowledge (Galton, 1996) and more of a natural outgrowth of their existing self-identity.

Whether assumed or bestowed, the role of music leader in a primary school links to this overall personal and professional identity.   For primary teachers who operate as music leaders in their schools, this leadership may be recognised by others in the school community on the basis of quite simple tasks or roles such as accompanying assembly singing. Very often, there is limited understanding about what music leadership entails; with common responses being admiration for the teacher's 'talent' or envy of their confidence and skill, and little recognition of the risks and costs associated with music leadership.   Where there is limited recognition for music leaders, this may be explained by reference to the ease with which performances unfold. To put it another way, a little like observing a well-functioning classroom, the surface excellence of music in schools may obscure the behind-the-scenes work of music leaders in terms of thinking, planning and overall practice. Applying Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop's (2004) framework of teacher identity to this study data sheds light on the complex set of circumstances that sit behind and beneath apparently simple acts of teaching, and in particular on how the activity of music leadership is both a function of and contributor to overall teacher identity.

Data from the study provided strong support for Beijaard et al.'s (2004) earlier findings of four distinctive characteristics of teacher identity: namely, its dynamic and responsive nature, its reflection of both person and context, its combination of different sub-identities with conflict between these resolved or minimised, and lastly, its dependence on teacher agency and engagement. In order to demonstrate some of the particular aspects of primary school music teacher identity that add efficacy to Beijaard et al.'s work, and to illustrate this congruence between findings, aspects of Sue's story has been analysed with regard to the four characteristics. However, it is important to note that any other participant's story in this study would have lent itself to similar analysis.

Evidence of the dynamic nature of Sue's music teacher identity and its responsiveness to both personal and contextual factors was threaded through her account of her work as a music leader. In her first teaching position, having responded positively to a gentle push to lead school singing, she recalled a lack of preparedness in terms of her teacher education experiences. This initial foray into music leadership was both tentative and experimental and Sue described how her developing understanding of the context combined with her own evaluation of her efforts contributed to ongoing changes in practice. Although she brought a range of skills and experience to the music leadership role, Sue was often aware that these were not the right ones for the context within which she was working. For example, early attempts to accompany assembly singing were less than successful and she soon realised that, in her case, the piano provided a more appropriate accompaniment for a large group than the guitar. Based on Sue's account, it is likely that others' assessments of her music teacher identity over these early months would have reflected this *emergent* leadership quality, in sharp contrast with the *experience* and *expertise* evident in the choir rehearsal I observed. Different and changing school contexts clearly influenced the direction of Sue's learning, and equally, her developing strengths influenced the range of musical offerings within those schools. The agency and engagement Beijaard et al. (2004) speak of are exemplified by the disposition for learning that has characterised much of Sue's work as a music leader. She reported how attendance at music professional development events often confirmed that she was moving in the direction of recognised good practice, and, at other times, provided the impetus for leading worthwhile professional development with her

colleagues. In more recent years, Sue's leadership has been characterised by a strong sense of responsibility to support less confident colleagues, a personal value that is out of alignment with the professional development aspirations of current senior management in her school. Nonetheless, she resolved this value difference for herself and continued to work at an informal level to provide ongoing music support and development, even in an environment that neither promotes nor values this. In addition, in spite of the increasing demands of regular classroom teaching on her time and energy, maintaining a middle school choir has remained an important aspect of Sue's personal identity, a primary site for her ongoing development and growth as a music leader, and a source of satisfaction in terms of children's musical development.

The question remains whether Beijaard et al.'s (2004) characteristics of teacher identity are sufficiently broad to account for the subtleties and distinctive features associated with primary school music teacher identity. Although in Sue's case it is clear that they align well, features of other participants' stories also affirm the efficacy of this framework for understanding more about music teacher identity. For example, whereas Sue's career path has been characterised by stability and consistency, Madeleine's has involved frequent changes of location and status. Nonetheless, all four characteristics can be seen at work in Madeleine's practice across different settings. In particular, her music teacher identity is flexible and able to meet the demands and opportunities presented by different teaching contexts. For Bruce, who began his teaching with an established music leadership identity, the weaving together of potentially conflicting sub-identities as musical show director and classroom teacher, give further evidence of the applicability of Beijaard et.al's teacher identity framework to the work of primary school music leaders.

An important aspect of this research has been to uncover the attributes that characterise primary school music leaders, and to build an understanding of the complex origins of these attributes. Many layers of experience and knowledge, and a range of formal and informal learning contexts were shown to have contributed to each participant's unique music leadership profile. These vivid accounts of music leadership practice add an enriched subject content perspective to the more generic work of Clandinin and Connelly (1995) and like-minded researchers (e.g. Day, 2004; Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1989). For example, Sue's story portrayed aspects of the distinction Connelly (2004)

draws between 'knowledge for teachers' and 'teacher knowledge'. The knowledge gleaned through years of choral singing and piano tuition, the extensive elective studies in music that were part of Sue's overall teacher education programme, and a wide range of professional development activities, all contributed to a broad base on which to draw, and incorporated elements of declarative (knowing what) and procedural (knowing how) knowledge. As this knowledge base has been brought into service through extended periods of teaching and reflection, Sue's bank of 'teacher knowledge' has also expanded. This interdependence of formal and experiential knowledge also surfaced in other participants' music leadership practice, further evidence that developing 'teacher knowledge' is an emergent and stable characteristic of music leaders' work. For example, Tom demonstrated how the breadth and depth of his prior music experience have provided a secure foundation on which to build new knowledge of what it means to be a teacher and a leader in music. Likewise, Fiona identified that her primary teaching career had been a journey in which she learned through experience how to use her musical knowledge effectively in a school and classroom context. These examples bear out Nias' (1989) findings that over half the teachers in her study saw primary teaching as an occupation which allowed them to live out their unique interests, qualities and dispositions.

In addition to the insights gained regarding the development of each participant's personal identity as a music leader, a range of data provided evidence for the manner in which school leadership experiences and contexts continued to shape and reinforce that identity. This overall concept of being 'the music person' in a school combined participants' own sense of being a music leader with externally imposed identity measures, in themselves important contributors to identity stability (Roberts, 2004). At times, these surfaced in the form of expectations, as in the case of the parents from Leanne's school who described high hopes of a forthcoming choir performance, unaware that their enthusiasm became a source of pressure and anxiety for Leanne. At other times, music leadership identity was communicated as affirmation, sometimes quite public and explicit but also in more subtle and personal ways. This personal affirmation appeared to be especially treasured because it often reflected how musical involvement had resulted in gains for individual children, and by association, the music leader's contribution to those gains. Being approached by colleagues to assist with their classroom music or assembly item, and being trusted enough for those colleagues to

share their feelings of inadequacy about teaching music were also valued signs of appreciation and success as a music leader. Another form of affirmation came about through children's varied responses to music opportunities and experiences. These responses included expressing an interest in joining extracurricular groups and persuading their friends and classmates to join; younger children's sense of excitement that they would soon be old enough to join established groups; unsolicited approaches from children wanting to talk about out of school music experiences or interests; children taking the initiative in suggesting new music groups or events; and former students returning to the school to find out what was happening with extracurricular groups they had belonged to or to evaluate events such as the school production.

Threaded through the stories and situations discussed up to this point is a strong affective component. Emotion in teaching, the focus of a great deal of research activity in recent years, clearly contributed to and flowed from the various teaching episodes described and observed. It is deserving of more detailed scrutiny and it is to this that we now turn.

8.3.3 The role of emotion in primary school music leaders' work

The emotionality of music teaching and learning lends itself to analysis in terms of Zembylas' (2004; Zembylas, 2007) ideas about the contribution of individual, relational and socio-political planes of emotional knowledge to teachers' overall pedagogical content knowledge. For now, the focus will be on the first two of these planes, with the third to be discussed in the next chapter section. Teaching and emotion influence each other as an interactive system (Zembylas, 2007), and, as with so many aspects of the work of primary music leaders, it can be difficult to unravel the separate contributions of each.   At the intrapersonal level, teachers' descriptions and my observations of their music leadership were consistent with Zembylas' views of the integrated nature of thoughts and feelings in teaching practice. As participants discussed their work with extra-curricular groups, at the forefront of their thinking was the dual focus of musical goals and the importance of children enjoying and gaining satisfaction from their engagement with music. For example, Sue's awareness of young children's need for recreational time in their lunch hour resulted in a changed rehearsal structure that recognised both the children's needs and the musical requirements of the rehearsal. At

a relational level, teachers monitored the affective climate of rehearsals and took note of events that reflected children's pleasure in the music. When children explicitly communicated aspects of enjoyment, this acted as a reinforcer for teachers, frequently in terms of musical decisions such as repertoire choice. In her account of supporting a child with autism to reach a public performance goal, Leanne noted that not only did the child's success make the effort worthwhile, it also provided a more general incentive to continue expending effort on music leadership in her school.

Discussions of emotionality in teaching also link to Hargreaves and Goodson's (1996) claim that children's wellbeing, central to the work of the teaching profession, is bound up with the creation of a caring and intellectually challenging environment. With the use of Hargreaves' (2001) work on emotional geographies as a framework, numerous examples in the data pointed to the likelihood of shared music activities strengthening relationships and heightening emotional understanding. On the one hand, opportunities were presented through the actual content of the activity such as emphasis on communicating the affective message of songs and encouraging an affective response in listeners. On the other hand, opportunities arose as participants and children interacted in affectively-charged situations such as auditions, overcoming performance anxiety, or sharing aspects of out-of-school music learning with a sympathetic and interested teacher.

Music-making with children is a potential site for caring and the data from the study bear this out. The emotional characteristics of music leadership were clearly evident in all participants' accounts of their experiences as music leaders as well as in the sessions observed. Reference has already been made to David's warm and engaging demeanour at junior school assembly, to Bruce's intentional choice of emotionally-laden song repertoire, and to Ian's relaxed interactions with members of the rock band. These are all indicative of a state of congruence between each teacher's individual emotional state and aspirations for their music leadership practice. Rosie's instrumental lesson provided a further example of the flow of emotion within and between music-makers. The lesson itself was overlaid with positive affect that included active encouragement of and responsiveness to children's contributions, sensitivity to children's need for information, and an awareness of the children's responses and engagement. Rosie's own emotional investment in the lesson was demonstrated through the content and tone

of her instructions which were unfailingly warm and personal, her frequent appeals to children's capacity to make choices and contribute, genuine delight at their successes and encouraging feedback for their emergent skills. The children's willingness to take risks and to offer suggestions (sometimes 'off the wall') indicated a secure and safe learning environment.

Although not restricted to issues of emotionality in teaching, Jackson's (1990b) identification of four themes in teachers' self-reporting of their work is also borne out in the data from this study. As participants spoke about working musically in their schools, and even as they recalled incidents or experiences that stretched back in time, there was a strong tendency to weave these recollections into their current music practice situations, in line with Jackson's analysis of teachers' *immediacy of action.* All the observed music sessions were notable for the presence of the teacher, obviously in a physical sense but also with regard to their engagement with both learners and music. The relative *informality* in the interactions between music leader and children has already been alluded to in relation to Ian's rock band rehearsal, but was also evident in the large group sessions such as Will's and David's singing, and this is consistent with O'Connor and Holland's (2004) findings that the content and the processes of arts learning and teaching can engender a relaxed pedagogical tone. Likewise, the concern for children's *individuality* within the overall music experience has surfaced throughout the data as teachers have reflected on their work as music leaders. Issues of *autonomy*, a striking feature of participants' experiences as music leaders, are discussed in greater depth in the following section.

As noted by Nias (1996), primary school classrooms, by their very nature, are a potential source of stress for teachers. Teaching is a demanding profession and there may be few, if any, opportunities for most primary school teachers to refresh and recharge their batteries during the school day. Playground duties, preparation of materials, extra-curricular activities, and the ever-present possibilities of accidents, illness, conflict and other intrusions mean that even non-teaching times are not protected from interruption. Nias's (1989) research highlighted the investment of self that primary teachers make within that role. This may be in general terms such as caring, kindness and other humanist values that emphasise the importance of relationships within primary school classrooms. Equally, it may be in relation to the

content of teaching episodes. Data in this study reinforced a widely-held belief that music activity, whether within the regular classroom programme or as extra-curricular activity, delivers a beneficial change of focus, pace, and affective tone to both teachers and children.

Considering the emotional and expressive character of a great deal of music learning content, the particular contexts in which music takes place in schools, and the possibilities of a different relationship between music leader and children than that which predominates at other times in the school day (O'Connor & Holland, 2004), it is not too radical to suggest that music making in school can offer benefits that go beyond children's musical learning. In the light of Sutton and Wheatley's (2003) work which demonstrated a strong connection between teachers' positive emotions and caring, if teachers are involved in learning activities that deliver a positive affect to them and to the children they work with, they may be more able to demonstrate care in their interactions with children, and children may in turn interpret these relationships as being caring in nature.

Data from this study, in particular the observation notes, confirm the investment of self (Nias, 1990) that characterised each participant's work and was demonstrated in small and large ways. It is shown, for example, in Bruce's frequent choice of songs that communicated important messages about living well, and in his admission of being profoundly moved by the children's singing. It was made clear through his words and actions that providing music experiences for children was a form of giving motivated by what he himself recalled receiving through music as a child. Likewise, Tom's engagement with the children during junior singing required him to step out of a conventional upfront leadership role focused on maintaining control and attending to an 'agenda', as would a master of ceremonies, to that of performer, musician, dancer, instrumentalist, motivator, coach, encourager, entertainer. His investment of self included a willingness to put voice and body on the line, and, if necessary, make a fool of himself along the way. A contrasting example was Fiona's story of bringing her flute to school and playing duets with a child during the lunch hour. This was a very different sort of engagement than normally occurs between children and teachers at break times. It involved teacher and child participating in an activity that, while giving

pleasure to both individually, took on a different life and character when shared with the other.

In the three contrasting situations described above, although the individual contexts are completely different, the investment of self is a shared and powerful characteristic. Each example required a 'giving out' from the teachers concerned, but also enabled a 'taking in' in terms of the pleasure of shared music-making, the refreshment that comes from engaging in a familiar and loved pursuit, the joy of being involved with children's musical lives, and overall satisfaction of a job well done. Nias (1996) suggested that teachers' capacity to maintain a stable classroom presence is bound up with levels of integrity and authenticity within their own emotional lives. Given the acknowledged demands of classroom teaching, teachers who love music and whose relationship with music is a source of emotional fulfilment can expect to be nurtured in their teaching role when they include formal and informal music activity as part of their teaching day.

The very public nature of extra-curricular music roles can leave music leaders vulnerable to perceived criticism and comparisons. Performances are open to critique from children, parents, other teachers and the wider community, a feature shared with the other performing arts and sports. Possibly because they easily recalled their own feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty when they started out as music leaders, the teachers in this study reflected high levels of diplomacy and sensitivity in their dealings with other teachers who were testing the waters of music leadership. For example, one participant related an example of a teaching colleague's enthusiastic but ineffective music leadership practice and was adamant that this experience must be reported in a way that would not identify the teacher concerned. The message I took from this interaction was that the other teacher's continued involvement was perceived as being more important than their actual music leadership skill. This ethic of supporting and encouraging colleagues across the breadth of music offerings in schools was articulated in different ways by different participants. For example, having delegated aspects of school production leadership to a less-experienced colleague, Rosie recognised that she needed to take a hands-off approach and allow the younger teacher space to experiment, take risks and learn from mistakes. At the same time, she remained emotionally close and supportive, assuming a role of resource person rather than active leadership per se.

The above examples highlight the varied manner in which music can provide an emotional bridge between individuals and groups. With regard to emotional distance in teaching, Hargreaves (2001) also draws attention to negative and potentially draining emotional contexts, such as the expression of values that are not well-aligned or that engender conflict with children, parents and teaching colleagues. Participants in this study had opportunities to discuss negative emotions associated with music leadership in their schools and my expectation was that these would surface quickly and with some strength. Some difficulties were raised, some frustrations shared, some slights and lack of valuing described, and these linked to issues that will be discussed in the following chapter sections. However, overwhelmingly, participants recounted experiences of music in their schools that were nurturing. Given the unexpectededly positive nature of these data, I questioned whether or not my approach to the research had communicated a subtle message that I was only interested in 'good' stories about their involvement in music. Examination of the interview transcripts confirmed that questions about difficulties, challenges, conflict, and disappointments were posed in multiple ways to all participants, and that they tended to respond by returning to constructive and satisfying stories of practice.

The music-making observed in the course of this study took place in environments characterised by positive and harmonious interactions between music leaders and children, and between the children themselves. It is clearly not possible to make inferences of causality between making music in a school setting and a happy, settled environment. Nonetheless, data from this study contribute to anecdotal and research evidence that links children's collective engagement with classroom learning to structural, motivational and relational factors such as the sequence and content of learning sessions, children's interest in the activity, the appropriateness of the learning material for children's age and stage, and the effective use of pedagogical strategies.

In this section of the discussion, study data demonstrating the dynamic nature of participants' work have been linked to a range of relevant theories and research, and have highlighted both similarities and differences between individual participants' data and how that data can be understood. Primary music leaders' work is dynamic in that it both influences and is influenced by factors such as the ongoing life journey to and

within the role of primary music leader, the development and construction of personal and professional facets of teacher identity, and the affective components of the role. However, given the stated and demonstrated importance of planes of operation that stretch beyond the personal and interpersonal (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), it is important to extend the discussion to include aspects of the wider educational context within which primary music leaders work out their roles and responsibilities.

8.4   The Broad Context of Primary School Music Leaders' Work

Bearing in mind that narrative can operate as both the *means* and the *end* of research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), and that humans often make sense of their world through the multiple telling of many stories (Butler-Kisber et al., 2007), we move now from the personal to the larger story of music leadership within New Zealand primary schools.   The major focus of this section is on how data from the study shed light on music's status within the curriculum, with attention given to how formal and enacted curriculum policies and priorities influenced both the practice and the understanding of primary music leaders' work.   Music's potential role in schools as articulated by and demonstrated through the work of research participants will also be examined.

It is well understood that the overall political and institutional context for learning and teaching has an effect on the practice of teaching at different levels, both contributing to and constraining such aspects as teachers' emotional experience of their work (Zembylas, 2007). The perceived marginalisation of music within New Zealand primary schools is reflected in explicit and underlying messages that filter to and from teachers, school leaders and members of the wider music education community. Accordingly, at the outset of this study I had a clear sense of the likely direction the research would take, and anticipated that the findings would confirm my understanding of what it might mean to be a primary school music leader in Aotearoa New Zealand at this time. This imagined story was characterised by burnout, disillusionment, a sense of hopelessness and a lack of valuing, that, from my perspective, needed to be told and heard. Therefore it came as a surprise when participants' accounts were consistently positive in orientation, both simpler and more complex than I had ever imagined, and at times followed unexpected trajectories.

A 'common music story' emerged in the study, similar to that described by Drake, Spillane and Hufferd-Ackles (2001) in relation to secondary school literacy leaders. Both sets of data show that literacy and music leaders share an enthusiastic outlook, a propensity for ongoing growth in practice, and ease of movement between personal and professional expressions of their subject passion. However, at an institutional and policy level there are considerable differences. Multiple opportunities exist within primary schools for teachers to develop as literacy leaders and the work of an effective literacy leader threads through all classrooms and programmes. Focused support for their literacy programmes is a priority when beginning teachers are being mentored, and the emphasis on effective literacy pedagogy is underpinned by coordinated research efforts. Teachers share responsibility for the overall health of a school's literacy programme and literacy practices are multi-directional between and among all members of the teaching staff.

Unlike the ubiquitous presence of literacy learning and teaching within New Zealand primary schools, data from this study suggested that without the active involvement of one or more teachers with a personal passion for music, high quality classroom and extra-curricular music programmes are unlikely. Such leadership may be bestowed from above (as in the different cases of David, Bruce and Tom), assumed by teachers who have the confidence and experience to lead, revealed through excellent individual practice, or accepted in response to other teachers looking towards them for support and ideas. Although participants' music leadership surfaced in a range of circumstances, in all cases they possessed a pre-existing level of confidence or experience that underpinned their leadership.

Participants reported wide variation in terms of their personal experiences of being or feeling marginalised in their role as school music leaders, although all acknowledged music's status as a *"Cinderella subject"* (Sue and Bruce) within the wider policy environment, justifying this assessment by reference to curriculum priorities, levels of support, and resource provision. Some participants suggested that resourcing and timetabling decisions and a lack of professional development support for generalist teachers limited the provision of coordinated classroom music programmes in their schools. Some felt that senior staff did not understand or value the distinctive character of music learning and teaching, nor did they recognise the behind-the-scenes work of

music leaders in terms of thinking, planning and overall practice. During observations of school and multi-group singing I noted the likelihood of music leaders and other teacher attendees experiencing the sessions in qualitatively different ways. These 'other' teachers' responsibilities were usually limited to organising their own class to and from the venue, monitoring behaviour, and joining in with the singing. In contrast, the music leaders' complex contributions were potentially obscured by an outward impression that music activity was second nature to them, as easy as breathing.

There were significant differences evident in the school systems within which participants exercised their music leadership roles. At one end of the spectrum, music was an established feature of Bruce's school, and his appointment to the teaching staff reflected wider aspirations for music in the school. This school's musical life was characterised by a more multi-directional set of relationships than would usually be the case, and all teachers, including the principal, were actively involved in a range of music initiatives. David, as the school principal, had exerted considerable effort to consolidate the place of music within his school, to the point that music was a taken-for-granted aspect of the school's overall profile. Likewise, Rosie and Will had forged an important place for music in their respective school communities, and played a pivotal role in supporting the provision of music in other teachers' classrooms. Tom's situation was unique in that it arose from the new principal's intentional policy to recruit teachers with subject specialisms and passion, the rationale being that this would support professional development for all staff across the breadth of the curriculum. Under this leadership model, there was potential for the development of a more organic and dynamic system of music activity, akin to that in Bruce's school. In contrast, individual music leadership was the primary driver for music initiatives in Sue's and Leanne's schools and they reported little recognition from senior leadership teams of the contribution music could make to school-wide goals of academic excellence, innovation and creativity.

Because Bruce and Tom's teaching appointments resulted directly from the music leadership strengths they could bring to their wider school communities, a culture of appreciation overlaid their musical contributions. In contrast, two other participants believed that their music leadership strengths were not valued by their current principals. In one case, this lack of valuing surfaced as an offhand comment about the

choir not being a worthwhile activity, and in the other, a comment that the choir was attracting too many children with a hint that something subversive lay behind the increased music activity. Where participants worked in an atmosphere of minimal appreciation from senior teachers, their motivation to continue as music leaders was fed by children's and parents' affirmation, and by the pleasure they personally derived from music-making.

Data from the study showed that the presence of an active music leader in a school provided a key opportunity for other teachers to develop as music teachers and leaders. Evidence was presented in relation to a first year teacher mentored by Leanne, an experienced colleague by Bruce, Fiona and another young teacher by Rosie, a student on practicum by David, David himself in his formative years by a specialist intermediate school teacher, and the teacher in the class next door by Tom. This is not to imply that all existing music leaders are ready and willing to nurture other teachers in the role or to share key leadership roles, as Madeleine discovered in one of her teaching positions. When supporting their less experienced colleagues to develop as teachers of classroom music, some participants encouraged these teachers to learn by participating alongside children in their music-making (Beauchamp,1997). This approach, utilised by Will as he scaffolded colleagues to develop their contributions to the school-wide production, by Ian during music activities that were appropriate for two classes of children to participate in, and by Tom in his work with the teacher in the next classroom, offered a fruitful strategy for participants who had little time to devote to other teachers' professional development needs. Experience and confidence developed in tandem for these teacher-learners, and raised the possibility of new music teacher leaders emerging in the future.

Irrespective of the status of music within their own school, all participants recognised music's marginal status in policy terms, particularly in relation to the privileging of literacy and numeracy. However their focus and energy was firmly fixed on what it was possible to achieve at school level rather than on political action. Given their strong collective beliefs about the multiple benefits and significance of music in their schools, I questioned why this was so. Participants were convinced of music's capacity to engage children at a level encompassing and going beyond the merely cognitive (Eisner, 2005), that music is inherently social and meaningful (Small, 1998), and that music

connects with who we are and the wholeness of our lives. Why then might they choose to work quietly on the margins rather than draw attention to the undervalued place of music in the school curriculum? Perhaps there is an element of safety on the margins, and, if so, exploring the nature of that safe place may provide an explanation for why teachers choose to remain there.

Increasingly, New Zealand primary teachers' work in literacy and numeracy is determined by stringent improvement and accountability measures and it is in these areas that schools place the greatest emphasis on obtaining comprehensive assessment information, setting goals for school review and reporting practices, and providing school-wide professional development. Goodson (1997) showed that when teachers are subjected to strong controls, particularly those that require assessment data to demonstrate effectiveness and raised standards, they have a tendency to subject their students to similar controls. Data from this study support the theory that music activity in schools can and does seed and blossom in numerous and unexpected ways, not always explicitly and often over an extended timeframe. Perhaps participants' willingness to stay on the margins can be explained by the space and autonomy it affords them to explore their 'passion' without interference. Alongside valuable musical learning and development, there is evidence in the data that authentic music activity nurtured joy, release, relaxed communication and warm relationships.

Participants worked within the constraints of current official curriculum priorities, with the resources that were present in their schools, these themselves representing the priorities and concerns of the school management and wider community. Although all participants except Madeleine maintained a music programme in their own classrooms, and David ensured that music learning in his school was supported by a part-time specialist teacher, there was little evidence in any of the participants' schools of formal attention to music learning and assessment. This allowed them considerable freedom to develop programmes that reflected their particular areas of musical expertise or interest, and these individualised curricula shone through the data. At the same time, there was little pressure to provide professional development for teachers who lacked confidence in music and were not currently delivering a coordinated classroom programme. The price for curriculum autonomy for most participants was a lack of support and resourcing to improve the status of the subject and the overall quality of the teaching.

An increase in status for music could equally be at a cost to these current levels of creativity and autonomy.

The findings of this research suggest that music is worthy of higher status than it currently enjoys within the overall primary school curriculum and that any commitment to developing and supporting school-based music leaders would bring rich rewards for children, teachers and school communities. Given that the wider music education field has often turned itself inside out in an attempt to justify its worth and value, evidence of a 'legitimation crisis' (Habermas, 1975), data from this study need to be allowed to 'speak for themselves'. This point is well made by Plummeridge (2001):

> *If it is necessary to bolster the position of music in a particular school, it may well be that this will be achieved through practice rather than some sort of elegant theoretical exposition… Professor Louis Arnaud Reid (1980), one of the most imaginative and respected of educational philosophers and with a particular interest in the arts, has made the point that it is only really possible to understand the value of the arts from within… To see children taking part in activities and working with a sense of commitment, purpose and delight is to recognise that they are participating in something worthwhile and of intrinsic value.* ***The practice is the justification.*** (p.28)

The focus in this section has been on the wider context in which primary school music leaders undertake their roles and responsibilities, and on how this context informs and constrains them in their work. Overall, participants in this study were critical but accepting of curriculum constraints, and demonstrated a willingness to work in accordance with the status quo. They made frequent reference to significant personal rewards from their music leadership work, and maintained an outward-looking focus on children's long-term musical futures and on the contribution music could make to vibrant, healthy school communities.

8.5   Primary School Music Leaders' Work as Community of Practice

Although satisfied that the different items in the 'theoretical toolbox' enabled a good level of understanding of the work of primary school music leaders, I was concerned

that they did not, singly or in combination, reach to the heart of the real significance and meaning of that work. Wenger's 'communities of practice' lens provided the necessary explanatory theory through which as yet unconnected aspects of the study could be drawn together. This then is the focus of the final section.

The section begins with a brief explanation of the communities of practice framework as it applies to education, and draws out three different threads that are subsequently unravelled in relation to the data from the study: namely, issues of identity, introduction into and mutual engagement within a community of practice, and the community of practice as a means of renewal.

8.5.1 The community of practice framework

The term 'community of practice' emerged from Wenger and Lave's collaborative work in the 1980s into the nature of learning in everyday life and into how such understanding can assist us to build more efficacious learning contexts (see for example, Lave & Wenger, 1991). The idea of multiple communities of practice, models of learning across a wide range of contexts and content, has its genesis in a social theory of learning built around intersecting axes of engagement. Investigating the relationship between *practice*, defined by Wenger (1998) in terms of coordinated sites of group activity, and *identity*, the make-up of the individual person engaged in practice, illuminates the core process of learning within a community of practice. Engagement in shared practice within a communal context for learning leads to a particular kind of knowing concerned with "being together, living meaningfully, developing a satisfying identity, and altogether being human" (Wenger, 1998, p.134).

Reference to the community of practice framework has enabled greater clarity in relation to the question of music's significance within the primary school setting. Although the focus of the research has always been on teachers and teacher leadership, at every stage I was confronted with the centrality of learning and learners: that of the participants in the study themselves, the children and teachers with whom they worked, and myself as a researcher and music educator. The communities of practice framework, predicated on the idea of ongoing learning as a function of participation within such a community, helped explain the difficulty of writing about primary school

music leaders in isolation from the layers of context and relationships that characterised their work. Wenger's theory sheds light on why and how music leaders' contributions to their schools, their colleagues and the children they teach are significant in multiple ways.

At the outset of the study, I expected that participants' core leadership activity would be focused on their teaching colleagues' growth and development as musicians as they worked collaboratively to bring music to children. In reality, the primary site for their leadership was with children in class, multi-group and extra-curricular music activities and accordingly, the anticipated sense of isolation for primary music leaders was virtually non-existent. With regard to all these contexts, the significance that I perceived as an observer can be well explained by reference to Wenger's (1998) three dimensions of communities of practice. *Mutual engagement* was evident through the personal investment of the whole self that was modelled, permitted and affirmed by teachers, and reflected in children's parallel commitment to their music-making. The idea of a *joint enterprise* may seem self-evident when a music leader and children are participating in the same musical event, but at a deeper level, children were invited into the music-making as co-participants whose contributions gave essential life and meaning to the enterprise. The development of a *shared repertoire,* beyond the surface content of the music-making, was a particular responsibility of these teacher leaders who sought to provide children with the means to participate in music beyond the time and place boundaries of the school.

While Wenger (1998) maintains that a great deal of school learning is built around decontextualised forms of knowledge, the formal and informal music activity observed and reported on in this study closely resembled participation within an authentic community of music practice. Participants worked in ways that nurtured children's developing identity as musicians, encouraging their participation as full members in specially constituted groups like choirs or bands, but also as classes and larger groups of children engaged in singing, playing instruments, moving or listening to music. This overall inclusive stance was further supported by pedagogical practices such as scaffolding learning experiences, de-mystifying specialist musical language, explicit encouragement of emotional and expressive aspects of performance, and the

involvement of children in all aspects of the music-making including musical decision making, technical support, and evaluation and reflection.

8.5.2 Identity and engagement within a community of practice

A central tenet of community of practice theory is that identity, mutually constructed on individual and social planes, is both a contributor to and a consequence of engagement within communities of practice, the two being inextricably entwined. The suggestion that the construction of identity is a "lifelong process whose phases and rhythms change as the world changes" (Wenger, 1998, p.263) was certainly borne out by numerous data that reflected this continuous interaction between person and context. The role of identity in the transfer of learning from one community of practice to another was demonstrated through examples such as Fiona inviting the novice flautist to play with her and Rosie having the confidence to apply her school-based singing leadership in a larger school cluster context.

The significance of music to each participant's identity profile emerged early in the research. What did not become evident until later was that children's engagement with music during the observation sessions provided a window into their unfolding identity as musicians. This points to the transformative nature of these sessions, consistent with Wenger's (1998) suggestion that education is concerned with the opening out of possibilities and the broadening of the scope for learning, in contrast to training which is geared towards specific and contained elements of practice.

Data from the study also contributed to understandings of how novices are inducted into existing communities of practice. When other teachers showed that they wanted to be a part of established music communities, they were welcomed in and a place was found for them to be involved. Hence, the first year teacher was observed 'trying on' a conductor/leader role while Leanne played the piano and directed from the side. Sue reflected back to a time when her school was engaged in bringing new music equipment (in this case, class sets of pitched percussion instruments) into use across the senior team of her school. On this occasion there was a common purpose, a focus for the activity, and a close alignment between what regular teachers knew they needed to know and what Sue believed she could help them learn.

Participants described other situations in which established communities of practice, primarily restricted to the music leader and children, reached out and brought teaching colleagues into a limited form of participation. For example, school productions were frequently tailored in terms of process so that participants could support other teachers to develop music teaching capabilities and confidence, thus extending their colleagues' potential identity as musicians.

As a unique case, Bruce's entire school operated as a dynamic community of music practice that included all staff and children as active musicians, the exception being a newly appointed staff member. Bruce reported that the new teacher had been left in no doubt that participation in music was expected from all teachers and that even if he didn't believe this was possible for him, he shouldn't worry. They would help him find his way and place as a musician, and, in the process, he might surprise himself!

As noted earlier, reification, defined as a process of making concrete that which has no actual concrete form, characterises a great deal of school learning (Wenger, 1998). An example of reification in music education practice could be children learning about music notation with minimal opportunity to use their learning in a real musical context. Although reified knowledge is not, by definition, lacking in value, in this instance, the outcome is a chasm between the experience of learning and the community of practice that it represents. Given the close connection between pedagogical content and processes, the result is often constrained relationships between teachers and children and a lack of opportunity for students to engage with teachers in their "lived identity" (Wenger, 1998, p.276). In contrast, just as Noddings (2005) reported drawing closer to a mathematics student in the wake of that student's engagement with visual arts practice, a certain *quality* of music activity in schools, consistent with Elliott's (1994) *musicking* and Regelski's (2005) *praxial* music education, allows children to draw close to their teachers in ways that are not easily achieved through other more reified school practices. In such instances, music within the curriculum extends beyond the status of a taught subject to that of an active agent within the wider social life of the school (DeNora 2003).

The above ideas provide a backdrop and an explanation for a quality noted in relation to all ten observation sessions. In each case, children's and teachers' engagement with the music seemed akin to Wenger's (1998) description of a legitimate community of practice as opposed to a shadowy representation of real life practice. This shared engagement included: patterns of communication that placed teachers alongside the children as co-musickers, in contrast to what Wenger (1998) termed "a teacher sticking out and a flat group of students all learning the same thing at the same time" (p.269); individuals or small groups of children moving unselfconsciously into a different musical world, reminiscent of Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) descriptions of 'flow'; observable signs of pleasure in music-making similar to what might be evident in out-of-school music groups such as choirs or rock bands.

8.5.3 Renewal within a community of practice

A striking feature of the data in this study was the fluid manner in which participants moved between past and present experience in their accounts of music leadership practice. A number of participants spoke about their early relationships with special teachers, and as they shared their memories of these teachers they emphasised their influence on their current practice. It was clear that they, in their turn, had become equally special teachers. In addition, there were explicit and implicit references to the musical and broader futures of the children in their care, consistent with Wenger's view of education as "an investment of a community in its own future" (p.264). The experiences participants brought to music-making in schools as learners and teachers, as well as their wider personal histories all contribute to how music education continues to be played out in our primary schools. Just as Drake, Spillane and Hufferd (2001) alluded to the generative nature of literacy teachers' stories, participants in this study were highly motivated to 'pass on the passion' for music to the children in their care. The concept of continuity within a renewing community of practice suggests that all those engaged in the work of music education face an enormous responsibility to create strong and enduring threads of musical activity that will contribute to lifelong constructive and empowering music practice.

Eisner (1996) suggests that:

> those who work in the field of research in music education should not distance themselves from the music itself. It is easy, at least relatively speaking, to define problems that fit the methodologies that we have learned to use and in so doing to address problems at the margins rather than the core of music education. (p.14)

One of the joys of this research project was that on ten occasions it brought me close to teachers and children as they engaged in the time-honoured practice of sharing music together. These experiences linked closely to Wenger's (1998) proposition that engagement in a community of practice involves more than human beings engaged in parallel forms of activity, a kind of shared *doing*. A deeper level of scrutiny revealed participants and children sharing aspects of their personal identities and *being* in ways that were meaningful for them as individuals and groups, and that contributed to an expanded identity as musicians.

8.6   Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to discuss the research findings in the light of a range of theories relevant to the overarching research questions. In the first instance, this involved linking each question to an explanatory strand that enabled a shift from description to interpretation.   In response to the question "who are the teachers who lead music in New Zealand primary schools?" multiple layers of teachers' lives emerged as contributing to their identity and practice as music leaders. In order to answer the question "what do music leaders do in their role?" it was necessary to reveal the seams of experience, knowledge, understanding, skill and discernment beneath the observable surface of practice. In answering the final question, "what is the significance of these teachers and their work?", interpretation of music practice in schools uncovered ordinary and profound occurrences, both qualities often bound together within a single experience.

The overarching theme of this chapter has been that although separating phenomena from their supporting contexts allows for close examination of specific features and factors, this should not be in isolation from or at the expense of the wider view. Recognition of the multifaceted nature of primary music leaders' lives has enabled

understanding of the journey as one of *being* and *becoming* rather than characterised by simple acts of *doing*. The work of primary school music leaders has a dynamic quality in that it contributes into and out of personal and professional identity construction, relationships with children, and the emotional landscape of the school. Attention to the wider curriculum context in which primary music leaders work has suggested that the bigger picture is itself complex and multi-layered. Although participants acknowledged music's marginal place within the curriculum, at a pragmatic level their primary concern was to provide the best possible music experiences to the children in care, in whatever ways were practical, realistic and achievable. The introduction of Wenger's (1998) "Communities of Practice" framework in the final section has enabled these different and contrasting layers to be woven together into a densely-textured and coherent whole.

CHAPTER NINE
CONCLUSIONS

We shall not cease from exploration,
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Little Gidding: T.S.Eliot

9.1   Introduction

This thesis began with the following research questions:

1. Who are the teachers who lead music in New Zealand primary schools and how do they come to be music leaders?

2. What do primary music leaders do and what skills, knowledge and understandings underpin their work as music leaders?

3. What is the significance of primary music leaders' work?

This chapter begins by summarising the overall research findings as they relate to each of the three substantive research questions. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study. The contributions the research makes to knowledge about teachers, teaching, music education and the broader school curriculum are then considered and implications for practice are explored. The thesis concludes with suggestions for further research and final thoughts on the research process and outcomes.

9.2   Research Findings

As a variety of small and large research conclusions coalesced around communities of practice theory (Wenger, 1998), I experienced a strong sense of 'coming home' to something I knew intuitively but had struggled to articulate. This concerned the belief, supported by personal and professional experience, that wherever excellent music teaching and learning is found in our primary schools, there we will also find children and teachers interacting in unique and joyful ways as they engage in shared music-

making. Underpinning this broad conclusion are specific findings related to the research questions and topic, and summarised in the subsections that follow.

9.2.1   Who are the teachers who lead music in their primary schools?

With regard to teachers who lead music in their primary schools, this research showed that the role of music leader was not something that was added onto the 'real life' persona of participants. Rather, it was embedded within their whole person and a significant contributor to each teacher's overall identity. In addition, the up-front visible role of music leader was shown to be the surface of multi-faceted personal and professional lives threaded through with music making, musical thinking and music experience.

Although participants' individual journeys toward and experiences within the role were unique, reflecting the complexity of their lives and situations, nonetheless, many shared features emerged from the data. Experiences within their own families, schools and communities, and their musical relationships with teachers and professional colleagues contributed directly and indirectly to participants' developing identities as music leaders. These multiple and diverse influences ranged from focused mentoring or role modelling in musical and teaching terms, through to providing opportunities for participants to enjoy and appreciate a wide range of musical styles and genre. Present and past relationships, including those with the children they taught, contributed in ongoing ways to participants' work as leaders and represented a dynamic and ever-present facet of their practice.

Patterns of similarity and difference were also evident as participants described the experiences which were formative in their developing identities as music leaders, or continued to be drawn on in their ongoing construction of that identity. Although the flavour and content of those experiences were distinctive and personal to participants, shared categories of experience were discernible. For example, although different in detail, most participants identified specific aspects of their own school music experiences that continued to have a bearing on their actual practice as music leaders in their schools and on their perceptions of the role. Among other important categories of experience highlighted were the gradual awakening of an aesthetic response to music,

formal and informal music instruction, affective outcomes of music learning events, and developing self-efficacy as musicians and music leaders.

9.2.2   What do primary school music leaders do?

In similar vein to the research findings regarding 'who' primary school music leaders are, 'what' they do was also revealed as complex and multifaceted with differences at the level of detail, and similarities in terms of broad categories of action. For participants in this research, extra-curricular music groups were the primary site for fulfilling their music leadership responsibilities, while examples of professional development work with colleagues were less frequent, less intentional and less coordinated. Notwithstanding constraining effects from the prevalence of literacy and mathematics within taught and timetabled class programmes, participants operated creatively to increase the quality and quantity of music learning and teaching in their own and others' classrooms. Within the current curriculum policy environment, they were accorded relative freedom to shape the nature of music making and experience for children in their schools.

Participants identified many tasks and responsibilities that fell to them as designated music leaders in their schools. As noted above, to a large extent they were free to determine the emphasis and focus of this work, and the choices made reflected both personal strengths and contextual factors. Participants provided evidence of growing into their music leadership roles over time, with encouragement from colleagues and their own reflective action contributing to increasingly skilled and assured practice.

It became clear through the observations and follow-up interviews that undertaking music leadership tasks and responsibilities was not just a matter of practical action but was also underpinned by reflection, a commitment to ongoing development as a music leader, thoughtful consideration of musical possibilities, and informed decision-making. This mindful and skilful practice drew on participants' generic and subject pedagogical knowledge and understanding, personal skills as musicians, experiential knowledge of music teaching and learning, and care for children's growth and development as musicians.

9.2.3 What is the significance of primary school music leaders' work?

In the original working title for this research, primary school music leaders' own achievements, challenges and experiences occupied centre stage in the study. However as the research progressed through the data collection and analysis phases, and as the thesis itself began to take shape, the interpretive lens shifted outwards to incorporate a wider angle on the topic of teachers who lead music in their primary schools. As the importance of their work beyond their own lives emerged from the data, it became problematic and somewhat artificial to maintain the line between participants' stories and broader perspectives on the significance of their work as music leaders.

Although the overall formulation of the research does not provide evidence of a causal link between music activity and the growth, development or achievement of particular learning or dispositional outcomes, the cumulative experiences of the ten participants and the congruence between their accounts give credibility to wider claims about the significance of music within the primary school setting. Alongside the strengthening evidence that participants' work as music leaders in their schools was significant to them personally, to individual and groups of children, to other teachers, and to the wider school community, Wenger's (1998) 'communities of practice' theory provided an explanatory framework for the data and findings.

In relation to participants' own accounts of leading music across a range of different school settings and in the context of extended teaching careers, their work as music leaders in primary schools reportedly bestowed wide-ranging benefits. These often accrued in immediate ways such as in a relaxed classroom tone, a change of pace following demanding cognitive tasks, or the shared release that comes from music-making. However, participants also reported longer term benefits in terms of children's developing identities as members of a community of musicians, strengthened relationships over time between children and teachers, individual children's improved engagement with school and learning, a satisfying focus for participants' professional development as teachers and musicians, and an enhanced school culture and community. Data from this study confirmed that participants brought a rich emotional life to their music-making. This emotional landscape provided them with resources to give out to children (Zembylas, 2007) but also enabled them to receive from children – reciprocity in action.

Findings relating to the overall significance of participants' work as music leaders reflect consistency between the descriptive data generated within the interview phases, researcher observations, and participants' own reflections with regard to the observations. The intense engagement of children and teachers was conveyed through energetic, committed, focused and joyful music practice and activity. Just as each of these sessions was transformative for me as the observer, participants were aware of their role in nurturing children's identity as musicians, and they in turn received nourishment for their wider teaching roles in their schools.

9.2.4 Limitations of the study

Drawing the boundaries around any research study will necessarily impose limitations on what can be achieved through the research. The main limitations of this study relate to the small number of participants, the shared role and perspective that participants represented, and the constraints imposed by the methodology selected for the research.

The ten teachers who participated in the research included an equal number of males and females and represented a range of demographic features with regard to age, years of service, levels of seniority, musical background and training, overall career history, and employment in schools with different demographic profiles. However the small number of participants precludes generalisation of findings to primary music leaders or schools nationwide. Given the important status of Māori as *tangata whenua* in New Zealand and the increasing numbers of Māori children in New Zealand classrooms, the absence of any teachers of Māori ethnicity is disappointing. In spite of these concerns about the sample size and the omission of a Māori perspective, the richness and breadth of data gathered does enable a level of informed speculation about both the 'who' and 'what' of teachers and music in New Zealand primary schools.

A second limitation concerns the single perspective on the research questions: that of primary music leaders alone. Although less of an issue in terms of the first and second questions for which participants were eminently qualified to speak with authority, this limitation was more keenly discerned in relation to the final research question regarding the significance of their work. The observation sessions allowed me to consider the

involvement of others in participants' music stories, and enabled a somewhat expanded view. Children, and in some sessions, other teachers and family members, taking part in a range of extra-curricular, class, team and whole school music activities created a larger 'informal' sample of participants. Their participation and engagement, and the energy and commitment of both teachers and children provided ample evidence of activity that was significant musically and in other ways to all concerned. Given my own prior experience as a primary music leader, this could still be interpreted as a partisan 'insider's' view. On the other hand, this experience also enabled me to 'see' and 'hear' with a degree of sensitivity that went beyond merely noticing that children were 'having fun', a level of appreciation consistent with Eisner's (2005) concept of 'connoisseurship'. To some extent it will be for readers themselves to judge whether the data, findings, and conduct of the study are credible in terms of their own knowledge of primary school music leaders and their work.

A further limitation of this research is reflected in the methodological approach to the study. Although both methodology and methods were well suited to the research questions formulated, every choice made also equates to a choice denied, and every choice denied closes a possible door to understanding. The selection of alternative methods and methodology would have enabled different shades of understanding on the overall topic of primary music leaders' work and its significance. For example, a nationwide survey of primary music leaders' work may have revealed important demographic patterns such as high numbers being close to retirement age, or the presence or absence of music leaders in particular kinds of schools or particular districts, or less 'common' journeys to music leadership than those uncovered in this research. It may also have enabled the compilation of a more complete list of tasks and responsibilities. However, any statistical and descriptive gains made through a survey approach would have been at the cost of participants' expanded personal stories, resulting in a reduced understanding of what it means in practice to be a music leader in a primary school. Similarly, a single ethnographic study of one teacher would have enabled more in-depth understanding of such aspects as motivational and identity factors in teacher development, or an analysis of that teacher's development in relation to specific contextual and political factors. Once again, the gains from a single teacher focus would also have been at the cost of a more collective understanding of *becoming* and *being* a primary music leader.

The limitations of this study which can be traced back to the exploratory nature of the research can also be balanced against its wider contribution to knowledge about primary music leaders and their work. These are addressed in the section which follows.

9.3   Contributions to Knowledge

This section outlines the contributions the research makes to knowledge about teachers and teaching, music education, and the broader school curriculum. In keeping with Jackson's (1990b) assertion that much educational research has moved away from a singular focus on grand theory to a "much more modest goal of trying to figure out what's happening here and now or what went on there and then" (p.7), the primary purpose of this research was to open up the 'collective case' of primary school music leaders to systematic scrutiny. Teachers, who understand music from the inside, and from a place of active engagement in leading music with schoolchildren, have a different perspective from those who view it from the outside. Accessing this perspective has not generated theoretical development per se, but it has contributed fresh insights and an expanded view of a range of existing theoretical constructs.

The contributions to knowledge of this research coalesce around new and original applications of theory to the particular context and wider work of primary school teachers who lead music in their schools. As data were analysed against a range of existing theoretical literature concerned with teachers' personal and professional lives, emotions in teaching, teacher identity, music and arts education, and communities of practice, they were shown to add fresh and thought-provoking perspectives to each theory. For example, a key finding from the data on teachers' journeys to becoming music leaders highlighted the contribution of past and present relationships and experiences to current identity beliefs and teaching practices, with recognition of the inter-generational factors at work in participants' personal and professional lives an important outcome of the research. This knowledge is not new in itself but the focus on generalist primary teachers with leadership responsibilities and a passion for music is novel. It adds to existing literature that explores when and how 'subject' makes a difference to such areas as career trajectory, alignment of personal and professional interests, and dispositions towards the subject and teaching the subject. As a result of

this study we now know more about music as a form of specialism within a generalist primary school framework, and we have greater understanding of how sustained engagement in music can be profoundly satisfying and nourishing for teachers working in a demanding profession.

The study contributes new knowledge to generic understandings of primary school subject leadership, in itself a somewhat neglected aspect of the teacher leadership literature. It demonstrates that although music leadership shares common features with leadership in other curriculum areas e.g. those with a performance orientation or those with a practical skills base, nonetheless, music leadership has a distinctive character and operates according to a unique set of tasks, personal characteristics and expectations. This distinctiveness is inextricably linked to the nature of music itself, the sonic world it creates, the incremental nature of learning in music, and the complex interplay of experiential, personal and social factors in the development of musical identities.

Finally, the application to the research data of Wenger's (1998) theory on the life and characteristics of "communities of practice" has modestly contributed to new knowledge on two counts. First, it has supported the transferability of the communities of practice theory to multiple contexts and its utility for understanding effective practice within different kinds of learning communities. More importantly, it has provided an explanatory framework for music educators' intuitive understandings of the value of music practice in human life. With its emphasis on the development of transformed identities, the importance of shared meaning and the possibilities for intergenerational and multiple role contributions to the learning context, communities of practice theory reaches beneath surface aspects of musical skills and repertoire to reveal deep cognitive, emotional and social engagement enabling children and teachers to strengthen and transform their individual and shared identities as musicians.

9.4   Implications for Practice

In addition to contributing new insights into relevant theory and knowledge, the overall research findings have implications for the practice of music education in schools. Through bringing the stories that underlie everyday music practice in schools to the forefront of collective consciousness, this study can help strengthen existing music

education practitioner and advocacy networks. Research conclusions add support to initiatives regarding the place of music in classrooms, schools and the overall curriculum, and highlight practical steps to encourage music leadership and develop overall teacher capability to teach music. The key to putting these ideas into practice is to disseminate the research findings in practitioner-focused publications and forums in order to raise the positive profile of music and draw attention to the benefits it offers within classroom or school settings.

Participants in this study reported varied influences and opportunities that were significant in shaping their musical identities (Borthwick & Davidson, 2002); described the joy and comfort of music in their lives; and shared inspiring stories of the power of music to include, motivate, challenge, connect and build community within their own professional practice. The research demonstrated the multiple roles music played in helping participants cope with the inevitable challenges of classroom life, and in creating a bridge between teachers and children, individual classes and the whole school, and between the school and its community. It confirmed that the work of primary music leaders can be the catalyst for a strengthened and healthy school community, and can inspire "a fresh and humane vision of what schools might become because what our schools become has everything to do with what our children and our culture will become" (Eisner, 2005, p.191).

Study findings give a double-sided view of how music can benefit students and teachers across every plane of school life. They highlight both the contribution of music as a discipline and the unique role of music leaders in bringing the subject's potential to fruition. When teachers with a personal passion for music incorporate this into their overall teacher identity, not only is it immensely rewarding for them but it can also be transformative both in terms of children's attitudes towards music, and their overall sense of belonging within the school environment. The challenge now is to apply these findings strategically so that schools play an active part in ensuring bright musical futures for all the children in their care.

The research signals the important role senior leaders have in supporting prospective music leaders to develop leadership profiles that reflect their personal strengths and abilities. In addition to providing tangible and practical support e.g. release for teachers

to lead some extracurricular music groups within the timetabled day, or encouraging music leaders' to seek out music professional development opportunities, music leaders are particularly appreciative when principals take a genuine interest in their work. Such recognition is experienced not only as affirmation for the teachers themselves but also for the achievements of the children, and it adds significantly to teachers' sense of satisfaction in the music leadership role.

Investing time and resources in communities of learners/musicians comprising teachers and children could deliver positive musical and extra-musical outcomes in our primary schools. Currently, limited recognition of professional development needs in music have made it difficult for music leaders to support their less confident colleagues in systematic ways. Although the study provided evidence of less-experienced teachers being mentored to take on music leadership roles in the future, we still know little about teachers who may be on the cusp of music leadership but have not been sufficiently mentored or have not had a potential gift identified. Study findings could serve as encouragement for other New Zealand primary school teachers who would like to be more involved in the music in their schools but lack the confidence or the opportunities to reach towards this goal.

The research also has implications for those involved in teacher education. It provides evidence of the positive contribution of passionate subject teaching within the formal curriculum and extra-curricular life of primary schools, and presents a challenge as to how this might be reflected in teacher education programmes. It suggests a shared responsibility within pre-service and in-service teacher education to ensure that our schools continue to have the services of capable music leaders, teachers whose identity as musicians is woven tightly within their overall teacher identity. The study points to the value of coordinated support for beginning teachers, in particular, the development of supportive structures that enable key teachers to develop strong music programmes in a policy environment that may not be sympathetic to such an aim.

9.5   Future Research

Although the exploratory nature of this study points to a wide range of possible directions for future research, the key areas highlighted in this section have been singled

out because of their direct links to and from the study. The suggestions for future research are also consistent with other calls for music education to strengthen its foundations by attending to a broader theoretical base than music itself (Roberts, 2004).

In order to overcome identified limitations of the current study, a broadly-based research programme could be developed into the nature of music education in primary schools. This could include further investigation into the role of music leaders through the eyes of other key stakeholders, as well as an expanded view of how children, other teachers, parents and members of the wider community experience and value the school music experience.

Allied to the research above would be expanded research regarding the breadth and nature of primary school music leaders' work and, in particular, the skills, knowledge and understandings that underpin that work. This research, which would require a level of *connoisseurship* (Eisner, 2005) on the part of researchers, could focus more specifically on musical aspects and link more directly to the wider music education field. While the current study addressed the *value* of participants' work as music leaders, it was not *evaluative* in terms of the quality or effectiveness of the music learning and teaching that occurred. There is scope for this aspect of their work to be explored further.

Music learning in schools could be the basis on which to investigate the use of alternative pedagogies to engage students and teachers in the learning process. There are strong parallels with Wenger's (1998) description of practice communities as leading to a particular kind of knowing concerned with "being together, living meaningfully, developing a satisfying identity, and altogether being human" (p.134). Ethnographic or multiple case studies of existing communities of music practice in primary schools could lead into action research with the aim of developing and expanding similar communities across different school settings.

Finally, there is scope to develop ongoing research into the relationship between subject disciplines and more generic knowledge of teachers' lives and work. In particular, research associated with teachers' personal and professional lives, the emotionality of

teaching, and students' experiences of teacher caring, could be extended by being viewed through the lens of primary music leaders' work.

Within the international field of music education there is a continuing call for researchers to develop coordinated and collaborative research initiatives that will strengthen the position of music in compulsory education. The suggestions for further research outlined above could contribute to such a research programme. Dissemination of findings from this and subsequent studies through scholarly, professional and community publications is an essential component of such a multi-faceted approach to building understanding of the practice, position and significance of music in primary school education.

9.6   Final Thoughts

When I embarked on this research journey, I envisaged that it would end in the preparation of a passionate account of life for primary school music leaders that could speak, on their behalf, of such things as the frustration of too few resources and too little time for music; the minimal value and place of music within primary school life; the need for inspired and courageous change. Although on occasions these ideas surfaced in the data as issues to be addressed in relation to primary schooling in Aotearoa New Zealand, the perspective participants presented on the research questions emphasised quite different aspects of their work and resulted in an unexpected thesis. They pointed towards a joyful curriculum, shared experience, a common purpose, a satisfying pursuit of beauty and joy within music, a place to be oneself and to get to know others. To paraphrase Plummeridge (2001), their practice is the justification!

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to Principal and Board of Trustees requesting access to teacher with responsibility for music

[LETTERHEAD]

The Principal and Board of Trustees' Chairperson,
(Insert school name and address)

Re: Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

Dear *(insert name),*

My name is Jenny Boyack and I am enrolled in a PhD at Massey University. I am interested in researching the stories of primary teachers who have a music leadership role in their schools. Although these teachers have a unique perspective on the value and place of music in schools, there has not been any attempt up until now to document their stories in a systematic way.

Following initial interviews with participating teachers, I would like to observe a music event (e.g. a school singing session, a music planning meeting, a class music lesson) in order to gain an enriched perspective of music leadership in the school context. Follow-up interviews with participating teachers will conclude the data collection phase.

I am seeking your permission to approach the teacher in your school with responsibility for music about their possible participation in the project. I would like to meet with the teacher concerned to outline the details of the study and answer questions. At this meeting the teacher would be given a copy of the Information Sheet about the study, a personal consent form and a stamped addressed envelope. Following the meeting, the teacher will be able to make an informed and unpressured decision about their participation.   I have attached a copy of the Information Sheet for Teachers. Please feel free to contact me or my chief supervisor, Dr Alison St.George, if you have any questions or concerns, or if you wish to discuss this request further.

If you consent to my approaching the teacher concerned, I would appreciate written confirmation to this effect. You are welcome to use the attached form letter and to return a signed copy to me in the envelope provided. Thank you for taking the time to consider this request.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Boyack
Senior Lecturer in Music Education
Massey University

Appendix B: Sample letter granting access

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

[School Letterhead]

Dear Jenny,

With regard to the above research project, we give permission for you to approach *(insert teacher's name),* the teacher with responsibility for music at *(insert name)* School. We understand that we are able to contact you or your chief supervisor for information and clarification about the project.

Principal's signature: **Date:**

Full name - printed

BOT Chairperson's signature: **Date:**

Full name - printed

Appendix C: Information sheet for teachers

[LETTERHEAD]

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS

My name is Jenny Boyack and I am a Senior Lecturer in the School of Arts, Development and Health Education at Massey University. I am enrolled in a PhD at Massey University and am interested in researching and documenting the stories of primary teachers with responsibility for music in their schools.
I hope that this research will enable us to:
1. identify policies, practices and cultural contexts that support and constrain teachers in their music leadership roles;
2. understand the relationship between teachers' music roles and their wider role in the school;
3. understand the impact of contextual factors on children's primary school experiences of music and on the music programmes and opportunities offered in primary schools.

Because of the music leadership role you have in your school I am inviting you to participate in the research. Details of the research and of what is involved for participants is outlined below.

Project details
The first part of the research will involve individual interviews with teachers who have or have had music responsibilities in primary schools. These interviews will be audiotaped and the transcripts returned to the teachers concerned for comment and possible amendment. Prior to the individual interviews, participants may be asked to collect documents or artefacts that they are happy to share with me and which represent aspects of their work as music leaders. This could include such things as an audiotape/programme for a school production, a planning document, or a resource prepared for use by other teachers. Following the initial interview, participants will be given the opportunity to share an aspect of their music leadership practice. This would involve me attending a school choir practice, staff development session, team singing or similar school music activity as an observer and taking notes. I would then follow up with a second audiotaped interview in which the teacher's evaluation and my observations would be shared and discussed. Once again, the teacher will have access to a transcript of the interview in order to verify or amend it.

What would your involvement be?
The data collection will take place in (insert date). Interviews will be conducted outside school hours at a mutually agreed time. It is likely that each interview could take up to one and a half hours. Interviews will take place in a quiet room in the teacher's school or my workplace or other appropriate venue agreed on. Observed music sessions will be part of the normal commitments of the participant teachers.

There is no expectation that teachers will schedule or prepare for events that are additional to or would disrupt their regular timetable.

Although taking part in the study will require a commitment of time and energy from participating teachers, I am hopeful that the process will be both affirming and encouraging for the teachers concerned.

What are your rights?
You are under no obligation to accept this invitation,
If you decide to participate, you have the right to:
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- view the transcript of individual interviews in order to verify and/or amend the material contained in them;
- view and comment on the researcher's observation notes from the observed music activity session;
- withdraw from the study at any time up to the end of the data collection phase;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

Every effort will be made to protect the identity of participants and their schools in the final research report, and in publications or conference papers that stem from the research. In the event of individual teachers wishing to be named in subsequent documents, papers or presentations, full consent for this will be sought from the teacher concerned, their Board of Trustees and Principal.

In line with current Massey University policy, all data collected as part of the project will be stored securely for the five years following completion of the research. Data will be kept separately from consent forms and other identifying information.

If you have further questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to contact me or one of my supervisors. Once you have had sufficient time to consider the project and make a decision about your participation, could you please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the stamped addressed envelope. If you wish to participate in the first interview and defer consent for the observation and second interview, please sign the top part of the consent form. However if you are happy to consent to both phases, you may sign both parts of the consent form. It would be appreciated if you could return the consent form by *(insert date here)*.

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Appendix D: Consent form for teachers

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions of the researcher or her supervisors at any time.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time up until the end of the data collection.

I agree/do not agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I agree to participate in a first interview

Teacher's signature   **Date**

Full name printed

I agree to participate in the observation phase and second interview

Teacher's signature   **Date**

Full name printed

Appendix E: Schedule for initial interview with teachers

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

NB: The researcher will go over material from the Information Sheet with regard to the teacher's right: not to answer questions; to have the tape recorder turned off; and to terminate the interview at any point. Will also repeat information about the process of transcribing and releasing the tape transcript for use as data in the research.

Tell me about:
- how you first came to have a primary school music role in this school/other schools
- role models or experiences that sit behind this involvement
- the impact of music on children, classrooms, schools
- self-perceptions – did you feel equipped to take on a leadership role?

What are the outstanding memories – the memories you go back to?
- for yourself, children, teachers, the school community

What were some of the challenges?
- how did you address these?
- what support did you receive?

Tell me about a situation in which you felt supported/affirmed in your lead teacher role?

What happened next …?

Tell me about a situation in which you would have liked support in your lead teacher role?

Have there been frustrating or disappointing times?
- how did you deal with these?

What changes have you experienced over the years?
- your own teaching and role in relation to music?
- school music programmes, curricula, resources?

Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about your involvement with music in schools?

Appendix F: Transcriber confidentiality agreement

**Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes:
Experiences, achievements and challenges**

TRANSCRIBER'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I …………………………………………………….. *(full name)*

agree to transcribe the tapes provided to me.

I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me.

I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for the project.

I also agree not to discuss, share or distribute the transcripts or anything else to do with the audiotapes in this study with any other person.

I agree to keep the audiotapes and the transcripts in a safe and secure place so that others do not have access to them while they are in my possession.

I agree to delete the computer files after the data has been returned to the researcher on the completion of all transcription.

TRANSCRIBER

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name - printed

Appendix G: Authority for the release of tape transcripts

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TAPE TRANSCRIPTS

This form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read, amend and/or verify the transcript of the interview conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, Jenny Boyack, in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____   **Date:** _____

Full Name (printed): _____

Appendix H: Information sheet for parents

[Letterhead]

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes: Experiences, achievements and challenges

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

My name is Jenny Boyack and I am a Senior Lecturer in Music Education at Massey University. I am enrolled in a PhD and am studying the work of teachers who are responsible for music in primary schools. This Information Sheet is to tell you about the project and about how your child may be involved.

I have spent time with (insert teacher's name) talking about all the music that happens at (insert school name). S/he has invited me to come to (a choir practice, music session, team singing). I will watch and listen to what (teacher' name) and the children are doing and make notes about what is happening. (Teacher's name) and I will talk about these later so that I can get an even better understanding of how music works at (school name). The information and knowledge I get through observing (teacher's name) and the children will be used as data in the study. However I will only refer to individual children in general ways and it will not be possible to identify individual children in any research report or document.

The children themselves will not be doing anything different or out of the ordinary. Their involvement in the study will be part of the normal school music programme and all children will participate in the music activities.   However I am seeking the permission of both you and your child to record observations in relation to (insert activity e.g. the choir practice, music session, team singing…). If you decide that you don't want data collected about your child, this will not disadvantage your child in any way. You are under no obligation to allow data about your child to be recorded.

If you and your child do consent, you have the right to:
- withdraw consent up until the end of the data collection period;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- an assurance that your child's name will not be used in the research report.

I would really appreciate it if you and your child could discuss the study and then fill in the attached consent form. Information in relation to your child will only be used if both you and your child agree. The completed consent form can be returned to the labelled posting box at the school office.

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor.

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This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 06/06. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 350 5799 x 2383, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Music at Xxxx School

Hello! My name is Jenny Boyack and I teach music to people who are training to be teachers. I would like to find out about music at Xxxx School. I have talked about this with (teacher's name). S/he has invited me to come to a (choir practice, music lesson, team singing…). I want to watch and listen to the music, and to write about what I see and hear, and about the things that (teacher's name) and you do at (choir practice, music time…). If other people read what I have written they won't know which teacher and children I am writing about.

I have sent a letter about this to your parents or caregiver so that you can talk about it at home and fill in the Consent Form together. If you have any questions you can phone me at home (358 7824).

Appendix J: Consent form for parents/caregivers and children

Primary teachers' leadership in school music programmes:
Experiences, achievements and challenges

Parents'/Caregivers' and Children's Consent Form

This Consent Form will be held for a period of five (5) years

<u>For Parents/Caregivers</u>
I have read the information about Jenny Boyack's research and talked about it with my child. I understand that my child will not be identified in any research report.
We agree to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Parent and Caregiver Information Sheet.

(Please tick [✓] the correct box)

	Yes	No
I consent to information about my child being recorded as part of the data collection for this research.	☐	☐

Signed _____
Parent's/Caregiver's name _____

<u>For Children</u>
I have read about Jenny's research and talked about it with my parents or caregivers.

(Please tick [✓] the correct box)

	Yes	No
I am happy for Jenny to write about things I have said or done at (choir practice…)	☐	☐

Child's name and room number _____
Child's signature _____
Date _____

Thank you for taking the time to read about the research.

Please place your completed form in the labelled posting box at the school office.