

# CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis responded to the need for written unit standards for Music in South Africa. As the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) currently requires that unit standards be formulated for all the different learning areas, Arts and Culture, including Music, also had to fulfil this requirement. With the Foundation Phase being regarded as one of the essential stages in the learner's development, it is important that Music should be introduced and successfully taught during Grades 1-3. Unfortunately, no standards are required for any subjects until Grade 9. This lack of compulsion only adds to the often prevalent unsatisfactory situation in which Music is not taught successfully or is even disregarded.

This problematic Music Education situation can be solved by means of the proposal for a new Music framework for South Africa's Foundation Phase and the teaching thereof. In this way a foundation for the teaching, learning, growth and future prosperity of Music in South Africa is laid.

### 7.2 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The question on which this thesis is based is:

How can a quality Music Education in the Foundation Phase be facilitated?

This question was first addressed through the extensive and thorough research process of reviewing different countries' Music curricula (chapters 2-4). The music frameworks of the United States overall, plus four specific states, as well as Zimbabwe and Australia were critically analysed and their advantages and disadvantages discussed. The music framework of England and obtainable music

information on seven African countries were also investigated. In addition, the most applicable points were taken into consideration in designing South Africa's Music standards (chapters 5 and 6).

The answer to the posed question of the thesis can be summarised as follows:

The provision of Music standards for the Foundation Phase and for teachers of this level can lay the foundation for a quality Music Education.

The various general problems linked to the initial research question were all dealt with, solutions were offered and subsequently included in the author's above-mentioned proposed Music standards. This thesis' issues of concern included generalists who have to teach Music in the Foundation Phase, the lack of both pre-service and in-service training and the need for a Foundation Phase Music framework with inclusive guidelines, standards, exit levels and practical examples.

The outcomes of this research are reflected in the proposal of much-needed Music standards for learners, as well as the unit standards for generalist teachers who have to teach Music in Grades 1-3. With the help of these standards and their inclusive advantages, Music becomes available and accessible to all schoolchildren, via informed teachers.

### **7.3 GENERAL MUSIC STANDARDS FOR THE FOUNDATION PHASE**

In establishing Music standards for Grades 1-3, one of the aims was to provide a framework that would be applicable, relevant and inspiring to all learners. During the preceding research process of reviewing other countries' frameworks, only the most suitable ideas were included to ensure an excellent curriculum for South Africa.

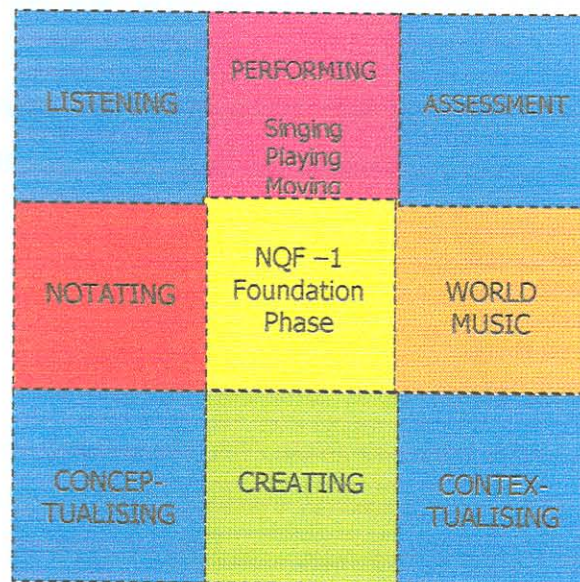
The proposed standards exemplify the following:

- They are expressed in straightforward and simple English, as required by the Minister of Education, Professor Asmal.

- The levels set for Music ensure that South Africa's Music Education is internationally comparable.
- User-friendly elements were built in to assist teachers, parents and learners. Together with each standard, an explanation of the background concerning the specific standard and its contents is given.
- The standards and the inclusive requirements are broad, adaptable and pliable in order to incorporate all South African learners with their different needs and levels of expectancy.
- Detailed guidelines as to how and what to teach are provided. The specific music matters that should be attended to in the Foundation Phase are clearly stipulated and can be followed without problems concerning range, contents and ideas.
- An important advantage of the proposed standards lies in the fact that the different South African groups and cultures can all use the same set of standards. The standards were constructed to suit every learner's requirements and expectations and are applicable to each scholar's situation, of whatever language or culture group he or she may be. For this reason the standards can be applied and used in any school in South Africa. The facilitator can start with the community's culture and music, and work from there to accommodate other requirements and interests.
- Ensuring a specific level of achievement at the end of Grade 3, Music has a definite point of departure in Grade 4. Without the Grade 1-3 Music standards, there would be no secure way of knowing where to start in Grade 4 and proceed with the learners' music development.
- The thoroughly researched Music framework, equivalent to that of various other countries, accommodates the needs of the South African learner and provides the necessary elements to ensure a well-balanced Music framework.
- As role players in the construction of unit standards for Music and Music Education, the MEUSSA team arranged relevant information into a model to be of use to anyone concerned. The model is applicable to all the different fields in Music, and the requirements for a specific phase in Music can be viewed at first sight.

The following model shows the end result of MEUSSA's mapping for Music standards for the Foundation Phase. As explained in chapter 5, all the different

features of these standards are reflected in this model - the six proposed standards, the built-in assessment, the different musics of South Africa and beyond, as well as the applicable NQF level.



**Figure 7-1: Application of the MEUSSA model from the learners' perspective** (Grové 2001b)

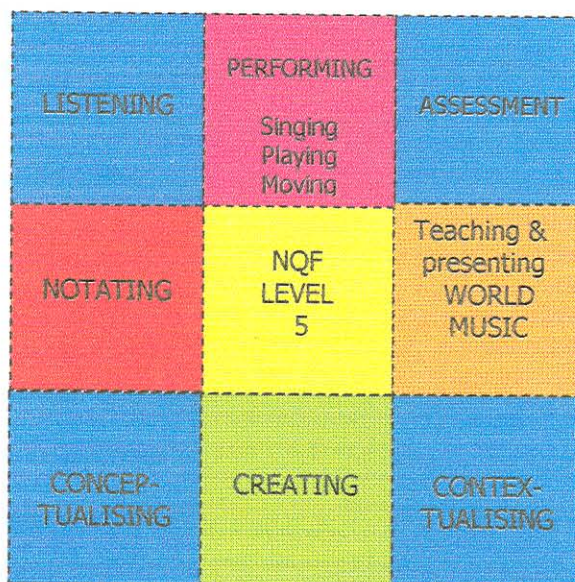
#### 7.4 UNIT STANDARDS FOR THE TEACHING OF MUSIC IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

The knowledge and skills required for the successful teaching of Music during Grades 1-3 are incorporated into the newly proposed HET course (chapter 6). The emphasis falls on practical application and efficient implementation of the prescribed Grades 1-3 standards. In order to manage these skills, the contents that need to be explained in the Foundation Phase curriculum, are used as part of the training process in the HET curriculum. The rest of the curriculum sees to the obtaining of the necessary knowledge and skills to efficiently teach this learning area.

The unit standards provided for the teaching of Foundation Phase Music reflect and are based on the following:

- They are written in simple English.
- Various user-friendly elements to assist the teacher-in-training are provided and form a built-in part of the unit standards.

- In constructing the unit standards, the diversity of South Africa's population was kept in mind. These unit standards are applicable to teachers in training of all cultures and backgrounds in South Africa. Starting with the specific community's music and culture, the units accommodate the various cultures, styles and musics.
- Teachers-in-training can be assured that both the learners' and the teachers' standards are internationally and nationally competitive and comparable.
- In order to assist the facilitator in obtaining and handling a specific and approved standard, specified competency levels are set. These standards assure a specific achievement level by the end of Grade 3 (chapters 5 and 6).
- Using the same and relevant material required to teach Music, when training teachers, provides generalists with sufficient and applicable knowledge. It is of the utmost importance that teachers know exactly what to do and how to teach Music in order to do so successfully. With the provided "tools" - knowledge, skills, a positive attitude and the necessary guidelines - facilitators will surely develop enough self-esteem to teach Music with confidence.
- The following MEUSSA model portrays the proposed unit standards for the Grade 1-3 generalist teacher-in-training. It reflects all the contents of the Foundation Phase's Music standards at a glance and mirrors all the required teaching elements as described in chapter 6.



**Figure 7-2: Application of the MEUSSA model in terms of training required to facilitate learning (Grové 2001b)**

This model summarises and resembles the essence of Music teaching during Grades 1-3, with NQF level 5 referring to the Higher Education and Training Phase for this teacher training.

## **7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to establish Music as an important and properly functioning part of Curriculum 2005, certain aspects should be taken into consideration. The following recommendations, if accepted and applied, would contribute to Music's role in assisting the learners' development in totality.

### **7.5.1 Foundation Phase**

The writer recommends that the following points in connection with Music in the Foundation Phase should be considered for implementation and application:

- The definite need for Music standards in the Foundation Phase, although currently not required by SAQA, should be acknowledged.
- The proposed standards for Music during Grades 1-3, which are presented in this thesis, should be considered for acceptance by SAQA.
- With the acceptance of the Music standards, teachers and the Education Departments should do everything possible to assure the successful implementation of these standards. Music's important role in Curriculum 2005 should be taken cognisance of and the official and practical inclusion thereof should urgently be attended to.

### **7.5.2 Higher Education and Training**

As the flourishing of Music depends on its effective teaching, the author recommends the establishment of the following:

- The proposed course for Music training of generalist teachers in the Foundation Phase, as suggested in this thesis, should be recognised and accepted.
- The pre-service and in-service music training of generalist teachers who have to teach Music should be compulsory.
- The attendance of Music courses should be both compulsory and credited.

- The training of generalist teachers should be largely “hands on” and practical, utilising material such as provided in this thesis so that teachers in turn will be ready to teach the Foundation Phase learners appropriately.
- Facilitators teaching Music should be evaluated regularly.

### 7.5.3 General

- As in Australia, the possibilities of magnet schools should be considered for implementation throughout South Africa. These schools are a useful and helpful way in which whereby specialists can assist and guide generalists in the teaching of Music. General Music Education can still be the domain of the Foundation Phase class teacher at all South African schools. However, specialised Music teachers at magnet schools can be of immeasurable help in leading and aiding generalists in any problems they encounter with the teaching of Music.
- Community involvement, as mentioned in the Music frameworks of Australia and various African countries, can contribute to the improvement of the current music situation in South Africa. As many of these people are experts in their different areas, their inputs and ideas can inspire teachers and learners.
- Teaching equipment such as step by step lessons, providing all the needed material, sound examples and suggestions, will benefit both the learners and the teachers. At this stage, the facilitators do not have the knowledge, motivation, time, finances, or confidence to successfully prepare and teach music lessons. By providing the mentioned resources, the interest of music, the pupils, the teachers, schools and the future of Music will be attended to.
- Lists of resources, help lines, magnet school contact details, web site addresses and other applicable information should be easily available to teachers.
- Travelling experts, in the form of qualified Music teachers, can assist generalists and make suggestions, give guidelines and help the teacher according to the school's, teacher's and learners' specific needs.
- Professionals in all the different subject areas should be encouraged to visit schools as mentors, to enthuse children about their professional chosen fields and to share their experience of the world of work (Rogers 2000:8). South African and even international music enthusiasts can play an important role in the stimulating of South Africa's learners.

- It is vital that policy makers be made aware of the importance of adequate time allocation for music, both in the Foundation Phase and in the training of teachers.

## 7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In line with the author's study and as a result thereof, the author suggests the following possibilities to be considered for further study:

- Since the provided unit standards in this thesis can be viewed as educational building blocks (chapter 2) and the "means by which the new curriculum in South Africa should be implemented" (chapter 1), Music curricula for both the Foundation Phase and teacher training can be designed.
- Music standards for the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) should be developed to follow Grade 3 in order to provide a sequential and quality Music Education in South Africa.
- Since Grade R is in the process of becoming compulsory, Music standards should also be provided for this Grade. These standards will ensure that youngsters will be introduced to Music at an early age, via a thoroughly researched framework. These standards should be in line with the provided Grades 1-3 Music standards, in order to form a continuous flow in Music Education in South Africa.
- As part of the process to establish and assure a quality Music Education for learners in South Africa, the author suggests the compiling of a Music course for the Foundation Phase. She is of the opinion that a Basic Music Series such as *The Music connection* (Beethoven et al 1995) should be designed for all levels of Music in South Africa. In the light of South Africa's Music's needs, together with the problems concerning its teaching, the proposed course would benefit both the teacher and the learner. Included in this teachers' course should be the following:
  - \* A general course with the required explanations and guidelines for teachers - both generalists and specialists.
  - \* A glossary explaining general terms, abbreviations and signs.
  - \* Suitable lessons for each lesson period with step-by-step instructions.
  - \* Colourful pictures of possible instruments, a world map, costumes of different interesting ideas.
  - \* Music and sound examples as required by the lessons.



- \* An easy to use and easy to carry suitcase for the mentioned books and possible tapes and/or CDs.

Although this might seem like an ideal far from reality, the author believes that such a project is feasible and will see positive results within a few months after implementation.

- As part of this ideal, teacher enrichment courses with new ideas and interesting material should be designed and offered throughout the country.
- Although the provided units are designed for all learners in South Africa, a Music curriculum especially designed and adapted for disabled learners should be of inestimable value to both the teachers and their learners.

It is the author's opinion that the foregoing ideas will be worthwhile to investigate and the possible resulting research or studies will be in the interest of South Africa's music future.

## 7.7 FINAL WORDS

One way of ensuring that music can be a part of and belong to every South African learner, is to provide a quality Music Education at schools and to pull this thread through to teacher training. Viewed from the other end of the spectrum, quality teacher training should ensure that the Music Education at schools is of an appropriate standard.

The author's foregoing beliefs and ideals for South Africa are echoed in Zoltán Kodály's true and summarising words:

"Music should belong to everyone...music is a spiritual food for which there is no substitute...there is no complete spiritual life without music...there are regions of the human soul which can be illuminated only through music" (Earl 1998).