



# FRAMEWORK STUDY

*Framing Non-traditional Music Teaching  
as Empowering Discipline*



# SHORT SUMMARY

The manual is part of the Erasmus + Movement project, and constitutes one of the tools sets up within the project to allow sharing experience among the partners of:

- a common vocabulary related to musical educational experiences and practices;
- good practices in favor of social inclusion in educational contexts where music finds space;
- teaching experiences on different target groups of students (by age, by conditions of fragility, by ethnic origin, by social and cultural conditions of the families);
- innovative musical educational practices;
- critical reflections on the methodologies adopted for the creation and development of a musical curriculum;

The definition of the target of teachers and students by age group inside the E book is coherent with the project: from 7 to 12 years, with different variations in the partner countries in defining the specific target. This is indicatively an age group corresponding to ISCED levels 1 and 2, and to the education cycles of primary and lower secondary school.

The triangulation between different educational figures and socialization contexts constitutes an added value of the e-book: teachers, musicians and families.

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# 1 PUPIL'S PERSONAL GROWTH AND LIFE SKILLS AS THE MAIN CONCERNS OF A MUSIC CURRICULUM

## A. TOPIC

The contemporary scientific debate is very heterogeneous and the definitions about skills (cognitive and non-cognitive) are multiple and they depend on different purposes. It would be impossible to present this debate in full. However, it is useful to recall some essential contributions.

In 2006 the Council of Europe identified 8 skills for long life learning (LLL). Through these competences learners need to develop their full cognitive and non-cognitive throughout their lives, for their personal fulfilment, so that they can actively engage with the society in which they live and to ensure that they are prepared for a constantly changing world of work.

This model is particularly effective when applied to adult individuals or in the transition to adulthood. Terminology also differs across countries, time, and research and social contexts. For example, the vast scope of literature on the subject uses terms that have similar meanings, such as "21st century skills", "life skills", "essential skills", "behavioural skills", "non-cognitive skills", "youth development assets", "workplace or work readiness competencies", "social-emotional learning", and "character skills".

For this reason it is useful to know other alternative models, such as the OECD model, in which skills are distinguished between cognitive and non-cognitive; and it is above all non-cognitive skills (which can be learned but which are not part of curricular programs and explicit didactic actions in any country) that have relevance for human,

social, cultural, professional development, as they are involved in the achievement of objectives in adult life , in the protection from social risks and ultimately these skills are essential for the overall well-being of individuals. These non-cognitive skills are named, in the OECD reflection, social and emotional skills.

Another important contribution to understand the debate on skills comes from the World Health Organisation (WHO) that defines life skills as all the positive abilities and behaviours that enable adults and children to cope effectively with everyday life, in the multiplicity of its challenges and demands.

Life skill education aims at promoting personal and social development, at preventing health and social problems, and protecting the human rights<sup>1</sup>. We can therefore state that, both with respect to the purposes of the skills and with respect to their contents, there is a certain semantic, conceptual and theoretical proximity between the OECD model and the WHO model.

In fact, both models identify five areas in which skills converge.

In table 1 it is possible to observe the parallelism and permeability between the OECD and the WHO classification.

**TABLE 1 – OECD AND WHO SKILLS AREAS.**

<b>OECD MODEL</b>	<b>WHO MODEL</b>
Task performance area	Decision making and problem solving
Open mindedness area + compound skills area	Creative and critical thinking
Collaboration area and Engaging with others area	Communication and interpersonal skills
Collaboration area	Self awareness and empathy
Emotional regulation area	Coping with emotions and stress

At this point it is important to clarify when we adopt one model and when it is more appropriate to adopt the other. The WHO model applies well (and has inspired) the survey on the wellbeing of pupils by teachers and musicians. The OECD model,

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. (1999). Partners in life skills education-Conclusions from a United Nations inter-agency meeting. Geneva: World Health Organization, Department of Mental Health. Social Change and Mental Health Cluster. Retrieved January, 12, 2008.

on the other hand, finds its preferred terrain in the Impact Kit (that is the Intellectual Output 3 of the project Movement).

The reference to the human development calendar, whose stages mark both the cognitive, the emotional and relational aspects, is an element of commonality of the different approaches.

In this sense, therefore, the proposed theoretical models support a vision of the child as a social actor, whose wellbeing must be dealt with.

Childhood wellbeing is therefore expressed through the four dimensions of:



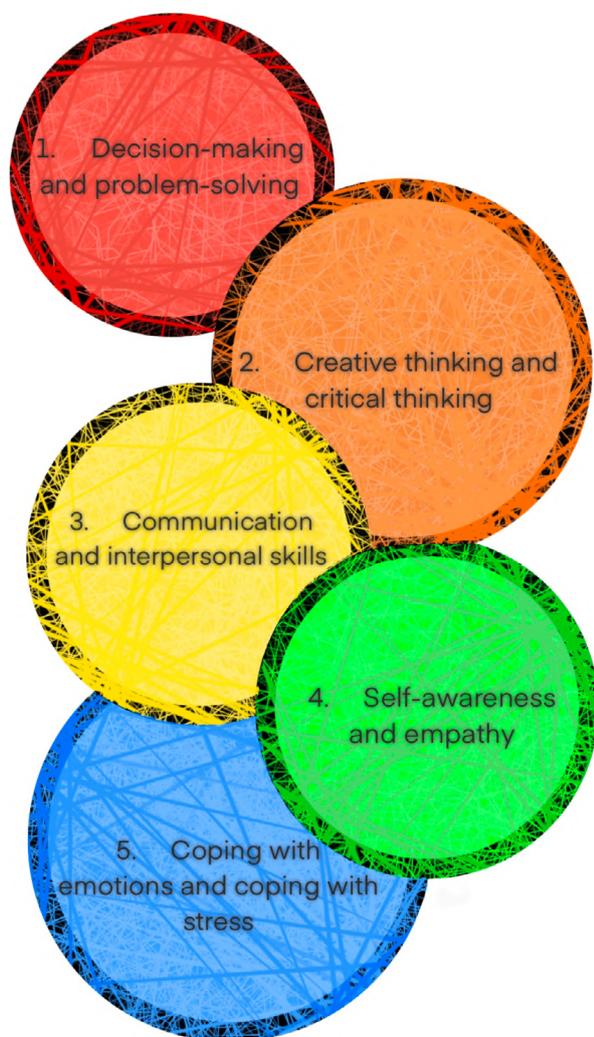
Consistently with the psychological, pedagogical and sociological literature on the subject, the individuals' human development goes through a combination of cognitive and non-cognitive skills; the effective and balanced combination of these skills generates better schools results, lower dropout risks, a longer stay in the educational circuit, greater inclusion and social participation, better chances in the labor market, greater protection from unemployment, higher quality of life and overall well-being.

The main aim of the following paragraphs is to evidence the Partner's priorities on pupil's personal growth, and to link them to the five main areas of life skills, as evidenced by the WHO definition.

## B. THE PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

Every partner has been asked to list the different dimensions that according to them are determinant for their pupils' personal growth. All the dimensions have been clustered into the five basic areas of life skills in Figure 1.

**FIG. 1 THE WHO, FIVE BASIC AREAS OF LIFE SKILLS**



### ***Decision-making and problem-solving;***

- Find strategies to solve problems and difficulties that arise.

### ***Creative thinking and critical thinking;***

- Ability to exercise critical thinking
- Creativity
- Improve the Divergent Thinking

### ***Communication and interpersonal skills;***

- Cooperation
- Share space with others
- Ability to argue own opinions, thesis and ideas
- Respect
- Expressing one's creativity

### ***Self-awareness and empathy;***

- Emotional involvement
- Awareness of skills, limits and merits
- Listening on a personal and interpersonal level
- Suspend judgement
- Interest in the inner world
- Ability to understand others

### ***Coping with emotions and coping with stress***

- Self-confidence
- Ability to express ideas and emotions
- Empathy
- Ability to perform

## C. THE MUSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE

We asked the musicians involved in the Movement Project to explain what Musical Growth means to them, and in the graphic representation below it is clear that some central elements return from the previous paragraphs: improvise, create and compose.

*FIG. 2 THE WORD CLOUD DISPLAYS THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE WORDS APPEARED IN THE MUSICIANS' ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION ON PUPILS' MUSICAL GROWTH*



## D. CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Movement Music Curriculum, the development of Life Skills is crucial. Each partner answered the questions on the personal growth of their pupils by indicating at least one of the five life skills as a core element. Only few marginally related items were reported in the questionnaire: concentration, improvisation, resiliency, curiosity and autonomy. These latter skills are also essential for group music learning. However, the ability to concentrate is linked to the students' ability to cope with emotions and the ability to improvise is part of the broader category of creativity. Finally, resilience can be part of the ability to manage stress. Often artistic performance in a group (e.g. playing in an orchestra at a concert) allows each individual pupil to learn to manage their negative emotions, their stress level in a protected condition such as an orchestral performance. Finally, the need to support pupils' autonomy through musical practice emerges repeatedly from the Partners' experiences. The individual

and autonomous study, often patient and solitary, teaches the students to refine their ability to produce sound through the immediate sensory feedback of the sound itself. Musical practice, even in a self-study dimension, allows the pupil to develop the capacity for self-evaluation and self-correction.

## BOX 1

### IN SUMMARY, A MUSIC CURRICULUM ORIENTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIFE SKILLS SHOULD

- Support pupils to find their own strategies to solve problems and to take proper decisions in difficult situations (i.e., how to express a certain message with a specific melody; how to reach a functional and effective musical gesture)
- Reinforce children's creativity, also through music improvisation practices, and help them to exercise critical thinking (i.e., to find the meaning of a specific piece of music, or to find creative solutions for technical problems due to the specific instrument they are playing)
- Stimulate the interpersonal connection between pupils during shared musical practice, which, in turn, will lead to mutual listening, reciprocal respect and cooperation
- Increase the pupils' emotional involvement through the shared musical practice, and support them in improving their self-awareness, exploiting the special link between music and emotions
- Support pupil's ability to cope with stressful situations (i.e., the final concert, open classes where external auditors) in a protect condition, as an orchestral performance can offer

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# 2 | SOCIAL INCLUSION IN MUSIC LEARNING CONTEXTS: DEFINITION, TARGETS AND INTERVENTIONS



## A. TOPIC

Some musical experiences in primary schools do not build their fundamental principles on inclusion. Inclusion is often not enough highlighted in the music school curriculum and the implementation through specific actions and activities is not consequential to the principles.

## B. THE PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVES

In the following paragraph we summarize the key elements emerging from the partner's answers regarding their personal definition of social inclusion in a music learning context.



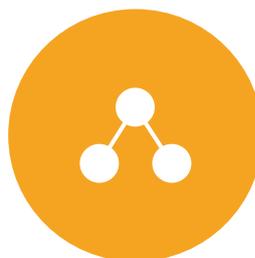
*The key words* for an inclusive experience:

- ***no selection, nor distinction:*** race, social level, cultural level skills, disabilities
- ***smoothing out all differences:*** of gender, age, class, technical and disciplinary level
- ***the individual contribution for achieving a common goal:*** everyone, equally, contributes significantly to the final result (i.e., a good rehearsal, a concert, a recital)



*The specific actions* to build an inclusive musical learning:

- ***creating new spaces*** where children can develop creativity through art, where they develop feelings of belonging to a group and feel that their contribution is important regardless of their ability, culture, race or gender



*The effects* of the social inclusion in a music learning context:

- feeling part of a ***community***,
- ***sharing*** emotions, enjoying doing something with other people who are different from me
- ***communicating*** through art across cultural barriers
- feeling that the cultural tradition and my skills are ***valued***
- every pupil can be part of the group sharing his/her own effort and competence which ***creates the sense of being part of the group***
- the joined beat creates the ***feeling of belonging*** and this way builds up the spirit of the group

## C. CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In a perspective of inclusion all the students can benefit from the music learning opportunities as they are, with their own learning profiles and needs. We can derive that the system should change to fit the student, and not vice versa (UNICEF, 2014; OECD, 2020).

### *SOME KEY ASPECTS OF AN INCLUSIVE PERSPECTIVE:*

- Music learning contexts does not assume the same standards for all learners
- An inclusive music activity respects and values each student's unique needs, talents, aspirations and expectations
- It removes barriers to participation by certain groups of students (especially minorities)

### *SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH MUSIC TAKES PLACE WHEN:*

- The boundaries between mainstream and minorities cease to exist
- All students learn music with and from one another
- All students can achieve their full music learning potential
- The social value of diversity is supported by the musical and artistic activities

## BOX 2

### IN SUMMARY, AN INCLUSIVE MUSIC CURRICULUM SHOULD

- Remove any form of discrimination in its contents, in the adopted materials (i.e., in the choice of musical instruments), learning music activities and music classes (the learning environment)
- Connect the musical contents and materials to the social and cultural background of pupils
- Recognize the students' needs, prior knowledge, musicality and musical experience in designing the learning progression of the musical activities

## BOX 3

### INCLUSION IN CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Inclusion in curriculum development** can be defined as offering all learners a high-quality curriculum that allows them to reach their full potential just as they are, by respecting their diverse characteristics, needs, abilities and expectations and by removing structural and cultural barriers, including biases and discrimination.
- **Inclusive curriculum** refers, therefore, to a curriculum that acknowledges and values students' differences and embraces diversity so that all students can experience an enriching school life

## BOX 4

### THE TARGET OF THE INTERVENTIONS: INCLUSION FOR WHOM?

- **Inclusion for all.** Children with greater economic possibilities often suffer from disillusionment and disenchantment. slaves to tablets and virtual reality. They need a sense of reality, harmony, complicity, teamwork.
- **Inclusion for specific needs.** Children from disadvantaged groups (i.e., migrants, economic disadvantage, special needs, different abilities, cultural minorities) have specific needs for inclusion within a loving and structured community, where they can recognize themselves in a common space, with a common language.

# TESTIMONIALS

## GOOD MUSICAL PRACTICES FOR INCLUSION

### 1 Paula, Madrid

The film, entitled "[La buena suerte](#)", was presented at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and was tremendously useful in making the work being done at the school visible and in giving children a voice. However, there was still a lot of resistance to new families joining the challenge of building a diverse neighbourhood "from below", from the educational institutions.

***There was a lot of fear about letting their children have a new experience in a context that was considered violent. One of the most repeated arguments in the conversations was the fear that their children would be involved in "macho behaviour".*** For example, with the group "Las rompe-escenarios", we staged a play entitled "Vivir mi vida", where the girls dared to ask themselves if they wanted to lead the same life as their grandmothers. In this way, a new bridge is crossed and a seed for the future is planted in the girls' imagination, and they can see themselves reflected in those other students who are graduating from secondary school. In a context with a high level of school dropout and a high gender bias in the educational continuity, it is not negligible to be welcomed to participate on stage and not only as spectators or visitors. The following school year, the school gradually became



populated by new families. The cultural and social gap continued to exist and we realized that the diversity of the student body was not reflected in the configuration of the teaching staff or in the official content. We began to ask ourselves about the references we were offering. ***We needed very different people to live together without infringing on each one's identity or homogenising.***

In order to build bridges in this crack, with the dual aim of opening up new imaginaries and highlighting cultural minorities, we decided to start a cycle of musical residencies in which the

guests could be women musicians. We invited the gypsy percussionist Noelia Heredia, "la Negra", LGTBIG+ activist, who during a course gave cajón workshops, breaking stereotypes for gypsy families and bringing flamenco closer to others. The following year Aiblin Brito, a Cuban singer, gave us the opportunity to open a choir where we learned about the mixture of influences that gives rise to the music. Niurka Lopez, also Cuban, took over the choir. We thus had our first black teacher, and with her we plunged into the repertoire of African choral music, singing in different languages.

## 2 ***I am convinced that the children who are growing up in the orchestra will help their parents and families to create a new society.***

Recently, we made a video about the Lion King, where the very young protagonist was a child who had recently been left fatherless. This project allowed us to touch on the theme of loss, of death. Of redemption and growth.

## 3 **Nadia, Torino**

In classe si può: l'orchestra tra i banchi is a music education project proposed by the Istituto Comprensivo Regio Parco di Torino in collaboration with the Associazione Orme, and it aims to use orchestral dynamics to teach children

and young people the importance of knowing how to be in a group and how to relate to others, starting with individual work on themselves. The project has been developed at the IC Regio Parco in Turin, which over the years has seen a sharp drop in enrolment due to a very high percentage of foreign or second-generation pupils. For this reason, the project immediately took on a very strong social and intercultural character. The involved schools are characterised by a high percentage of pupils with non-Italian citizenship and by users often coming from a disadvantaged economic and socio-cultural context (Porta Palazzo, Barriera di Milano and Aurora districts).

***For this reason, the school community has decided to invest in universal languages that can be understood by everyone, regardless of their language and culture.*** This has led to the strengthening of mathematics, science, the arts and, in particular, music as a project for individual and social growth. The project, launched in 2012, starts with the practice of string instruments, which are difficult and demanding and certainly not particularly sought after by the poorer classes. But the real goal is to play in an orchestra, because this means developing active citizenship skills and education in solidarity. The classes therefore become string orchestras for two hours a week during school hours. But the project also extends into extracurricular hours by creating afternoon orchestras for anyone wishing to deepen their study of stringed instruments.



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# 3 | METHODOLOGIES, STRATEGIES AND FORMATS IN MUSIC TEACHING FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

This paragraph explores the three main dimensions of music teaching. First, the study seeks to understand the shaping of teaching methodologies, strategies and formats, by examining the way partners use different classroom practices and the prevalence of these among teachers across schools and countries of the Movement Project. As a result of this exploration, some teaching methodologies, strategies and formats will be put forward as crucial examples for building a music curriculum.

It's known in the research community that the teaching strategies are multidimensional and that their efficiency is strictly dependent from the context of application (Hattie, 2009). In other words:

## A. TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

- the use of a wide set of repertoires: from popular music to classical music to contemporary works, but above all to practices related to them
- collective decision of the rules of group composition, alternating their function from instrumentalist to conductor (take decisions together; citizenship, democracy and solidarity)
- the value of the ludiform dimension, that educational action which takes the form of a game but conceals educational objectives
- the music media as an educational tool

- To open a debate: music is certainly expression and creativity, but having rules and a precise code, the figure of the teacher is important as an ever-present guide
- Cooperative learning, role play, peer to peer learning

## B. TEACHING STRATEGIES

- **The music of bodies:** collective movement, body percussion, vocality game, rhythm game
- **Improvisations:** how to teach and build improvisation experiences in classes (i.e. over ostinato, free interpretation, improvisation and performance in front of the group, improvisation in different styles)
- **Concentration activities:** breathing exercises for relaxation and for reaching concentrate attitudes
- **Music as interdisciplinary approach:** linked to other teaching subjects (Italian, history and art)
- **Narrativity as a teaching strategy:** narration of a story, fairy tale or description; imaginative work beforehand; Warming up based on the narrated story
- **Musical composition** in narrative, but also in combinatorial form: drawing inspiration from other languages or manipulating pure musical matter







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# 4 TOWARDS A NON-TRADITIONAL MUSIC TEACHING



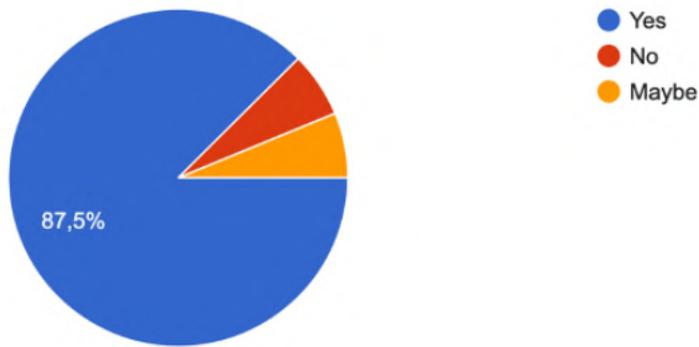
The aim of this paragraph is to highlight the characteristics of non-traditional music teaching. Some innovative elements emerge from the official documents drawn up by the school, others from the materials collected by each school of the Movement Project, and still others from the questionnaires answered by the Partners of the Movement Project. We will analyse below the innovative, non-traditional elements that emerged from the questionnaires. In the concluding critical analysis, we will highlight the difficulties that emerge in the transition between theoretical intentions and a didactic practice that wants to be truly innovative.

## A. THE PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

	Traditional	Nontraditional
<b>Who</b>	Individual	Group music, orchestra
<b>What</b>	Imitation, execution	Individual creative skills and improvisation are enhanced
	Instrumental learning and technical exercises are the core of the music learning	Body percussion and / or percussion activities; movement/dance, vocal and choral activities; instrumental activities (improvisation learning by ear); use of technology and media material; music/dance/painting/theatre as a global art experience
	Technique is an aim in itself	A new concept of "technique", as a mean to get to use music as a language, and not as an end in itself
<b>Why</b>	It aims at discovering and sustaining talented children	It aims at including all the children in the music experience
	Musical objectives come always privileged, and are often the only targets	It aims at creating social bonding and good citizens, developing life skills
<b>How</b>	Through repetition of exercises	Through pleasure, joy and high rewarded activities
	Individual learning times should be shortened and optimized	It respects the learning times and preferences of the learners
	The final musical outcome is privileged out of the process	Importance of the process rather than the outcome
	Learning through concepts	Learning by doing : to play by playing to dance by dancing (from the sensory to the emotional level, and then to cognition)
<b>Teachers</b>	Formal guidance and transmission of knowledges	Take an active part in the workshop, and if necessary, help more vulnerable children
	Work alone	Should work in pairs with another music teacher
	Not interested in research	Become researchers in their own classes
	Are the holders of knowledge	Become means to realize students' ideas
<b>Students</b>	Risk of passivity	Students take up roles to manage the music workshop
	The pre-decided contents come first	Student's needs, preferences and learning styles are the starting points

## B. THE MUSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE

*FIG. 4 MUSICIANS INVOLVED IN THE MOVEMENT PROJECT MAINLY DEFINE THEIR MUSICAL TEACHING STYLES AS NON-TRADITIONAL*



### BOX 6

#### NON-TRADITIONAL, BECAUSE COLLECTIVE

One of the key elements of a non-traditional approach to music learning is the collective dimension. This is why schools are a privileged context for consolidating and transmitting non-traditional models of musical learning

*TEACHING MUSIC USING  
NON-TRADITIONAL  
STRATEGIES ALLOWS YOU  
TO BREAK PARADIGMS  
AND OPEN YOUR MIND AND  
PREPARE IT TO RECEIVE  
MESSAGES THAT ARE NOT  
ONLY ABOUT THE ACTUAL  
MUSICAL PREPARATION,  
BUT ALSO ABOUT  
EVERYTHING AROUND US.  
MUSIC AND THE  
ORCHESTRA BECOME A  
MODEL FOR DECIPHERING  
AND NAMING EMOTIONS,  
ACTIONS AND THOUGHTS  
IN THE EVERYDAY SPHERE.*



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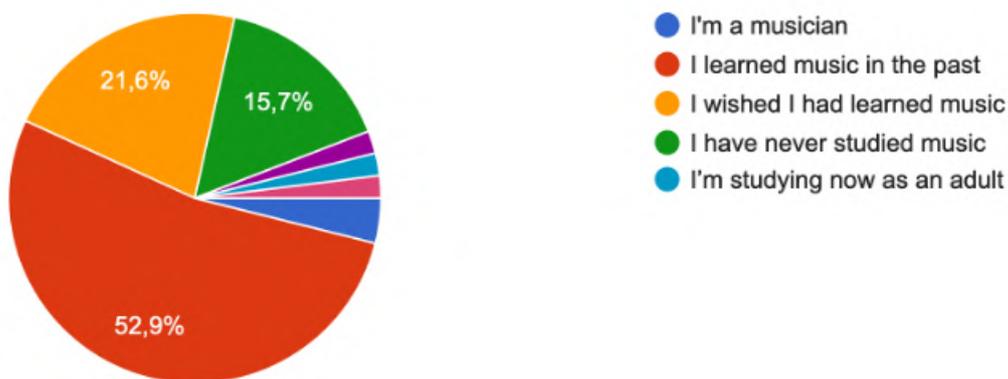
**IL RUOLO E LA  
PROSPETTIVA DEI GENITORI  
SULL'ESPERIENZA MUSICALE  
DEI LORO FIGLI**

## A. TOPIC

The aim of this section is to bring out the parents' perspective on their children's musical experience at school. Often the family perspective is not adequately considered when designing the school curriculum for pupils. We believe that this work of collecting and processing data to define the parental perspective can support a good definition of the music curriculum. The complementarity that this perspective offers convinces once again of the need to involve families in the definition of children's school curriculum.

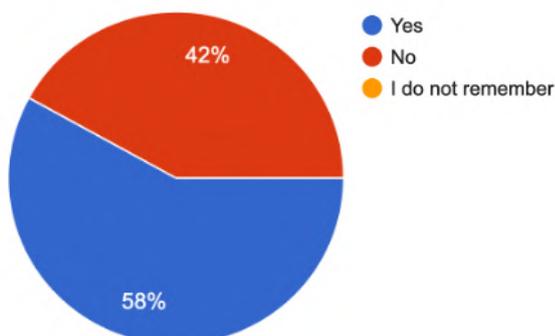
## B. THE PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE

FIG. 5 THE PARENTAL MUSICAL EXPERIENCE



Parents' answers show that most of them have had - or currently have - musical experience. Only 15% of them have never learned to play an instrument or to sing. The present data underline the fact that parents consider as important to learn music. Parents and families can thus become active partners both in the definition of the musical curriculum and in the creation of widespread musical experiences in the territory (i.e. parents who are part of the orchestra, who start a musical learning path together with their children).

FIG. 6 THE PARENTAL PARTICIPATION. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN YOUR CHILD'S MUSICAL ACTIVITIES (OPEN CLASSES, CONCERTS, PERFORMANCES)?

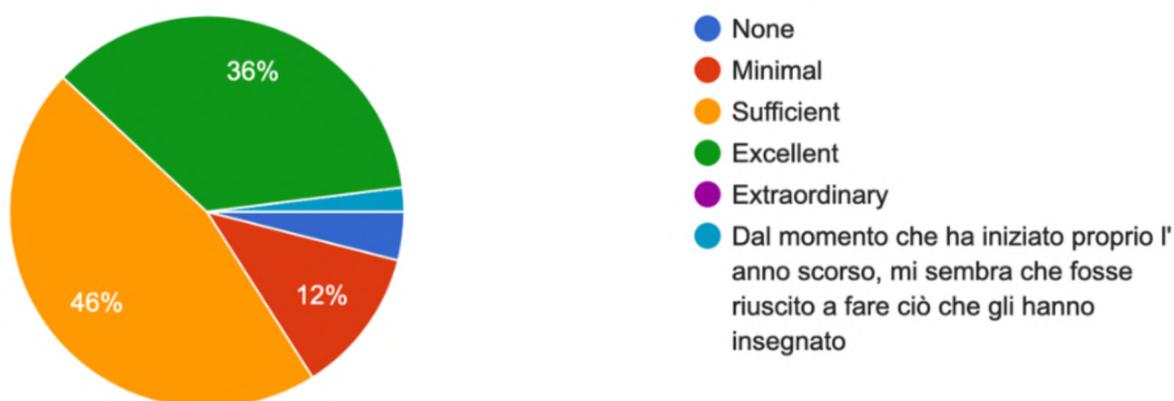


The graph on the left shows that only just over half of the parents have ever participated in their children's musical activities. We also found that about four out of 10 parents are aware of the kind of musical experience their children are having at school. Only two out of 10 do not know anything, while the rest say they are only partly aware. This testimony, collected from a total of 60 families, calls for reflection.

In spite of the good involvement of the families, which takes place thanks to meetings, but also through direct participation in concerts, open classes and performances, there is still a part of the families that could be more involved and more aware of their children's musical experience. We hope, therefore, that this direction indicated by the parents should be taken into account when designing the music curriculum.

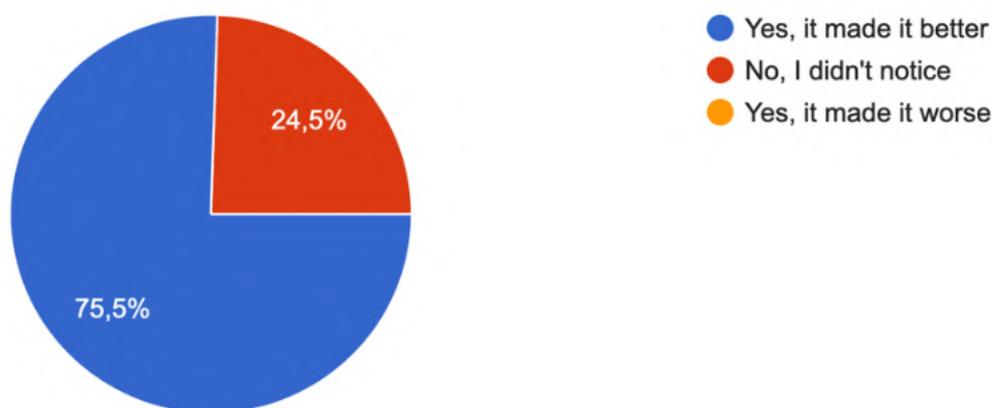
## C. THE EFFECTS OF THE MUSICAL PRACTICE AS EXPERIENCED BY PARENTS

*FIG. 7 I THINK THAT MY CHILD'S MUSICAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LAST YEAR WERE*

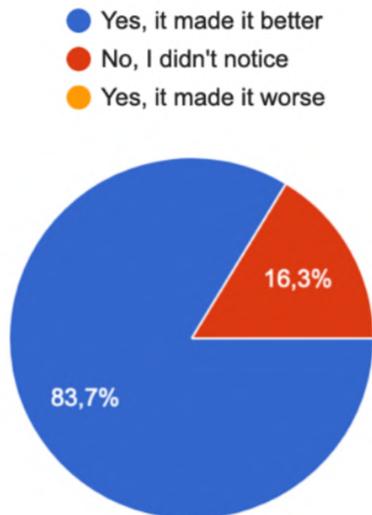


The vast majority of parents - more than 80% - reported that their child's improvement in music has been good or very good. However, almost 15% think that their child's musical progress has been minimal or insufficient. We believe that greater family involvement in music activities can also have a positive impact on this perception, which is often mediated by the fact that the parent does not actually know what the child is doing during music lessons.

*FIG. 8 IF SO, IT MADE AN IMPACT ON HER/HIS LIFE SKILLS?*

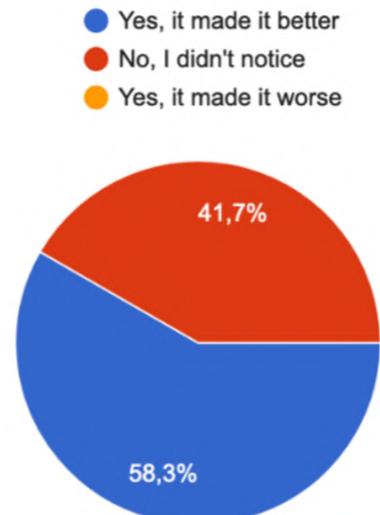


About two thirds of the parents interviewed thought that the musical experience had an impact on their child's life skills. So, we wanted to go into more detail to see where the impact of music is most evident.



**FIG. 9 IF SO, IT MADE AN IMPACT ON HER/HIS ABILITY TO COPE WITH EMOTIONS (MOOD)?**

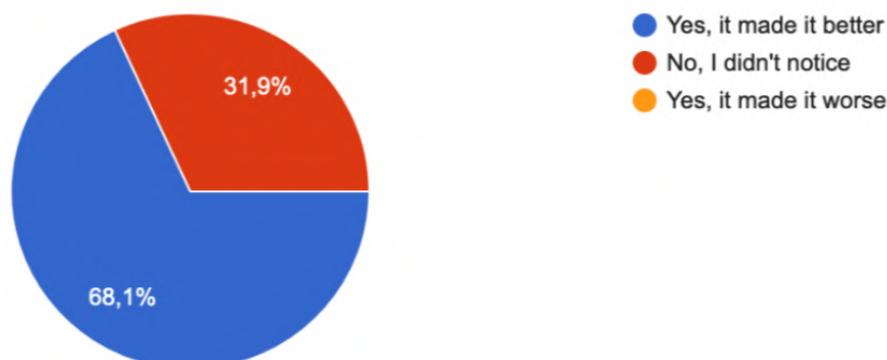
The vast majority of parents - more than 80% - think that their children's ability to cope with emotions improved with the music lessons. None responded that the musical experience worsened the children's mood and, therefore, their ability to regulate their emotions.



**FIG. 10 IF SO, IT MADE AN IMPACT ON HER/HIS TEMPERAMENT?**

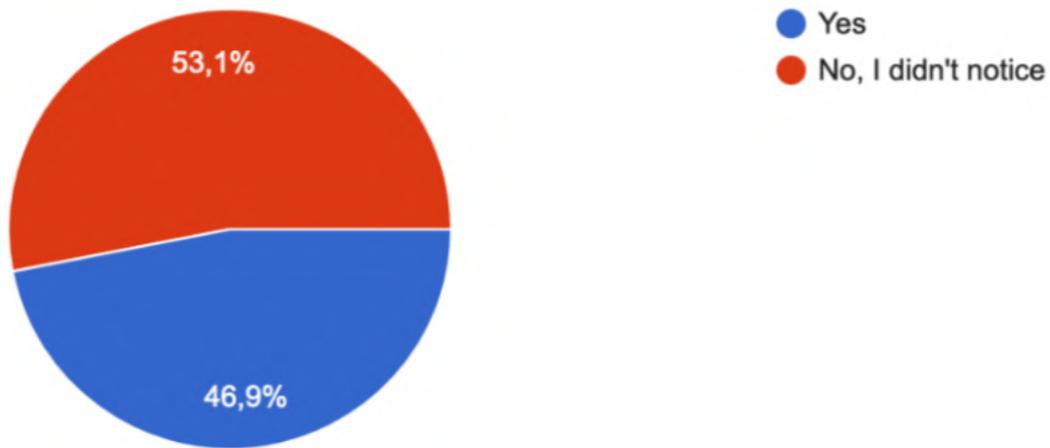
If the mood is transitory, the notion of temperament is conceived as a stable and usual way to cope with emotions in the different life situations. In this case, the percentage of parents who did not notice an effect of the music experience increased when compared to the previous question.

**FIG. 11 IF SO, IT MADE AN IMPACT ON HER/HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS?**



The perceived positive impact of the musical experience in children's life skills is again higher for their ability to relate to the others (peers and adults). In the parent's perspective, the musical practice improved their children's relationship. This is a crucial dimension for children and young adults who had a shared experience such an orchestra playing.

*FIG. 12 DO YOU THINK THAT MUSICAL PRACTICE HAS ALSO HAD POSITIVE EFFECTS ON OTHER SCHOOL DISCIPLINES (I.E. IN TERMS OF RESULTS, OF INTERESTS ETC.)?*



With this last question we wanted to ask parents about the impact of music learning on results in other subjects. Here the responses seemed less evident: the group of parents who saw a positive impact of the musical experience slightly exceeded half of the respondents. Given the abundant evidence over the years on the positive impact of a musical experience on language, maths and motor skills, we feel it is necessary to reflect with families on these possible cross-curricular effects. Indeed, parents and families can support teachers in assessing the impact of music on children's transdisciplinary competences, especially when musical learning takes place in the extracurricular period and context.



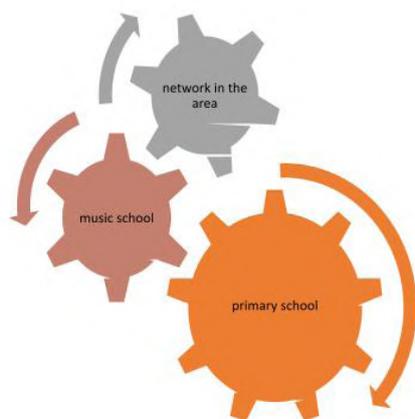
A woman and a child are looking at a microscope in a classroom. The woman is on the left, leaning over the child on the right. The child is holding the microscope. The background shows a window with a grid pattern and some greenery outside. A large white number '3' is overlaid on the image.

3

**I CONTESTI  
LOCALI**

# THE LOCAL CONTEXTS OF THE MOVEMENT PROJECT

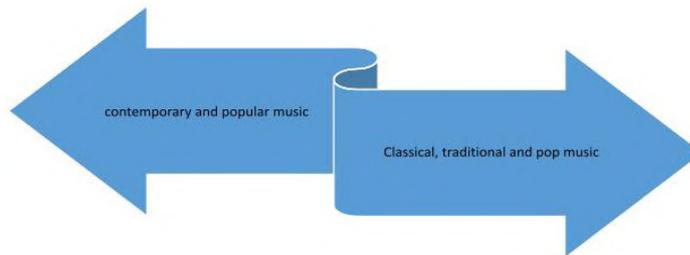
## A. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE VARIOUS APPROACHES:



The schools involved differ substantially: some are formal learning agencies, others are non-formal, those of primary school and specialized music schools. The latter, possessing specialized musical skills but less institutional recognition and the impossibility of delivering recognized degrees, can offer their expertise to the primary school, integrating themselves into organizational processes and curriculum planning. All of them make use of network relations with actors active on the territory in the field of training, education and social promotion.

The most relevant differences concern the adoption of repertoires oriented towards contemporary music and popular repertoires rather than classical, traditional, pop ones.

All declare to take into account the dimension of expressivity as a fundamental pivot of all musical learning, however, in some institutions (but not in all) a gap is found between the activities of musical propaedeutics for young students in which they know and master the basic parameters of musical expressivity such as dynamics, timbre, pronunciation and accentuation, these acquisitions seem not always transferred to instrumental practice, where the skills of musical reading and the mere production of notes are sometimes privileged.



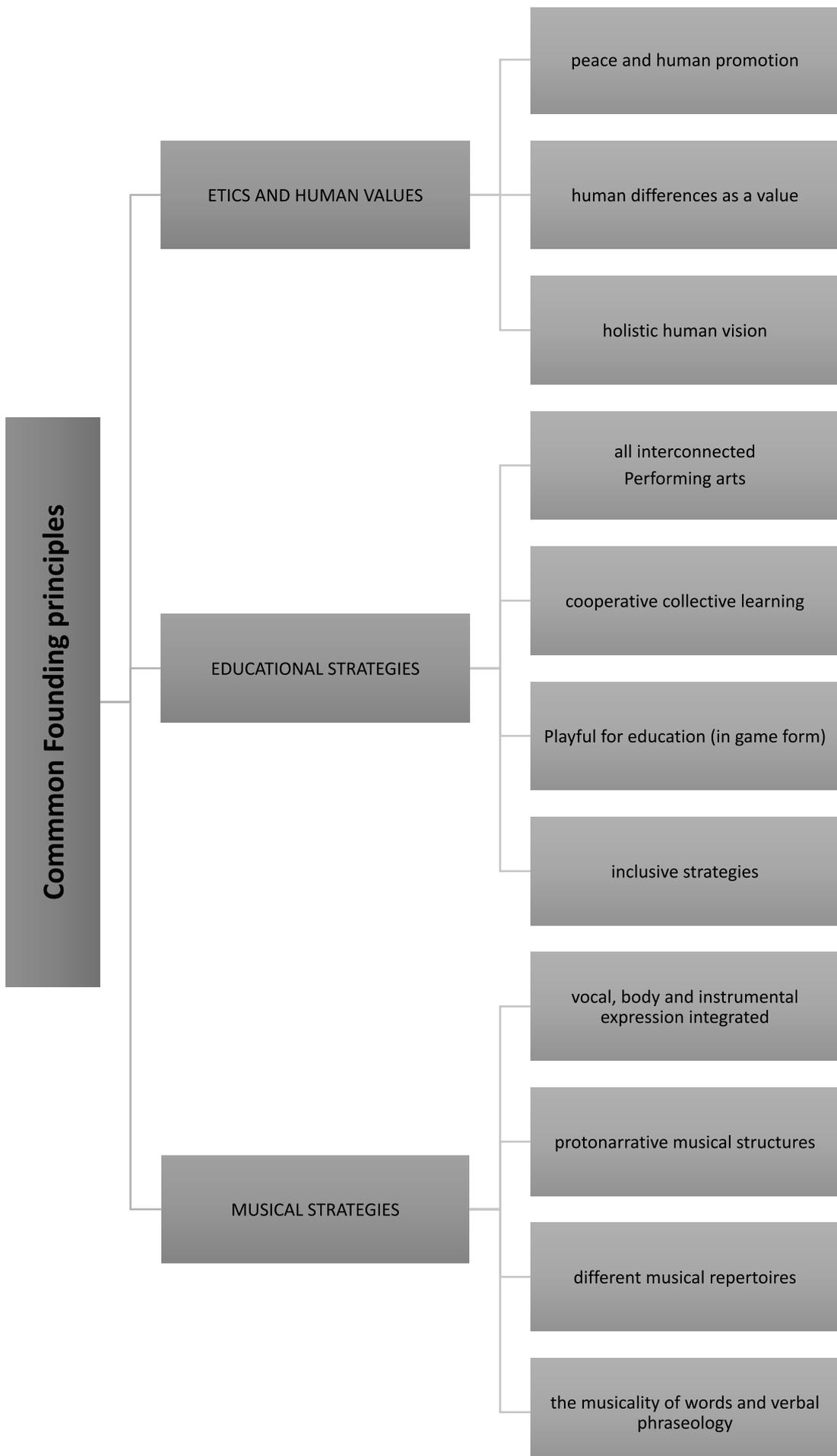
Psychophysical experiences are central to the learning processes of all schools: even in this case, however, they are preparatory to instrumental activity, but when the latter prevails over expressive performance, the freedom of bodily movement and the process of personal adaptation to the instrument seem to be constrained within training practices, which follow standard postures and models of progression in technical-instrumental learning that are the same for everyone.

## B. FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

The founding principles on which the life of each school is based are linked to the respective histories, environmental contexts and experiences of the teachers involved. However, they present a network of correspondences and similarities on which common denominators can be created.

All institutions:

- believe in culture and the arts as tools for human promotion, bearers of peace and social justice;
- consider as essential to value differences and non-discrimination;
- believe in an idea of man made up of logical thoughts, emotions and corporeity in an holistic, integrated whole;
- promote early ensemble music, emphasizing the social value of musical communication, declaring the pursuit of specific disciplinary objectives together with transversal competences;
- use different repertoires, not only referable to the history of Western music, with didactic-instrumental but also cultural purposes;
- are inserted in territorial networks in which third sector subjects (associations, cooperation, foundations) and public institutions operate constructively: the collaboration feeds a community idea of educational processes;
- consider cultural differences, different abilities, and the most varied cognitive styles as resources and not as limits; do not stigmatize fragility, but enhance possibilities;
- emphasize, with different tools, the musicality of words and the construction of narrative temporal structures;
- adopt inclusive strategies, modifying learning environments, forms of inter-subjective relationships, educational technologies on the basis of the differences present in the educating community;
- consider play/game, or rather playful activities (in game form), a privileged means of learning.



## C. GENERAL PROPOSALS

Schools organize propaedeutic musical training courses and basic instrumental training.

With respect to the way in which they are organized, schools devote projects to musical/instrumental learning from a minimum of 30 minutes to more than two hours per week, mainly during curricular hours, partly during extracurricular ones. The early and late childhood classes are dedicated to active multi-instrumental practices, to learning the fundamentals of language and music, to socialization mediated by shared activities, to the prevalence of bodily and non-verbal expression.

The main sources of funding are public agencies and/or contributions from families; for educational/productive projects of limited duration, intensive and particularly qualifying, contributions from bank foundations, community foundations, European funds are frequently used on different axes.



## D. DIDACTIC STRATEGIES

As far as the methodological framework adopted by the various institutions is concerned, it must be said that some of them refer to precise teaching schools (Suzuki, Orff, Abreu), always declaring that they adopt their strategies in a flexible and adaptive way. Others do not adopt historicized methods, but make use of different professionals who have developed varied teaching skills and have personalized their work kit and shared the main lines of action in teams, integrating individual perspectives.

Although they have experimented and consolidated forms of involvement of the body in its theatrical and expressive dimension, in instrumental didactics the prevalence is that of reading scores that adopt a diastematic musical writing on stave according to western tradition, the learning of reading develops in parallel with that of instrumental practice: both follow, in an almost synchronous way, a progressive increase in complexity.

The music used for teaching purposes is very frequently transcribed and arranged by instrument teachers; composition experiences seem to be limited to the use of sounds sampled through electronic music writing software.

The improvisational practices play a generally marginal role, they seem to be

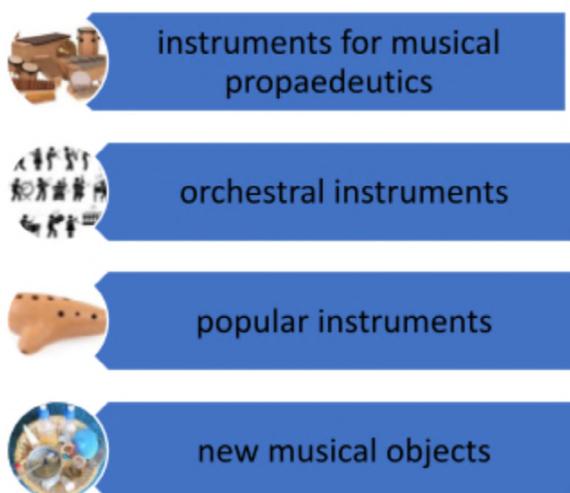
limited and restricted to experiences of musical propaedeutics, much more rarely within the musical interpretation of the group.

Relevant are the situations in which narratives are used according to the following variables

glue, taken from literature, between original musical works, composed expressly for the didactic purpose: greater experimentalism; original literary track interspersed with musical style pieces; narration, original or not, with semi-improvised sound works;

## E. TYPES OF MUSICAL GROUPS

In the schools involved in the Movement project, basic musical instruments are used, mainly small percussion instruments, for musical propaedeutics; in the orchestral groups, strings, keyboards, winds and percussion prevail, but more varied multi-instrumental groups are also used, including instruments of popular music. Alongside the analogue instruments - belonging to the classical repertoire as well as to the popular repertoire and to the traditions of every part of the world, the ancient ones - there are instruments created and assembled by the children, everyday objects with different functions whose sound dimension can be discovered and enhanced. In some cases, the use of digital instruments is introduced for activities of composition

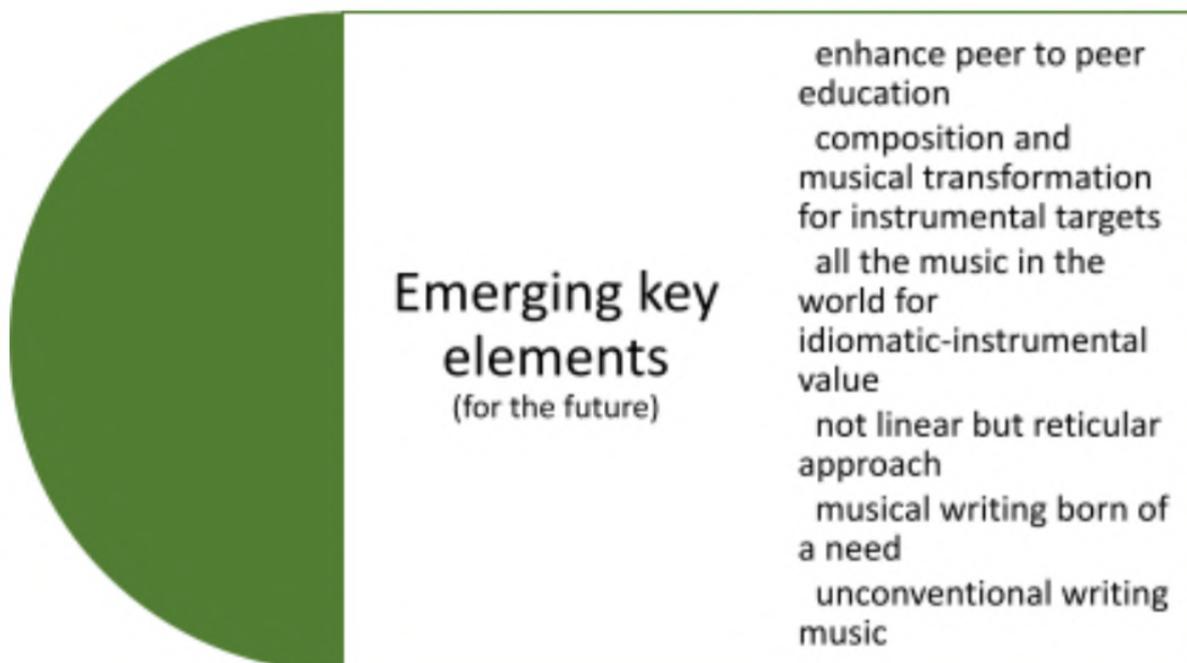


## F. EMERGING KEY ELEMENTS

On the basis of the evidence collected, we suggest the promotion of the following shared actions to strengthen the idea of an innovative and fully inclusive practical music education curriculum.

- strengthen peer to peer learning opportunities: through peer leadership experiences, mutual aid, planned cooperation, small or large groups;
- systematically promote practices of composition, processing and transformation of musical material given in individual but, primarily, group form;
- introduce activities of musical composition and improvisation in individual and group form to acquire musical and technical-instrumental skills together, starting from the relationship between body and instrument, between sound and expressiveness;
- Select popular repertoires of the tradition of all peoples of the world, classical, ancient, contemporary on the basis of their idiomatic-instrumental value, or anchored to the most physiological interaction between body and instrument;
- exploit the sound potential of the instruments pursuing the maximum result in terms of presence, satisfaction with respect to control effort and expenditure of energy;
- in case of adaptations, transcriptions and elaborations, to preserve the aesthetic heart of the original works, preserving the sound and the expressive intentionality
- integrate structured methods with less linear approaches;
- introduce musical reading in the didactic path when there is a widespread need to note down what is to be performed: for complexity, for length, for need of synchronization with others

Mastering diastematic and adiastrumatic, conventional and unconventional writings in order to increase their vocabularies by adapting them to different contexts, genres and repertoires.



## G. SUGGESTIONS FOR A DEBATE

When we talk about citizenship goals, are we referring to those of a democratic or authoritarian regime? So, do we promote forms of interaction among peers in which relationships are self-regulated, decisions are shared, and problematic issues are addressed cooperatively, or do we adopt standard practices in which scores are translated into sound and the director is obeyed?

If we speak, as Abreu says, of a school of social life, what society are we talking about? Of one co-constructed or planned on standard models? With predefined and “covered” roles or embodied, made one’s own in depth? Is it a place of training and exercise of power or a land of negotiations, of interpretation of rules, of reinvention of the rules themselves to take possession of them and make them fully legitimate?

The inclusive dimension must be pursued through a mode of articulated collective work, with attention to the individual and natural regulation between differences: is it essential to always build sets of compensatory or dispensatory measures determined, or can conditions be created for self-regulation and adaptation among peers, of people with the objects and contexts in which they act?

Parental figures and care givers are involved in the choice of musical activities in schools, they attend the performances that their children give at the end of their training, they are informed of what happens in educational institutions, but what educational alliances can be built around music? How can the informal skills of parents in the musical, artistic and creative fields be put to good use in order to strengthen the educational mission of schools?