What strategies did I use, as a music therapy student, to promote child-led cooperative play in an inclusive education setting?

By

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Abstract

The fostering of inclusion in modern mainstream schools can be challenging. Student needs are becoming increasingly diverse, funding is scarce, and an attitudinal shift is necessary to value the contributions and identities of all learners. This study explores how music therapy can assist the process of inclusion by articulating the strategies I, a music therapy student, used when working to enhance musical play within a play-based learning environment. Findings have been generated using the methodology Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data which involved thematic analysis of session notes and my reflexive diary. They describe the strategies I used to facilitate children's developing social play skills, which varied from onlooker and solitary play, to parallel (alongside) and associative play (with some unorganised verbal and musical interactions), culminating in cooperative play (with children interacting directly to organise play and assign particular roles). I identified five themes reflecting levels of social participation in musical play; meeting individual needs, facilitating involvement, encouraging participation, encouraging interactions and supporting play stages. 'Encouraging interactions' was identified as the key theme relating to cooperative play, and the most significant in fostering pro-inclusive social skills. Musical and non-musical strategies are described and the significance of musical co-playing in facilitating pro-inclusive interactions is explored. The strategies identified are relevant for fostering inclusion in other play-based learning programmes and free play environments in both primary schools and pre-schools in New Zealand and globally.

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Acknowledgements

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Ethical Statement

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Introduction

I have a personal and professional interest in inclusive education. As the mother of children with mild learning support needs, I can see that inclusive classrooms are the best place for them to develop the skills necessary to lead happy, fulfilled lives. As a music educator, heavily influenced by Kodály philosophies, I believe that every child should have access to quality music education, and that music has an important role to play in child development, academic learning, developing social skills and emotional well-being. As a student music therapist, working in a mainstream school where music therapy was new, I was cautious to ensure that taking children out of class for sessions did not contribute to perceptions of marginalisation, and I wondered what I could do to improve inclusion for them, and for children within the wider school community.

Inclusion is an area of current focus in the fields of Music Therapy (McFerran & Rickson, 2014; Rickson & McFerran, 2014) and Music Education (Darrow & Adamek, 2012; Jellison, 2012; Jellison, Brown, & Draper, 2015; Jellison & Draper, 2015). This reflects a parallel interest in inclusion within broader education circles, both in New Zealand (*Creating Everyone's Schools*, 2018; Ministry of Education, 2018d) and globally (Loreman, Forlin, Chambers, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2014), as the rights of all children to be educated alongside their peers are increasingly recognised (UNESCO, 2017). There is also a need for Music Therapists to deliver support in innovative ways which better align with inclusive practices in contemporary school communities (McFerran, 2012; McFerran & Rickson, 2014). This study, then, sits within the framework of an increasing awareness of the need for inclusive practices, and presents an innovative way of using music therapy techniques within a broader education setting, and with a focus on promoting inclusion.

Inclusive Education

The Ministry of Education in New Zealand defines inclusive education as an education system where 'all children and young people are engaged and achieve through being present, participating, learning and belonging' (Ministry of Education, 2018a). The ministry expects schools to value the contribution of all students, their parents, whānau[1] and communities, to respect diversity and identify and remove barriers to achievement (Ministry of Education, 2018d). This definition sits within a wider, global framework which describes

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[1] The Māori word 'whānau' translates as 'family' but encapsulates a wider understanding which incorporates extended family and wider connections within communities (Moorfield, 2018).

inclusive education as a process to strengthen the capability of schools and learning centres to accommodate and support all learners (UNESCO, 2017). Inclusive education may be conceptualised as the removal of barriers that may limit children's participation and achievement, or defined by its key features, such as zero rejection policies, implementation of differentiated parallel learning programmes and support for children to learn alongside their same-age peers (Loreman et al., 2014).

Beyond these very practical measures of integration, an ethos which accepts and values human diversity is essential. Without such a shift in attitude, efforts at integration will not be embedded or consistent. Attitudinal shifts need to be systemic, internalised by policy makers, school leaders and educators (UNESCO, 2017), and attitudinal shifts within the education system have the capacity to affect social change as children, our future citizens, are taught to value diversity themselves. Definitions of inclusion which focus on the removal of barriers or describe its key features seem to be considering the issue of exclusion rather than the root cause; societal attitudes towards diversity. In the context of this study, I would like to focus on the attitudinal aspect of inclusion, and would therefore define inclusion in education as a process to increase acceptance and valuing of diversity by all members of the school community; students, parents and whānau, educators, school leaders, and Boards of Trustees.

The next question to address is what is meant by learner diversity. In current dialogues about inclusive education, the focus is on disability issues. At a recent conference in Wellington, (*Creating Everyone's Schools*, 2018), the focus was on facilitating equity for children with disabilities and/ or special education needs, now termed 'learning support needs' by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2018c). Historically in New Zealand, and many other countries, children with additional needs were segregated from their peers (Darrow, 2015). The transition to educate this previously isolated group with their peers is therefore particularly visible, and brings some significant challenges as it requires a radical restructuring of an education system that was not designed with these children in mind.

Children with learning support needs are a significant group when considering learner diversity, but the scope of inclusive education is broader than this and encompasses learners from any group at risk of marginalisation. This includes marginalisation based on gender, ethnicity, linguistic, religious or cultural background, poverty, refugee status or health needs, as well as disability (UNESCO, 2009). Such groups do not require separate learning programmes, as this would serve to further marginalise them, but rather a broadening of the mainstream education system to accommodate all students, regardless of background and needs (Loreman et al., 2014).

Whilst most educators accept the rights of children from marginalised groups to be educated alongside their peers, there is still a significant gap between theory and practice (*Creating Everyone's Schools*, 2018; Hwang & Evans, 2011; Lancaster, 2014). Children with learning support needs become a particularly visible marginalised group in the classroom when standardised academic testing charts individual, class and even school performance (UNESCO, 2017), and many educators find catering for the increasingly diverse and disparate needs of their students to be a significant challenge (Lancaster, 2014; Wong & Chik, 2015). There are several key factors that impact educators' efficacy in implementing inclusive practices, from organisational barriers in how classrooms are managed, curricula developed and instruction delivered, to teacher skills and attitudes (UNESCO, 2017).

Ongoing professional development in pedagogies to support differentiation and active learning is a key strategy in providing educators with the skills to develop an inclusive practice, as well as increasing teacher self-efficacy (Darrow, 2015; Lancaster, 2014; Muccio, Kidd, White, & Burns, 2014; Vaz et al., 2015). Strong leadership support at school, regional and national levels, accompanied by policy reviews which create more equitable and inclusive systems, also have vital roles to play in supporting educators to facilitate more inclusive classrooms (UNESCO, 2017). As I have identified, an attitudinal shift is also essential to develop a truly inclusive system. School communities must move from a theory of integration to an attitude of inclusion, where all children with learning support needs or differences become valued and contributing class members (Cassidy & Colwell, 2012; Darrow, 2015).

Models of disability which move away from a medical model with its associated perceptions of deficiency, provide alternative lenses through which to view disability. Of particular relevance in the context of inclusion are the social, social-relational and ethnographic models. The social model views disability as a social construct; historically, environments have been designed by the non-disabled without consideration for the needs of people with impairments, and the challenge of navigating these environments is what causes the perception of 'disability' (Office for Disability Issues, 2016). 'Disability' can thus be reframed as a human variation, a form of diversity, like gender or race. The deficit then sits with educational environments and systems that fail to accommodate children with impairments (Darrow, 2015). The social-relational model views impairment, inadequately constructed environments and the attitudes of others as impacting the experience of disability (Martin, 2017). The ethnographic model goes one step further to consider disability from the perspective of the impacted individual. It attempts to shift public perceptions to focus on the

individual's abilities and strengths, again moving towards societal acceptance of diversity (Bakan, 2015).

Setting

The mainstream primary school where I was on placement was a decile 10 full primary, catering for children up to year 8 with a role of approximately 490. Families within the school community identified with the following ethnicities, and many of them identified dual ethnicity for their children; NZ European/ Pākehā 70%, European 16%, Māori 10%, Asian 9%, Pacific Peoples 6%, Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African 2%. 1.5% of students spoke English as a second language. The curriculum was strongly secular, but religious and cultural tolerance was encouraged.

The school's principal was well informed about current educational thinking and promoted a holistic approach to education, valuing all aspects of child development and education, including the arts and music. Staff were generally well supported with PD and there were a number of perceptive teachers who catered well for diversity within their classrooms. There were 5 part-time teacher aides (TAs), co-ordinated by a Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO). They supported three partially funded ORS[2] children and a number of other children with milder learning support needs. In addition specialists, such as RTLBs[3], Occupational Therapists and Educational Psychologists, visited the school to support individual students.

This is a good starting place to embrace inclusion and cater for diversity. Overall, the school attempted to integrate children with learning support needs and certainly the intention for inclusion was evident. For example, adaptations had been made to the environment to support a child with a severe visual impairment, and amplifiers for personal assistive listening devices were commonly worn. However, other accommodations, such as providing sensory withdrawal spaces, were sometimes less well managed, and some teachers seemed better equipped than others to manage behavioural issues that may arise from conditions like Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

In the past there had been concerns about children with learning support needs being bullied and where this had not been effectively addressed, parents had moved their children

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[2] The 'Ongoing Resource Scheme', offered by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, provides support for students with the highest level of learning support needs to participate and learn alongside their peers (Ministry of Education, 2017).
[3] 'Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour' services are provided by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, and RTLBs are specialist, itinerant teachers who work alongside teachers, SENCOs, support staff and schools to support children identified with significant learning support needs (Ministry of Education, 2018b).

to alternative schools. In 2018, the school began implementing the KiVa programme, a Finnish anti-bullying initiative using specific techniques for prevention, intervention and monitoring (Salmivalli, Kärnä, & Poskiparta, 2011).

The Musical Play Project

At the beginning of 2018, the junior syndicate, covering years 0-2 (children aged 5-7, with a role mid-year of 153) introduced a play-based learning programme. This was a significant change for the school, fuelled by an increasingly holistic focus on child development, backed by current educational research, and enabled by the abolishment of National Standards in 2017. The school was well resourced with musical instruments, most of which were unused. I wondered whether it would be possible to get some of these instruments into junior classrooms and incorporate musical play into the play-based learning programme. I initiated conversations with key staff members and the idea of musical play was greeted with enthusiasm. Musical play was introduced in term 2.

The musical play project was a new endeavour for the school and for me as a student music therapist. Although informed by conversations with the team and the specialist assisting the syndicate to implement the play-based learning programme, and by my ongoing reading about learning through play, musical play and inclusion, the musical play project grew organically. The development of my research question reflects this.

Research Question

Due to the structure of the final year paper for Victoria University of Wellington's Master of Music Therapy degree, clinical work and research took place in tandem. Because of my existing interest in inclusive education, an awareness of inclusion strongly coloured my approach to music therapy practice on placement. At the start of the year I knew that I wanted my research to explore this passion, and my research interest began broadly with several potential avenues to explore. By the end of term 1, I had identified the musical play project as the context for my research, and as the musical play project developed in term 2, it became apparent that some types of play provided more opportunities for encouraging pro-inclusive social behaviours than others. In week 7, I adopted the team's 'anecdotal note form' as a way of reporting back to teachers (see appendix 5). The form included an outline of play stages, and I became increasingly aware of the significance of cooperative play in developing and practicing pro-inclusive social behaviours. The resulting focussed research question was:

What strategies did I use, as a music therapy student, to promote child-led cooperative play in an inclusive education setting?

Literature Review

New Zealand has a rich history of integrating music and the arts with other curriculum areas (Fraser, Aitken, & Whyte, 2013), as well as valuing self-efficacy and exploring innovative ways to encourage student agency (Annan, Annan, & Wooton, 2016). Educators recognise the value of high student engagement when children feel in control of their learning. The integration of multiple curriculum threads, including music and the arts, also has the potential to enrich students' educational experiences and foster deeper levels of thinking and learning (Fraser et al., 2013). Musical play and play-based learning sit within this educational framework, and in this literature review I will begin by exploring the research about musical play and play-based learning before turning to consider inclusion theories in the Music Therapy literature and their impact on the musical play project.

Musical Play

Children's relationship with music is thought to start very early, perhaps even in the womb, and is linked with their social development (Tafuri, 2017). The music-like babble of infants with their parents as they begin the process of language acquisition (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Stern, 2004) progresses to playful interactions like lap games and counting songs (Tafuri, 2017). By pre-school, children have developed a rich repertoire of musical games and spontaneous musicking. This was explored in the still influential Pillsbury Study, which was situated in a pre-school specifically established to explore children's music making in a free play environment (Kierstead, 1994). This and subsequent studies identified three common types of musical play in early childhood (ages 3-6); movement, instrumental play (when instruments were available) and singing (communicative or chant-like in groups, and more free-flowing and soft when solo). Musical play was found to be multimodal, blending two or three of these forms, and was frequently improvisational (Marsh & Young, 2015).

Musical play is impacted by social patterns from children's wider social-cultural environments (Lew & Campbell, 2005). Children frequently learn new musical games by observing and participating in games with adults and peers, who model and facilitate the participation of less skilled children (Marsh & Young, 2015). Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' is a key concept here; by playing alongside a child or adult with greater skills in a particular area, a child can develop new skills and understanding (Gray, 2013). 'Scaffolding' is a metaphor for the help offered by a more skilled participant to allow those

less skilled to take part and may take the form of reminders, hints, encouragement or more direct help (Gray, 2013). Where one of the more skilled participants is an adult, this could be termed co-playing (White, 2012).

It has been suggested that an adult co-playing can extend the length of time that children engage in musicking (Young, 2003). In a study based in a pre-school setting, it was found that children played on a xylophone for a significantly longer period of time when partnered by an adult than when playing on their own. The study used a protocol to ensure the music was child-led and found that familiarity with the adult made a greater difference to the length of time children played over and above the adult's musical skill level. This would suggest that the interpersonal aspect of adult participation in child-led play has a significant impact. It was observed that techniques used in this study gravitate towards music therapy and counselling techniques in their use of non-intrusive, supportive responses to empower the children (Young, 2003).

Musical co-playing has also been used to foster interactions between typically developing children and children with developmental delays. Gunsberg's (1988) study was also undertaken in a pre-school setting, but used reverse mainstreaming. The researcher speculated that adult facilitation would be necessary to bring the two groups together. An Improvised Musical Play (IMP) technique was developed to facilitate interactions. This involved using rhythm and guitar chords to gain the attention of the children and bring them into a mutual play space, followed by the use of improvised lyrics to describe and develop the play. The lyrics were improvised by the researcher so it might be argued that he imposed his own interpretation on the play, rather than allowing the children themselves to assign meaning. However, play was child-initiated, allowed both groups to interact positively with each other, and provided scope for participation in the play at a developmentally appropriate level (Gunsberg, 1988).

Play-based Learning

There is a movement in current education practice towards, or perhaps returning to, the use of play as an educational tool (Claxton, 2008; Gray, 2013). Play-based learning is a research-based approach to education that is gaining traction globally (Pramling Samuelsson & Fleer, 2009). It is highly relevant in pre-school settings, but is also being used in the early grades of primary schools where a holistic perception of child development and 'school readiness' requires a broader lens to grow active, independent learners (Best Start Resource Centre, 2015). For educators who have been trained in teacher-directed approaches, play-based learning can be challenging (Aiono, 2017; Nolan & Paatsch, 2018; Walsh & Gardner,

2006). There are significant cross curricula and developmental benefits for children (White, 2012), and the discontinuation of New Zealand's standardised testing regime 'National Standards' has offered a less pressured climate for school communities to review their practice (Aiono, 2015; Jay & Knaus, 2018).

Play can be defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this study, my definition is contextual, aligning with the perceptions of the mainstream school in which the musical play project took place. Play is an activity that is child-led and enjoyable. Participation is voluntary, and play is intrinsically motivated and process oriented. Children involved in play are actively engaged and there is often a non-literal, fantasy element involved. Any rules introduced in the play tend to be flexible and the players themselves assign meaning to activities and objects (Riley & Jones, 2010; White, 2012).

Children participate in many kinds of play, and researchers have categorised these in different ways, including play urges, functions of play and social play (White, 2012). The play behaviour exhibited by typically developing children has been linked with developmental stages, and play generally becomes more complex and social as children mature (Best Start Resource Centre, 2015). From an inclusion perspective, children's interactions during social play is of particular interest. Although recent literature highlights how changing contexts of the modern world have impacted children's play (Pellegrini, 1984; Xu, 2010), the work of Mildred Parten (1932, 1933b) exploring social play and participation among pre-school children still forms the foundations of social play theory. Parten identified the following social participation categories; unoccupied behaviour, onlooker, solitary independent play, parallel activity, associative play and cooperative or organised supplementary play (Parten, 1932).

Parten's social play theory follows a hierarchical sequence, with children progressing to more social stages as they mature (Parten, 1933b). More recent literature questions this hierarchical sequence, and suggests that children may move between social play stages depending on the activity and other participants (Pellegrini, 1984), and that further factors, like cultural and linguistic background, socio-economic and environmental influences, impact the ability of some children to participate in social play activities (Xu, 2010).

In the context of the mainstream primary school where I was on placement, Parten's play stages were defined as:

Onlooker play: The child observes, but is not quite ready to engage in play.

Solitary play: The child plays alone, absorbed in his/her activity and does not show any awareness of others.

Parallel play: The child plays alongside others and shows awareness of them, but predominantly focuses on his/her own activity. Interactions with others may occur occasionally when interrupted or requiring a resource.

Associative play: The child shows a greater awareness of others and may work with them on similar projects and take a particular role in the play.

Cooperative play: The child is highly aware of others and can perceive their feelings and needs. Play is more organised and deliberately collaborative.

The adult role in facilitating play-based learning is one of enrichment. This may involve resourcing and preparing the play space, but it may also take the form of guiding play (White, 2012). In facilitating play, an adult may take on the role of onlooker, observing children's play from the outside, or of stage manager, setting up the play and providing suggestions to enrich the play as necessary. For children requiring additional help, an adult may act as a co-player, following the child's lead in a supportive role, modelling skills and offering suggestions as necessary, or as a play leader, guiding the play more actively if necessary (White, 2012). The adult role may change during play, and a skilled facilitator learns when each role is necessary, knowing when to step in and scaffold further or to step back and allow the play to develop.

There are multiple benefits in using a play-based learning approach. Play harnesses children's natural curiosity and encourages exploration. Children explore their experiences and practice their skills in a safe environment, which encourages them to take greater risks (White, 2012). Play is a self-motivated activity that encourages high levels of engagement, enabling children to achieve more than they would in a setting perceived as 'work' (Breathnach, Danby, & O'Gorman, 2017). Free play allows children choice empowering them to meet their own needs and match their learning styles (White, 2012), as well as having the potential to foster self-efficacy, a quality that is becoming increasingly desirable in later stages of schooling (Riley & Jones, 2010).

Children can and do use play to develop their growing skills in key areas that are highly relevant to the curriculum. In New Zealand, the national curriculum covers core subject areas like literacy and numeracy, but also views student development from a more holistic perspective. The curriculum emphasises the development of 'confident, connected, actively involved' learners and incorporates the key competencies; managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing (Ministry of Education, 2014). Through play, children practice and develop numeracy and literacy skills, problem solving skills and creative thinking. Physical play offers opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills,

whilst group activities teach children vital social skills, such as negotiation and compromise, as well as strategies to cope with fear, anger and frustration (Riley & Jones, 2010; White, 2012).

Almost every child plays, regardless of background, available resources or adult encouragement. Yet the majority of play research has been done with typically developing, middle-class Western samples (White, 2012). The research that is available on the relationship between groups at risk of marginalisation and play-based learning suggests that a child's linguistic, cultural or socio-economic background can be a barrier to participation in Parten's higher stages of social play (Xu, 2010). Personal cultural bias may, however unintentionally, impact pre-school educators in their support of children's understanding of musical cultural diversity, and children themselves may sustain parallel musical cultures rather than creating joint ones (Vestad, 2014).

Children's perceptions of disability during play may reveal a strong bias towards the medical model of disability, with accompanying perceptions of illness and personal tragedy, suggesting the need for education to enhance children's understanding of disability and the accompanying social and cultural dimensions (Federici, Meloni, Catarinella, & Mazzeschi, 2017). Furthermore, children may be marginalised or isolated by the reproduction of power relations where race and/ or gender may be used to exclude peers during play (Breathnach et al., 2017). As facilitators of play-based learning and advocates for inclusive education, educators and other staff supporting children during free play will need to develop their own cultural awareness to prevent such exclusion from becoming normalised in play.

In addition to an increased cultural awareness in the play-based learning environment, some children who are at risk of marginalisation may need extra support to participate in social play. For example, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have challenges with reading social cues, and difficulties in managing social interactions with peers can compound their social challenges and hamper social skill development (Walker, 2014). Similarly, children with ADHD may encounter difficulties participating socially during play. Challenges with impulse control may result in behaviour that is perceived as 'too rough' by their peers, and may lead to social exclusion. However, a play-based learning environment also has the potential to allow children with ADHD to be self-directed and to regulate themselves (Gray, 2013; Zachariou & Whitebread, 2015).

From this research, it would therefore seem that children from marginalised groups are potentially vulnerable to exclusion within a play-based learning environment. It suggests that facilitators of play-based learning should work to increase their awareness of personal

bias, challenge negative perceptions within peer groups and offer direct support for children at risk to develop their own skills so that they can thrive alongside their peers.

Music Therapy and Inclusion Theories

Music therapy in New Zealand is a relatively young profession (Croxson, 2001; Fletcher, 2016). It has strong ties with the education sector and music therapists are recognised by New Zealand's Ministry of Education as approved specialists offering additional support for students who qualify for ORS (Ministry of Education, 2017). According to a recent survey, the majority of music therapy work in education is undertaken in special schools, but music therapists also work in special units attached to mainstream schools, as well as working privately with individual children in mainstream schools (Molyneux, Talmage, & McGann, 2016).

Withdrawal based music therapy services are often related to the medical model of disability; a child is viewed as having an impairment or difficulty that needs 'treatment'. Accompanying perceptions of deficit and difference can serve to further marginalise children who use music therapy services in mainstream settings. It has been argued that music therapy in education contexts must evolve beyond the withdrawal model to work within the school community, integrating interventions within everyday tasks and routines (Carlsson, Hocking, & Wright- St Clair, 2007; Holck & Jacobsen, 2017; McFerran, 2012). Consultancy models have been suggested as an alternative approach, focussing on collaboration with staff to enable them to use music with their students (Rickson, 2012; Twyford & Rickson, 2013). Community Music Therapy approaches also offer a way of promoting student wellbeing within the wider school community setting (Rickson & McFerran, 2014).

Globally, researchers in the music therapy and music education fields have been concerned with issues of inclusion (Jellison & Draper, 2015). I identified three main themes in the literature about the use of music and music therapy to promote inclusion in educational settings; building positive relationships, collaboration, and valuing diverse identities. These are encompassed in the philosophy of Community Music Therapy.

Building Positive Relationships

The attitude of educators and peers towards disablement has been identified as one of the key challenges to successfully integrating children with additional needs into mainstream classes (Lancaster, 2014; Vaz et al., 2015). Whilst educator attitudes are improving (Loreman et al., 2014), there is still more work to be done. Building positive relationships within school

communities remains a significant consideration as we move towards a more inclusive system (Darrow, 2015).

Where racial and/ or ethnic groups are segregated, research has found that increased contact has a significant impact on reducing intergroup prejudice (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). This has been found to generalise beyond the individuals experiencing contact to the wider group, and the fostering of positive intergroup relationships also has the potential to generalise to other types of groups and contexts (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

In a music therapy case study based in Raanana, Israel, where children with disabilities were segregated and taught in special education centres, Elefant (2010) presents an example of intergroup work which illustrates how music can be used to challenge and change attitudes towards disablement. Elefant facilitated a music group integrating children from such a centre with a group from a local elementary school. She charts how, as the groups merged, the elementary school students moved from ignorance, and in some cases fear, to acceptance and friendship. This project had a significant impact on the attitudes of the children involved, their teachers and parents, and this had a ripple effect on other local schools, who instigated similar projects, and the wider community where increasing tolerance was shown towards the city's disabled population (Elefant, 2010).

Another case study based in Israel describes similar changes in perceptions about children with disabilities through the inclusion of children with ASD in an inclusive children's choir (Eilat & Raichel, 2016). Again, the neuro-typical children attended a separate school to those with ASD, so singing in the choir was the primary form of contact for these children. It was found that singing together changed participants' perceptions of the 'other' (Eilat & Raichel, 2016).

Other studies explore how music therapy can enhance perceptions of children with additional needs who are already integrated within mainstream education. Twyford found that peers and staff who participated in group music therapy sessions developed stronger relationships with the target child, and felt they understood and appreciated them more (Twyford, 2012). In another study, Twyford and Rickson (2013) found that music therapy sessions conducted with children's teachers and TAs present enhanced educators' understanding of their students. It offered new ways for them to connect, strengthening relationships, and positively impacted their perceptions of the children.

Rickson and Twyford interviewed the same educators 6 months later and report varying success in sustaining the use of music therapy tools. One teacher with strong musical skills was able to embed the tools in her practice and develop them further, but another

appeared disempowered by the process (Rickson & Twyford, 2011). This may reflect the limitations of restricted contact time (Twyford, 2013) and ongoing collaboration would support teachers who feel less confident musically.

A further study explored the feasibility of a music therapy consultation model to support staff in a special school classroom to use music incidentally. The most significant finding was that the use of music built stronger relationships between students and staff, with music offering opportunities to enrich their interactions (McFerran, Thompson, & Bolger, 2016).

Collaboration

Collaboration is a process that involves working jointly with others to engender change (Rickson, 2010, p 63). From a music therapy perspective, it may reflect a variety of working practices, from talking with other practitioners to more integrated transdisciplinary approaches (Twyford & Watson, 2008). Collaboration between music therapists and other specialists, including educators, is becoming increasingly commonplace, and collaboration between music educators and music therapists has been identified as a key strategy for challenging attitudes towards disablement (Darrow, Colwell, & Kim, 2002). Collaboration played a key role in all of the literature considered so far. Elefant's intergroup work sits within the framework of Community Music Therapy, which is a highly collaborative approach (Elefant, 2010). Twyford's work was based on collaboration with teachers, TAs and peers to develop support skills (Twyford, 2012; Twyford & Rickson, 2013), as was the work of McFerran et al. (2016).

Further literature supports the impact of collaboration in promoting inclusion. In a pre-school setting, Kern worked with educators to develop and implement embedded music therapy interventions to encourage the inclusion of children with ASD (Kern, 2004). She argues that for inclusion to be successful, strong communication between specialists, educators and parents is essential (Kern, 2015). Caltabiano (2010) observed that teachers and peers initiating, modelling and prompting interactions helped develop the social skills of children with ASD.

Working with peers may also have a significant role to play in cultivating inclusion. Peer-assisted learning practices purportedly tap into children's natural inclination towards pro-social behaviours (Jellison, Draper, & Brown, 2017). This provides opportunities for cooperative learning within Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development', and enables children to learn to interact with children they perceive to be different from themselves (Jellison, Brown, & Draper, 2015).

Valuing Diverse Identities

The concept of respecting diversity is endorsed by the Ministry of Education in New Zealand in their document *Success for All* (Ministry of Education, 2018d). Elefant also considers how her intergroup work increased appreciation for diversity (Elefant, 2010), whilst Raichel and Eilat describe this shift as changing perceptions of 'otherness' (Eilat & Raichel, 2016). The shift to value diversity is partly about building more positive relationships within school communities and is strongly linked with challenging the attitudes of peers and staff towards children who may seem 'different'. It is about creating a sense of belonging (Kern, 2015), fostering acceptance and tolerance amongst all members of the school community, and it is also tied in with the formation of identity (McFerran & Teggelove, 2011), not just for children at risk of marginalisation but for their peers as well.

Personal bias impacts us all, and Whitehead-Pleaux and Tan's (2017) book *Cultural Intersections in Music Therapy* highlighted for me how my own background, growing up on an island where children with additional needs were segregated, impacted my perceptions. I needed to move beyond the idea of 'accepting difference,' which focusses on disparities between groups, towards a more holistic approach which appreciates the individual strengths and contributions of all people; a valuing of diverse identities. Being open to increasing awareness and challenging deep-seated perceptions is central to the process of inclusion.

Personal bias, if left unexplored, can also impact attitudes towards other people based on gender (Hadley, 2006), ethnic, linguistic or cultural background (Hadley, 2013; Whitehead-Pleaux & Tan, 2017), and sexuality (Whitehead-Pleaux & Tan, 2017). Baines (2013) suggests it is crucial for music therapists to reflect on and reduce the impact of personal bias on their practice. Moreover, the attitude of educators (Vestad, 2014), students (Federici et al., 2017), and the wider school community will also have an impact on inclusivity in school settings.

Additional literature relating to the valuing of diverse identities explores the use of musical play to facilitate inclusion for refugee populations in education settings (Marsh & Dieckmann, 2017; Skidmore, 2016). Music can provide an important tool to form connections between peers, especially when they do not share a common spoken language.

Community Music Therapy

Community Music Therapy may provide an alternative framework that meets the evolving needs of inclusive school communities (McFerran & Rickson, 2014). Community Music Therapy, with its strongly collaborative and ecological approach, draws on and contributes extensively to the philosophy of inclusion. The book *Creating music cultures in*

the schools: A perspective from Community Music Therapy (Rickson & Mcferran, 2014) seeks to address inclusion issues, like challenging attitudes and resourcing educators, at a systemic level. The philosophical model presented is underpinned by principles of mutuality, respect, empowerment and commitment, with emphasis placed on evaluating musical engagement rather than individual pathology.

There are a number of studies illustrating the use of Community Music Therapy philosophy and approaches in schools and with young people. Rickson reports on the participation of adolescents with special needs in a performance with a professional orchestra (Rickson, 2014b). Davidson considers the use of Community Music Therapy to develop a sense of belonging for students in a special school (Davidson, 2013). Winter details the practice of Community Music Therapy in Malawian schools (Winter, 2015). Whilst not all of these projects were initiated to promote inclusion, the ecological, resource oriented and activist qualities of Community Music Therapy have the power to engender this change.

Framing the Musical Play Project

I perceived the musical play project to sit within the context of the syndicate's play-based learning environment, and to belong within a Community Music Therapy framework. Key factors in its implementation provided strong parallels with Community Music Therapy (Stige & Aarø, 2012).

Participatory: Musical play provided opportunities for individual and social participation. Children were encouraged to have agency over their musicking, making musical play a collaborative process, and giving children a strong voice. As a more skilled collaborator, I only took on the role of play leader when it was necessary to support individual child development, and the majority of my participation was co-playing. This meant that I was able to use Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' to enrich the children's play without controlling it.

Resource oriented: I used the existing physical resources available at the school, moving school instruments so that they were accessible during play-based learning sessions. Musical play was child-led, drawing on children's existing musical experience and natural curiosity. I adapted musical play sessions to individual classroom environments, working to meet the needs of individual teachers and match their teaching styles, as well as following the interests of their students.

Ecological: Musical play occurred in a social context, and involved building relationships between peers and between students and teachers. 'Reporting back' to teachers about aspects of musical play enabled me to open a dialogue and facilitated positive perceptions of

teacher's personal resources. Some of my notes were also included in 'Learning Stories' which were made available to parents and displayed on the walls of classrooms.

Performative: The development of children's agency was facilitated by allowing play to be child-led, resulting in a shift in their relationships with teachers/ facilitators. This in turn has the capacity to fundamentally alter children's perceptions of their place in the world and the way in which they can relate to others, and particularly to adults.

Activist: During musical play, child development and well-being was considered from a community perspective. My interest in inclusion was a part of this, with a background agenda based on inclusion theories in the music therapy literature. I wanted to challenge peer attitudes to 'difference' by fostering positive relationships between peers and encouraging collaboration.

Reflective: I took a reflexive approach to developing the musical play project, using a reflective journal and fostering dialogue with teachers about musical play, student interests and teacher approaches to play-based learning. Whilst acknowledging that I had existing personal and musical skills to contribute to the project, I found I had to challenge staff perceptions of music education as the domain of experts, and I used my reflective journal to develop strategies to assist with this.

Ethics-driven: One of the syndicate's play-based learning goals was to promote self-efficacy. This reflects a child's belief in his or her ability to control themselves, their learning and their environment. During musical play this was facilitated by allowing musicking to be child-led. Paired with the development of empathy and core social skills, self-efficacy provided a strong ethics-based foundation for the project.

As a student music therapist with a strong background in music education entering a play-based learning environment, I was very aware of trying to find the balance between therapy and education. This is a complex issue. Despite protestations from some quarters that a focus on child well-being in schools risks increasing student vulnerability, educators are adopting a more holistic approach to education (Rickson, 2014a). In New Zealand, this is clearly outlined within the key competencies curriculum; managing self, participating and contributing, and relating to others (Ministry of Education, 2014). There is therefore considerable overlap between child development goals in education and music therapy domains. In the context of the musical play project, this was clearly reflected in the inclusion of goals to develop social skills, emotional regulation, creative thinking and self-efficacy.

To assist with the evolving identities of music educators and music therapists in a more holistically oriented system, a goal-based differentiation has been suggested. Music

educators have been identified as being primarily concerned with musical goals, whilst music therapists use music to achieve non-musical goals (Darrow & Adamek, 2012; Draper, 2017). Given this definition, my work during the musical play project, which was strongly driven by non-musical goals, should sit firmly within the bounds of music therapy. However, in a play-based learning environment where classroom teachers are also interested in non-subject specific goals, I wonder whether this distinction blurs.

To date, I have found no literature about the use of music to promote inclusion in a play-based learning programme. The research suggests that vulnerable children are potentially at risk of being further marginalised in a free play environment (Breathnach, Danby, & O'Gorman, 2017; Federici et al., 2017; Myck-Wayne, 2010; Vestad, 2014), so there is a strong case for exploring strategies to mitigate that risk. Social play theories (White, 2012) were highly relevant in the context of the syndicate's play-based learning programme, and provided a useful vehicle to explore inclusion within musical play. In analysing the data about inclusion in my notes from the musical play project, I therefore developed the following research question:

What strategies did I use, as a music therapy student, to promote child-led cooperative play in an inclusive education setting?

Research Methodology

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

I have approached this research from a constructivist paradigm, using a qualitative methodology to conduct secondary analysis of data collected during the musical play project. A constructivist ontology suggests that human beings create multiple realities grounded in their own experiences and contexts, and that knowledge is a subjective construct with multiple interpretations (Edwards, 1999). Constructivist research attempts to capture the context-based, subjective meanings behind experiences and phenomena, and a qualitative methodology offers rich, descriptive data with which to explore those meanings.

Secondary analysis of qualitative data uses pre-existing data to explore a research question (Heaton, 2004). In this case, my data was generated during my placement at a mainstream primary school, and consisted of the notes and reflections about my work during the musical play project. A constructivist paradigm was particularly relevant to my research because I believed my interpretation of my data would inevitably be coloured by my own subjective perceptions of interactions that took place between the children involved.

Data Collection

The musical play project began at the start of term 2 2018, and musical play was integrated during the syndicate's play-based learning programme in the afternoon on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Sessions lasted between 30-45 minutes, depending on classroom demands for that day, and were also dependant on wider syndicate and school schedules, such as huis[4], parent teacher interviews and swimming classes. In total, 17 musical play sessions were held in term 2.

Initially, musical play sessions were divided between a year 1 and a year 2 classroom, with the intention that all children in the syndicate would have access to music in the free-flow play environment. In reality, however, this was not the case, and when organisational changes also impacted the children's ability to move between classrooms, staff opted for me to be rostered to individual classrooms around the syndicate on a fortnightly basis, beginning in week 7 of term 2.

I kept daily session notes (see appendix 1) and reported back to staff, initially via email and from week 7 via an 'anecdotal note form' that the team were trialling (see

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[4] 'Hui' is the Māori word for a meeting or gathering (Moorfield, 2018). In this context it is used for syndicate assemblies.

appendix 2). I also kept a weekly reflexive journal to help me reflect on musical play and develop new ways of working. These notes and journal entries were transcribed and formed the raw data for the research. The musical play project continued into term 3 during my placement, but it was decided that there was sufficient data from term 2, and a comparison with my term 3 notes indicated that saturation had most likely already been reached.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible method that identifies patterns within qualitative data by using codes to distil meaning. Codes may be identified from existing theories that the researcher applies to the data, known as deductive coding, or may develop from the data itself, and this is called inductive coding (Marks & Yardley, 2004).

Initially, I intended to use themes I had identified in the music therapy literature on inclusion as a priori codes, and to use a combination of deductive and inductive coding. However, as it became apparent that my interest in promoting inclusion was more practical, my research question became more refined to consider the strategies used, and I wanted to be as flexible as possible in exploring my themes. As a result, my thematic analysis used only inductive coding.

From my transcribed session notes, emails and anecdotal note forms reporting to staff and reflexive journal entries, I identified a subset of data directly describing the music created during musical play and the actions I took to facilitate this. I used the six-step analysis process outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006) to analyse my data.

- Phase 1: Familiarisation with data
- Phase 2: Generating initial codes
- Phase 3: Searching for themes
- Phase 4: Reviewing themes
- Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
- Phase 6: Producing the report

A detailed explanation of my data analysis is presented in appendix 3, and an example of my analysis can be found in appendix 4.

Ethical considerations

This research was undertaken as part of the requirements for the Master of Music Therapy programme at the New Zealand School of Music (NZSM), Victoria University Wellington. The structure of the programme's final year meant that research was conducted in tandem with clinical work. Inevitably some of my reading in drafting my literature review

coloured my perceptions of inclusion and social play during the musical play project. Given that the work was highly context based, and that staff were also encouraged to consider these elements within the play-based learning programme, this presented no conflict in my implementation of musical play.

I had an existing relationship at the school; prior to my placement, I had worked as an itinerant music teacher for 5 years and my children attended the school. To mitigate the risk of a conflict of interest, for this study I did not use data from work with children that I have a close association with, for example ex-pupils or close friends of my children.

My research involved secondary analysis of data in the form of naturally occurring notes and my reflexive diary. This sits within the framework of prior ethical approval (# 22131) obtained by the programme directors for the NZSM526 paper. Informed consent was obtained from the facility, implicated staff, and from relevant children and their caregivers in relation to the vignettes. (See appendix 5 for example information sheets and consent forms, which also give further details of ethical considerations.)

My research was not specifically aimed at working with children from Māori backgrounds, although children who identified as Māori participated in musical play. As there was no Māori liaison at the school, I communicated with the Clinical Liaison to ensure that best practices were followed.

Findings

I identified five overarching themes that categorised the strategies I used to promote child-led cooperative play during musical play sessions:

1.   Meeting Individual Needs
2.   Facilitating involvement
3.   Encouraging participation
4.   Encouraging interactions
5.   Supporting play stage development

Within each broader theme, strategy goals were identified and actions that were intended to support those goals were explored. The final thematic map that I produced during my analysis is shown in Table 1.

My findings are sited within the framework of my development as a student music therapist learning how to support music making within a free play environment. With more time and more experience in this environment, there may be more subtleties to explore, but this research is grounded within the context of my development during my Master of Music Therapy degree. To illustrate this development, I would like to begin my findings by sharing a vignette.

Vignette 1: An illustration of strategy development

This vignette describes how my strategies developed to facilitate the participation of a child learning to compromise during musical play.

Week 2: May and the Band

A group of girls excitedly announce that they are going to make a band. They take the bongo drums, a glockenspiel, a xylophone and a set of egg shakers into the book corner. I observe from a distance and they seem to be negotiating who is going to play what, so I leave them to work things through.

A little later, I notice that May (age 6-7) is standing near the book corner and looks upset. Her voice is raised and she seems to be arguing with Lauren, who is also standing. As I approach, I hear May say 'I've told the teacher that you won't let me join your band.' As I watch, Lauren offers May some egg shakers and invites her to join them, but May becomes upset and leaves again. From the earlier body language, I suspect that May wanted to play a different instrument, but as Lauren begins to explain what has happened, May returns and

Table 1: Final Thematic Map

Goal type	Description	Fine Description	Action
Meeting individual needs	Stimulation reduction		Environment (monitoring and accommodation)
	Impulse control	Regulation	Rhythm
			Volume
		Self-regulation	Visual cueing
		Success (promoting)	Interpreting behaviours positively
	Negative interaction (preventing)		Verbal intervention
Involvement	Provocation		Invitation to play
	Connection		Familiar music
	Invitation to join play		Rhythm
			Gestural cueing
			Verbal encouragement
	Reengagement		Following child's lead
	Disengagement		Music stops
	Barriers		Environment
			Verbal mediation
			Sung instructions
	Wider engagement		Musical quality
Participation	Permission		Verbal encouragement
	Confidence building		Verbal encouragement
	Supporting lyric reading		Gestural cueing
			Verbal cueing
	Supporting existing play		Chords
			Familiar music
	Exploration		Following child's lead
	Extending participation		Call and response
			Chords
			Harmony
	Contribution	Expanding	Verbal enrichment suggestion
		Valuing	Symbols into music
Interaction	Attention		Chords
			Gestural cueing
	Synchronisation		Rhythm
			Volume
	Collaboration	Peer	Stepping back
		Teacher	Encouraging teacher participation
			Stepping back
	Interaction (encouraging)		Gestural cueing
			Tempo
	Supporting child leadership		Following child's lead
			Volume
			Verbal suggestion (simplifying game)
	Sharing		Verbal mediation
	Turn taking		Chords
			Sung instructions
	Verbal social skills development		Stepping back
Play Stages	Parallel child-led play		Stepping back
	Associative play		Verbal redirection
	Child-led co-playing		Following child's lead
	Cooperative child-led play		Stepping back

says; 'I've told on you again.' I step in and say that the girls are happy for her to join the band, and that some egg shakers are free, but May becomes upset again and leaves.

In this session, the only strategies I used to facilitate May's participation in the group were stepping back to observe the situation and verbal encouragement for her to use the instruments offered by another child. It wasn't until May had rejected this invitation and the band subsequently split into two smaller groups that I became involved in making any music. Reflecting on this session, I wondered whether taking a different direction in my verbal mediation would have created a different outcome, and whether there were musical strategies I could have used to diffuse the situation and better facilitate May's participation.

Week 8: Playing with Sounds and Rhythms

May asks Bella for a turn on the triangle. Bella has only just started playing with the triangle and tells her this. May picks up the finger cymbals and offers them to Bella as a swap, but Bella says 'no thank you'. Before May gets upset, I start describing how Bella is experimenting with the triangle, holding it in different ways to get different sounds. We talk about what the triangle is made from and I point out that the finger cymbals in May's hand are also made of metal. I ask; 'I wonder what would happen if you tried to play those finger cymbals on your knee the same way that Bella is playing the triangle?' This leads to a mutual exploration of sound production, and another child joins in with a second pair of finger cymbals. Some natural turn-taking begins as the children try other metal instruments that are on the floor, as well as each other's.

A little later, I am sitting with Esther who has a variety of instruments around her; bongo drums, tambourine, egg shakers and hand drum. She says their names as she plays them, guessing based on their look and sound if she doesn't know. As she tries them, she develops a steady rhythmic pattern (♩ ♩ ♫ ♩). I start adding some guitar chords in time with her rhythm. May notices and when Esther pauses, she shakes a half full jar of egg shakers, copying Esther's pattern. Esther and I look at each other, and I say 'May's copying your pattern!' I gesture for May to come and join us and say 'Let's do that again!' A game begins, where one girl offers a short rhythmic pattern and we copy. As the game continues, I stop playing and observe their playful interactions.

These sessions differed in that more instruments were available in week 8, because fewer children chose to engage in musical play. May also tried a strategy herself, offering to swap an available instrument for the one that she wanted, and she may have been practising her sharing and turn-taking skills in other contexts between weeks 2 and 8. However, if I had

verbally reinforced Bella's initial response, I think May would have become upset. Verbal redirection by finding similarities between the two instruments and drawing May into associative play with Bella sidestepped the issue, and naturally led to a turn-taking scenario where the children were able to try different instruments. May got a chance to play the triangle without any need for direct verbal mediation.

May participated in musical play for the entire length of the session, and was drawn into child-led cooperative play with another peer as they developed a call and copy game. My key strategies in this week 8 session were verbal redirection, gestural and verbal encouragement to participate in playing rhythmic patterns, and then, once the call and copy game was established, stepping back to allow it to be child-led.

Key themes

1. Meeting Individual Needs

In any classroom there are a range of needs. A play-based learning environment encourages children to be self-directed and therefore has the potential for children to regulate themselves and choose activities that meet their own needs. However, during musical play I found that it was sometimes necessary for me to accommodate and/ or support children's needs directly to facilitate their participation.

1.1 Reducing stimulation

Noise levels were sometimes excessive during musical play, especially when instruments were first introduced into the play-based learning environment. At times this was a barrier to participation for a number of children and it was therefore necessary to reduce auditory stimulation. A visual cue (a 'noise meter') was introduced to encourage volume awareness and adaptations were made to the classroom environment, for example by considering the number, type and placement of instruments, reducing the number of xylophone beaters or swapping hard beaters for soft beaters. When noise levels were average, but a child with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) still found it too noisy to participate, I suggested that he choose some instruments and withdraw to a quieter space to play with them.

1.2 Supporting impulse control

Although I was given no information about any diagnoses the children might have had, it was fairly obvious with a student music therapist's eye when a child was experiencing difficulties with impulse control. Frequently a disorganised beat and loud, fast playing prevented these children from being able to make music or even interact musically with their

peers. Using guitar or keyboard accompaniment, I therefore introduced a strong rhythm to steady a fast disorganised beat and found that target children synchronised with me, allowing them to play alongside their peers. I also reduced my volume in increments to encourage softer playing so that these children could hear their peers. This enabled them to participate in cooperative play, improvising or creating musical stories together.

The 'noise meter', introduced as a visual cue to encourage volume awareness, was used by learners with apparent impulse control challenges to monitor themselves and others. In addition, on one occasion, I incorporated a child's poor impulse control in striking an instrument when silence had been requested as a 'signal' in a turn-taking game, interpreting this behaviour positively to promote success in cooperative play.

1.3 Preventing negative interactions

On one occasion, when musical strategies combined with verbal and gestural encouragement did not work to deescalate aggressive behaviour, direct verbal intervention became necessary to prevent a negative interaction. In this instance, a child kept encroaching onto instruments being played by his peers, became upset when they tried to play his and he was not communicating verbally with me or the other children. I intervened directly when he tried to push another child's mallet off the other child's xylophone and gave verbal directions about physical boundaries.

2. Facilitating involvement

I identified several strategies that were related to initiating or maintaining children's involvement in musicking.

2.1 Offering Provocation

Provocation, or an 'invitation to play' was a method used frequently by the team to encourage or develop children's interest in activities and themes, or to develop social skills by observing staff role play scenarios. Where appropriate, I sometimes offered an invitation to musical play at the beginning of a play session. This was always prompted by an aspect of play from previous sessions, and involved encouraging children to extend their play as well as inviting wider engagement from their peers. For example, building on call and copy rhythm games from a previous session, I asked how they might share musical patterns with others, and this encouraged a small group of children to become involved in parallel and associative play as they created graphic scores.

2.2 Creating connections

I identified, or attempted to identify, music familiar to children to form connections and facilitate co-playing. For example, a conversation about a child's musical experience in a different country prompted me to sing an Arabic lullaby in time to his drumming, moving from solitary play to co-playing. He returned later to play another lullaby next to me, and this developed into co-playing as I responded with my guitar, and parallel play as nearby peers joined in as well.

2.3 Invitation to join play

I used gestural cueing and verbal encouragement to invite children to participate in musical play with their peers. For example, when children in close proximity played similar rhythms, I identified this and encouraged them to play their rhythms for each other. This changed the play stage from parallel to associative, and became cooperative child-led play as a call and copy game developed. I also used rhythm as a tool to invite wider participation. For example, using rhythm to synchronise a group of children encouraged others to move closer and join in.

2.4 Reengaging

When children signalled an intention to move on from musical play, I followed their lead to reengage them in the musicking. For example, responding to a learner's verbalised intention to 'go for a walk' by playing a walking rhythm on the keyboard drew her back to engage in cooperative play with peers as they developed a musical story. Likewise, using my guitar I matched the pretend strums of another child 'playing' a wooden block and this led to co-play exploring my guitar.

2.5 Disengagement

Co-playing seemed to prolong the length of time children engaged in musicking. This was not surprising as it was identified in the literature that an adult, and especially a familiar adult, that played the xylophone alongside pre-school children in a child-led way increased the length of time that the pre-schoolers played (Young, 2003). Conversely, when my musical support stopped, this sometimes led to children disengaging from musical play and moving onto other activities. Disengagement usually also led to a move away from cooperative play. For example, when I stopped playing guitar chords that supported an improvised turn-taking game and moved away, the game stopped and the children began individual song writing activities, moving to parallel and associative play.

2.6 Barriers

Barriers to involvement in musical play included high noise levels, and on one occasion the reduction of the number of beaters in response to this meant that some children could no longer play. Unsuccessful verbal mediation, where a child rejected a suggested solution, led to her not participating in musical play, and where sung instructions intended to facilitate a turn-taking game were ignored, some children opted to sit out. In a child-led environment, this is an acceptable option and did not indicate disengagement as learners participated again when 'their' instrument became available again.

2.7 Encouraging wider engagement

On several occasions, whilst co-playing on the guitar, I found that once children synchronised in rhythm and volume and the quality of the musicking became particularly successful, the musical quality seemed to invite wider engagement and encourage wider participation.

3. Encouraging participation

There were several strategies that I used to encourage children to become or remain active participants in musical play.

3.1 Granting permission

As an adult frequently co-playing during musical play, children sometimes seemed to ask me for permission to participate. I offered verbal encouragement where musical and gestural cueing were insufficient.

3.2 Building confidence

On consecutive occasions, I coached a child who wanted to participate in musical play but lacked the confidence to approach her peers. Initially, she needed help locating the appropriate words to ask for a turn, and as her confidence grew, I offered verbal encouragement to reuse this strategy. Over time, her request to peers changed to 'joining in' with others. Verbal coaching enabled this learner to build her confidence in social situations, and she moved through the various stages of play from onlooker to parallel, and then to cooperative play. At the end of term 2, this culminated in her taking a leadership role (with scaffolded support) when she initiated a turn-taking game.

3.3 Supporting lyric reading

I used gestural and verbal cueing to support lyric reading during group singing and song writing. I reduced the tempo and used vocal cueing to assist a child whose literacy skills

made reading pre-composed song lyrics challenging. Once I realised her literacy level posed a barrier to participation in this kind of song writing, I encouraged her to improvise lyrics.

3.4 Supporting existing play

I supported existing cooperative play by identifying music familiar to learners and playing chords underneath to support their singing. For example, when a group of children were singing 'Jingle Bells' and accompanying themselves using drums, bells and shakers, I fitted guitar chords underneath, and when one of the children switched to 'Jingle Bell Rock', I sang some of the lyrics with her and again tried to use guitar chords to fill some of the harmonies.

3.5 Encouraging exploration

I followed children's interests in specific instruments to support exploratory participation, for example by exploring materials instruments were made from, how they were constructed, and different pitches and timbres, as well as how the sound was produced. This led to associative play as the children discussed their findings, and to co-playing.

3.6 Extending participation

I used several strategies to extend participation in musical play. Rhythm, played on guitar or keyboard, helped to synchronise children in their musicking and seemed to extend the length of time that they participated. I also used call and response and harmony to extend the length of time that children improvised and on one occasion I used chords to frame speech prosody during song writing, which encouraged the development of a melody and extended the length of the song.

3.7 Valuing and expanding contributions

I expanded learner contributions to musical play by offering verbal enrichment suggestions. For example by acknowledging a child's exploration of body percussion to create rhythm patterns and asking whether the group could find more. This led to the children independently exploring movement and dance in their play. I have valued children's contributions throughout musical play sessions, but I explicitly valued a child's contribution to boost her self-esteem by translating symbols into music when she doubted the validity of her graphic score in comparison to others.

4. Encouraging interactions

I also identified a number of strategies I used to facilitate interactions with me and/ or with peers. These varied from actions that provided space for interactions to occur to strategies that directly supported or developed interactions.

4.1 Gaining attention

I used chords and gestural cueing to gain children's attention, enabling direct interactions between the children which led to cooperative play. For example, I used gestural cueing for silence so that a child could communicate with her peers about playing a musical turn-taking game. I also played a repeated bass drone to attract the attention of three children engaged in parallel play on the keyboard. This encouraged them to synchronise their playing and led to the collaborative creation of a musical story.

4.2 Synchronising

Playing a steady rhythm was an action I used on multiple occasions to synchronise children, and it was a strong tool to move play from parallel or associative to cooperative. Playing a steady rhythm reduced noise levels (because children could hear themselves better), allowed more opportunities for interaction and created a sense of playing together. When rhythmic synchronisation was achieved and it felt contextually appropriate, I also used diminuendo to synchronise volume and this often created a strong musical quality. I facilitated synchronisation to support intentional cooperative play, for example when a learner tried to conduct his peers to play together but needed help to steady his beat, and to support unintentional, incidental cooperative play. I found using rhythms unsuccessful when noise levels were too high, or with learners who did not want to share musical or physical space.

4.3 Allowing collaboration

I allowed space for peer and teacher collaboration with children by stepping back to allow direct interactions. I also encouraged teacher participation, for example by offering my guitar to a musically skilled teacher during a child-led turn-taking game. This encouraged her to actively participate in the musical play where previously she had been observing, and led to more direct interactions with her students.

4.4 Encouraging interaction

I used gestural cueing and changes in tempo to encourage children's interactions with me during co-play, for example I introduced a ritardando at the end of group musicking, and this became a playful interaction as the children tried to anticipate from my body language when the next beat would fall.

4.5 Supporting child leadership

I followed children's leads to support child leadership in musical play. For example, co-playing a child's turn-taking game demonstrated her rules for peers, which encouraged

their participation in a child-led game. Where necessary, I suggested that turn-taking games were simplified so that peers could understand the rules. I also used volume to support child leadership in another turn-taking game when the leader's sung instructions were very soft and I wasn't sure that her peers had heard her. I added my voice, increasing the volume of the sung instructions (and most likely as an adult adding weight to her leadership), but also encouraging her to sing more loudly.

4.6 Promoting sharing

I used verbal mediation to encourage equitable sharing of instruments. Sometimes this was quite direct, but other times I used this as an opportunity for social skills development, for example asking whether a group of three children could work out a way to share one xylophone and two beaters and then stepping back to allow them to find a solution.

4.7 Facilitating turn-taking

Turn-taking games were popular during child-led cooperative play. Where necessary, I used chords to encourage turn-taking. For example, one turn-taking game involved a child with a triangle moving around the outside of a circle in time to the improvised music of his or her peers. When the triangle was played by the child, the peer he or she stood behind became 'it' and the pair swapped. I introduced a chord sequence on the guitar to synchronise the improvised music and found that moving to V7 often encouraged a swap, without the need for any other type of prompt.

Sung instructions were a stronger incentive, and I also modelled sung instructions for a child to use herself to facilitate the transition to child-led cooperative play. Sung instructions to swap were unsuccessful where children seemed to be particularly attached to an instrument and were sometimes ignored. Alternatively, some children opted to sit out until 'their instrument' became available again.

4.8 Allowing verbal social skills development

To allow learners the space to develop their verbal social skills, there were multiple occasions when I stepped back from the musical play. For example I stepped back to allow child-led negotiations about sharing instruments, to let children work out how to take turns, to make song choices, or to decide the style of music or plot of a musical story. When children were unable to agree, further intervention became necessary.

5. Supporting play stage development

The significance of the play stages became increasingly apparent. Although the team recognised the validity of each play stage, and accepted that children moved between them in

both directions in a free play environment, based on Parten's theory of social play sequence (Parten, 1932), there was an awareness that cooperative play reflected a more advanced developmental stage, and that play at this level had the most beneficial impact on the students' cognitive, social and emotional development. Some of my strategies were therefore specifically aimed at moving children through the various stages, with equitable and inclusive child-led cooperative play as my ultimate goal.

5.1 Allowing parallel child-led play

When children were productively engaged in parallel child-led play, I stepped back to observe the play before deciding whether intervention was appropriate, and if so how I might enrich the existing play. For example, when a child was experimenting with using a graphic score to represent her rhythmic patterns, I observed what she was writing, asked what some of her symbols indicated (these were instructions for clap direction), and then stepped back. Without any prompting, other than my interest in her peers' scores, she began incorporating elements from her peers' notation into her own.

5.2 Encouraging associative play

I used verbal redirection to encourage associative play, for example whilst preventing emotional dysregulation about the unavailability of a favourite instrument, I redirected a child's attention to similarities between the instrument she was holding and the instrument that she wanted. This resulted in associative play between the learners as they explored the different sounds and ways of holding the instruments.

5.3 Encouraging child-led co-playing

I followed children's leads to allow child-led co-playing to develop and to help children create child-led musical products. For example, I followed a child's directions to play slides on my guitar and we made 'slug music' together. Another child created a score with specific instructions for me to play 'B' and 'A', and then 'BOOM' for slaps on the guitar body.

5.4 Allowing cooperative child-led play

On multiple occasions, I stepped back to allow cooperative child-led play to develop or to continue. For example, if previous strategies had led learners towards successful cooperative play, I stepped back to allow the children to lead the play themselves. If productive cooperative play was already occurring, I observed.

Vignette 2: An illustration of the interplay between strategies

Considering my strategies from a goal oriented perspective gave a more nuanced description and showed that I often used several actions in support of one goal, but this still feels like a slightly fragmented picture. In the course of facilitating musical play, individual goals were often steps within broader objectives. Not only might I use several strategies within one session to facilitate involvement, participation and/or interactions, over several weeks the combination of strategies evolved. Part of this was my own development as I reflected on more effective ways of working (as illustrated in vignette 1), but it was also necessary for me to adapt my strategies as the children's skills developed and their needs changed. I would therefore like to share a second vignette about how I used multiple strategies during musical play to support the development of a new entrant's social confidence.

Week 7: Finding the Words

Carina is watching two boys who are playing with a beater each on a glockenspiel. She turns to me and says she would like to play the glock, but isn't sure how to ask her classmates. I suggest; 'please can I have a turn?' The boys give her both beaters and move to play together on another instrument. She smiles at me and begins experimenting with the sounds.

A little later, I am working with a group of three boys on xylophone, bongos and egg shakers to scaffold the intention of one boy who is trying to conduct his classmates to play together. My guitar strums synchronise the musicking and a regular chord progression (in C to match the xylophone) creates some musical structure. What had been quite a chaotic sound becomes musical, and the boys seem surprised and delighted. Carina brings her glock closer and looks at me. I nod and smile at her and the boy on the bongos widens the circle to give her space. She joins in the improvisation.

When the musicking comes to a natural pause, one of the boys suggests some rock music, and plays a faster, more accented beat on the bongos. Another child points to the noise meter and says it will be too loud for him. Carina suggests a lullaby and I begin finger picking and singing 'Twinkle Twinkle'. All four children follow, playing more softly and slowly. We repeat the song a few times and as I slow at the end, one of the boys makes eye contact, raising his beaters as he anticipates the next few notes. This results in a playful interaction between the group as we finish the song. At the end, the teacher comes over and remarks on how beautiful the music sounded.

At the start of this session, I thought that Carina was asking permission for a turn on the glock, but she indicated that she wasn't sure how to ask her peers. The strategy I used was to provide her with some vocabulary. This was successful in that the boys gave her beaters, and resulted in solitary play as she explored the glock.

The three boys on xylophone, bongos and egg shakers provide a really good example of intentional cooperative play. Their musicking needed some scaffolding, and I used rhythm and chord sequences to achieve synchronisation, but the boys interactions were already indicating that cooperative play was taking place. Carina looked to me for permission to join in the musicking, but one of the boys also moved to include her. This enabled Carina to play within the zone of proximal development of three peers with strong social skills, and I took on a supportive, co-playing role. When we paused for them to negotiate the next section of musicking, she offered a verbal suggestion which was readily accepted and enjoyed by her peers and resulted in music of a strong enough quality that her teacher commented on it. This would have further validated her input and self-confidence.

Week 9: Trying out a leadership role

Carina approaches me and asks for a turn on a xylophone. There are three in the room, and I ask whether she has already asked the children that are currently playing them. Her approach to one pair is unsuccessful initially as the boys are reluctant to give up their beaters. Carina looks back to me. I approach and talk about sharing a limited number of instruments fairly. They agree to let Carina have a turn once they have had a little longer. I watch to make sure this happens, and again Carina is offered both beaters, resulting in parallel play, as the other children around her do their own thing too.

A little later, I am playing an improvised guitar accompaniment based in C major (chords I, VI, IV and V) for a child on the xylophone who has asked me to play with him. We synchronise well, and our playing catches the attention of a number of children, including Carina. Children who are further away move closer to join in our musicking. There is a large group of instruments, with three xylophones, two glocks, bongos, hand drums and egg shakers. I increase my volume to contain the music and maintain a synchronised beat. When we pause, Carina asks whether the children could swap instruments. I ask; 'like a turn-taking game?' She nods enthusiastically, and I verbally invite the other children to play. Most of the group agree. I sing; 'Time to swap! Time to swap!' There is a flurry of movement, I give a V7 strum, a nod and we begin playing again.

A four bar sequence in common time develops, followed by unaccompanied sung instructions 'time to swap', repeated as necessary, with a pause on V7 before the next sequence. I encourage Carina to sing the instruction herself. At first, her voice is soft and hesitant, so I add my voice, which boosts her confidence and volume, as well as increasing the overall volume. I also wonder whether some of the children are reluctant to swap, and as a co-playing adult, my voice adds weight to the instruction. A few of the children choose to stay on the same instrument and one or two sit back and let peers have a turn on 'their' instrument, waiting until the next round when it is available again. We repeat the sequence several times, with Carina singing the first 'time to swap' and me supporting her as necessary.

At the start of this session, Carina needed verbal encouragement to retry her previous strategy, but did not need me to supply the vocabulary. When this didn't work immediately, she looked to me for support and this gave me the opportunity to model negotiation for her and to reach an equitable agreement that all three children were happy with. However, this still left Carina playing the xylophone on her own.

When the musical quality of my improvisation with another child drew Carina and other classmates into the musicking, I followed her lead in suggesting that the children took turns, but being mindful that this might be reflecting a request for social interaction rather than just trying out other instruments, I asked whether she meant a turn-taking game. I modelled verbal negotiation with her peers, and introduced sung instructions to create the game. A clear musical sequence with cues created a framework for me to then offer her the opportunity to lead the game. I sang with her when necessary to build her confidence and support her leadership. It felt like I took on the role of play leader in this scenario. The play was child initiated, and I made sure to encourage voluntary peer participation, but I offered some strong scaffolding to build Carina's confidence and develop her leadership skills.

After this session, I wondered whether Carina's requests to 'have a turn' with the musical instruments actually reflected her desire to 'join in'; to make connections and build friendships with her peers, especially as she had chosen to approach a pair on the xylophone when other children in the class were playing individually. I had a conversation with her teacher, who said she was working in class to build Carina's social confidence and encourage friendships. In term 3, I had four more sessions in Carina's classroom and worked to encourage her interactions with others. She developed a close friendship with one of the boys

she approached on the xylophone in week 9 and her confidence in group musicking increased considerably.

My intention in sharing this vignette was to illustrate how I applied multiple strategies in supporting Carina to develop social confidence, from verbal encouragement to facilitate her involvement in musical play, to multiple actions which encouraged her participation, stepping back to allow social skills development within a strong zone of proximal development and the dance of scaffolded support to enable her to explore leading musical play. I think Carina was at a stage where she wanted to be involved in cooperative musical play, but she wasn't quite sure how to go about it. In essence, my strategies were intended to help her learn how to advocate for her own inclusion, and to encourage Carina to develop pro-inclusive social skills.

Discussion

To explore the strategies that I used to promote child-led cooperative play during the musical play project, I defined a strategy as an action to achieve a goal. I used this distinction to explore themes of 'actions' and 'goals' by using thematic analysis to analyse data collected in the natural course of running the musical play project, namely session notes, written feedback to staff and my reflexive diary.

I identified five overarching themes that categorised the strategies I used; meeting individual needs, facilitating involvement, encouraging participation, encouraging interactions, and supporting play stage development. In this discussion, I will explore how my five themes relate to social play theory and the significance of co-playing for promoting child-led cooperative play.

Musical play and social play theory

Awareness of inclusion issues coloured all of my work on placement, but the significance of social play theory in facilitating inclusive peer interactions only became apparent to me when I started using the team's 'anecdotal note form' (see appendix 2) to report to staff in week 7. For children who are developmentally ready and show an interest in participating in pro-social play, cooperative play is an incredibly powerful tool for shaping children's perceptions of their peers, as well as providing them with opportunities to practice positive social interactions in a range of social contexts (Best Start Resource Centre, 2015). Despite evidence that in a pre-school setting, friendship ties were a significant factor in the formation of play groups for girls (Mawson, 2010), in the play-based learning context at my placement, staff observed that during play, children often chose play by activity rather than friendship group, widening the circle of potential interactions the children experienced.

According to social play theory, children's play can be grouped into the following stages; onlooker, solitary, parallel, associative and cooperative (White, 2012). During the musical play project, I observed children playing at all of these stages. Whilst it has been acknowledged that progression through the play stages is more fluid than Parten's original hierarchical sequence suggests (Parten, 1932, 1933b; Pellegrini, 1984; Xu, 2010), there is still evidence that children's play generally becomes more social as they mature (White, 2012). In the context of the play-based learning environment in which the musical play project took place, staff awareness reflected this more fluid understanding of social play theory. All play

stages were therefore viewed as being valuable, individual movement through the play stages was self-directed and participation in all types of play was voluntary.

The relationship between my five themes and social play theory

Although not intentional, the ordering of my themes to reflect progression through levels of participation is likely to have been influenced by my awareness of social play theory. This progression begins with *meeting individual needs* to ensure that musical play is accessible to all, moves to *facilitating involvement* to begin musicking, then *encouraging participation* at an individual level whilst *encouraging interactions* reflects group participation. My final theme is *supporting play stage development* and this reflects my conscious awareness of social play stages during the musical play project.

Meeting individual needs asks the question; could everyone who wanted to participate join in? I restricted categories in this theme to needs that were unrelated to social development; 'reducing stimulation' to accommodate children with hearing or sensory processing difficulties and those who just found high noise levels too much; 'supporting impulse control' to help children to steady their internal beat to play with others; and 'preventing negative interactions' to ensure that children remained safe within the play-based learning environment.

This last category originated from an incident with a boy who was unwilling to share the instruments or the musical space. When his behaviour became aggressive and other strategies were unsuccessful, I prevented him from hitting another child with a beater by giving very clear indications on physical boundaries; I instructed him to use only his own instrument. In doing so, I was meeting the needs of the other child to feel safe during musical play. The child who was not sharing responded to my directions and remained in the musical play for a short while without incident before moving on to another activity.

The next theme, *facilitating involvement* asks the question; how did I help children to start musicking? Categories in this theme ranged from initiating musical play by 'offering a Provocation', 'creating connections' with individual children and offering an 'invitation to join play', to 'reengaging' children who were beginning to lose interest and using the quality of musicking to 'encourage wider engagement'. Also included in this theme were categories describing unsuccessful strategies resulting in 'disengagement' or 'barriers' to participation. In the context of play-based learning, 'offering a Provocation' aligned closely with team approaches to scaffold play, and beyond offering specific invitations to play that picked up on aspect(s) of musical play from previous sessions, the specialist supporting the programme

identified that my presence and the accessibility of the instruments provided Provocations in themselves.

As can be seen in appendix 3, I spent some time during my thematic analysis wrestling with the nature of participation in the data. The result was a separation of categories into two themes; *encouraging participation* and *encouraging interactions*. This separation reflects the social play theory lens that I used to explore the musical play project. *Encouraging participation* asks; what strategies did I use to encourage and maintain individual participation in musicking? This frequently, but not exclusively, involved children engaged in solitary, parallel or associative play. *Encouraging interactions* asks; what strategies did I use to encourage interactions? These strategies either invited or maintained cooperative play.

Categories in my *encouraging participation* theme included 'granting permission' and 'building confidence' for individuals who needed this kind of support to participate in musical play and 'supporting lyric reading', 'supporting existing play' and 'extending participation' to maintain the active participation of children already involved in musicking. 'Encouraging exploration' is a strategy that utilised children's natural sense of curiosity to increase their active engagement in exploratory musical play. 'Valuing and expanding contributions' is a category reflecting extension or validation strategies to support individual participation following involvement in musical play.

The categories grouped under the theme *encouraging interactions* are of particular significance in exploring the strategies I used to promote child-led cooperative play, and I will return to discuss these in greater depth shortly. Categories included 'gaining attention', 'synchronising' and 'allowing collaboration' to provide space for peer and teacher interactions, and 'encouraging interactions' which was prompted by an example of playful co-playing using changes in musical parameters. 'Promoting sharing' and 'facilitating turn-taking' described strategies to develop quite specific social skills, whilst 'allowing verbal social skills development' reflected provision of space for children to practice their negotiation skills during musical play. 'Supporting child leadership' described strategies to facilitate leadership roles for children during cooperative play.

My final theme, *supporting play stage development*, reflected my growing interest in social play theory towards the end of term 2. All of the data, except for one example of creating a child-led musical product in week 5, comes from notes written after my adoption of the team's 'anecdotal note form' in week 7. These categories reflect my increasing

awareness of social play stages. *Supporting play stage development* therefore asks the question; what stage of social play was taking place, and, if appropriate, how did I support movement to the next stage? Categories identified begin with 'allowing parallel child-led play', progress to 'encouraging associative play' and 'encouraging child-led co-playing', and culminate with 'allowing cooperative child-led play'.

Interestingly, one of the main actions I used in supporting play stage development was stepping back to either allow a play stage to continue, or to give children space to move themselves to the next stage. Other than stepping back, verbal redirection was used for 'encouraging participation in associative play', and I followed children's leads for 'encouraging child-led co-playing'. I suspect, then, that the theme of *supporting play stage development* primarily reflects points in the data where I have identified a play stage in my notes. The strategies I used to encourage progression through the play stages are therefore related to levels of participation and *encouraging interactions* is the theme that is of most relevance in facilitating cooperative play.

Encouraging Interactions: **Strategies to promote cooperative play**

All of my strategies during musical play had a role in facilitating children's participation in different play stages, but the theme *encouraging interactions* is most relevant in exploring the strategies intended to facilitate cooperative play. Throughout the musical play project, participation was voluntary, including participation in pro-social play. These strategies should be seen as invitations which children could choose to accept or decline depending on their developmental stage and their inclination on the day.

To explore my strategies in greater depth, I will include details of my actions. For clarity *actions* that were coded during my thematic analysis will be italicised and my 'goals' will be placed in inverted commas wherever possible. An overview of the actions identified during thematic analysis is included in appendix 6.

Gaining the 'attention' of peers on behalf of children interested in initiating group games was an important strategy for facilitating cooperative play. I used *chords* and/ or *gestural cueing* to do this. For interested peers, this provided an opportunity for cooperative play to develop and for the initiating child to practise his/ her leadership skills as I stepped back into a co-playing role.

Playing rhythmic chords to steady the beat of a child with apparent 'impulse control' challenges also gained the attention of peers, and the *rhythm* encouraged them to 'synchronise'. The steadier beat and my diminuendo enabled the child to regulate his speed

and *volume* and match his playing with his two peers. Cooperative play followed as the children improvised a story with musical sound effects in time to my rhythm.

The use of *rhythm* to 'synchronise' children during musical play was a powerful tool for bringing them together and encouraging interactions. In the vast majority of cases, playing a steady *rhythm* on guitar, keyboard or drum, 'synchronised' children's playing, even when this did not seem to be their intention. I suspect that this automatic response taps into an innate sense of pulse that is evidenced in the literature by the movement of children in time to music (Marsh & Young, 2015).

The impact of such 'synchronisation' on play stages was significant. Firstly, I found that noise levels reduced, allowing the children to hear themselves and others. This not only created a sense of playing together, but also allowed more opportunities for children to interact with one another. Synchronised playing often coincided with increased eye contact. This marked the potential for movement from parallel play or associative play to cooperative play. Not all children chose to participate in cooperative play once synchronised, but 'synchronising' a disparate group seemed to be a strong motivator for encouraging cooperative play. There were also times when a confident child with a particularly strong sense of pulse synchronised his/her peers, often resulting in the formation of a band or a perception that the group were jamming.

Stepping back signalled a change in my role from co-player to onlooker. This allowed me to monitor interactions and encouraged the children to 'collaborate' with their peers, and to practice and develop their 'verbal social skills'. Limiting the number of instruments available was sometimes necessary due to noise level considerations or because other classes were using them. However, this had a positive impact on peer collaboration as the children worked out how to share limited resources. Where necessary, I offered *verbal mediation* to encourage equitable 'sharing', but often the need to share instruments resulted in more pro-social play.

'Turn-taking' games were popular across all classes. These were always child-initiated and provide an excellent example of cooperative musical play. The amount of support I offered during 'turn-taking' games varied depending on the context. Where a turn-taking game was successfully negotiated and the children were interacting positively, very little scaffolding was necessary and I either took on the role of onlooker, observing the game, or I offered minimal musical support, playing *chords* to keep the beat 'synchronised'. Where

more scaffolding was required, I used the quality of a V7 *chord* to encourage children to swap, and where further support was needed, I used *sung instructions*.

Vignette 2 includes an example of a 'turn-taking' game in one of the youngest classes in the syndicate. This game was highly scaffolded and my role went beyond co-player to play leader as I modelled 'leadership' skills for Carina using *sung instructions*, and then I moved between play leader and co-player, using *chords* and *volume* as I supported Carina to try out a 'leadership' role. I suspected that Carina was showing an interest in participating in cooperative play and that she was actively seeking interactions with her peers during musical play to foster friendships. Her teacher confirmed this, and I was able to work with her in musical play to support these needs in term 3.

Carina's turn-taking game also highlighted the significance of 'child leadership' during cooperative play. My ultimate goal during musical play was for children to be able to participate in inclusive, equitable and child-led cooperative play, without any direct or indirect interventions from me. This meant *following children's leads*, suggesting game rules be *simplified* to help peers understand them, and *stepping back* to allow positive interactions and child-led cooperative play to develop. There were a number of examples during musical play where children moved into child-led cooperative play and I was able to assume the role of onlooker, particularly in the year 2 classrooms.

Where children had difficulties negotiating, cooperative play typically broke down. This was the case in vignette 1 when negotiations to include May were unsuccessful. As my skills in facilitating musical play developed, I used a variety of strategies, including *verbal redirection* and *verbal encouragement*, guiding the children to find their own solutions without appearing to take sides. I also found that providing a musical example of a child's verbal suggestion, or moving into musicking following one child's lead resolved potential disputes over musicking choices. Peers often joined in and had the opportunity to try their idea afterwards.

Parten explored the role of leadership among pre-school children as part of her social participation and play study and identified two types of leaders; the 'diplomat', a girl with strong language and negotiation skills, and the 'bully', a boy who used his physical size and strength to keep his 'gang' in line (Parten, 1933a). Subsequent research is surprisingly scarce, especially in a free play context, but a recent study classifies these distinct leadership styles as a predominantly female 'director' and a consistently male 'dictator' (Mawson, 2010). Furthermore, the 'dictator' leadership style is characterised by controlling membership of the

group, and these distinctions have some significant implications for inclusion within child-led cooperative play, and for my facilitation of positive child leadership during musical play.

The children studied in these papers were pre-schoolers, and I wondered whether the strong gender differentiation that was identified reflected a developmental difference, with girls typically acquiring the language skills and social awareness necessary for a 'director' leadership style earlier than their male counterparts. Mawson also found that during mixed gender play, boys were given the opportunity of exploring diplomatic skills more in line with a 'director' leadership style (Mawson, 2010). I wondered whether this reflects the use of Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' as less socially mature boys learn pro-social skills from their more capable female peers. This would provide a strong argument for encouraging mixed gender and ability groups during musical play.

From an inclusion perspective, the use or threat of physical force to control other children is not acceptable. With the possible exception of one boy who displayed aggressive behaviour towards his peer (although this seemed unrelated to social control), I did not witness the use or threat of physical force during the musical play project. Similarly, excluding children to assert dominance over a group would not have been tolerated. Personally, I do not view either of these traits as leadership qualities, but rather as evidence that a child requires assistance in developing empathy and social skills. Identifying positive ways of supporting potential 'dictators' and helping them to develop the skills necessary to explore more diplomatic ways of leading therefore seems essential (Fox, Flynn, & Austin, 2015).

The significance of co-playing

The communicative nature of music allowed me to enter the play environment in a unique way. Whilst I used some of the non-musical actions that the rest of the team might have used, such as Provocation, and scaffolding play by modelling or using verbal enrichment, musical co-playing enabled me to use a range of musical actions to facilitate play in a non-directive way. The musical actions I used during musical play are detailed in appendix 6. These included the use of rhythm, chords, volume, tempo, harmony, sung instructions and call and response.

I tried to maintain a child-led approach because evidence in the literature indicated that overly directive adult interactions could have a negative impact on play (Breathnach et al., 2017; White, 2012; Young, 2003), and that adult presence within the play environment could lead to children using less mature forms of play (Pellegrini, 1984). Sensitive and

responsive adult interactions, on the other hand, were reported to have a positive effect, providing a 'zone of proximal development', enriching play and extending the length of engagement (Aiono, 2017; Gray, 2013; White, 2012; Young, 2003). Musical interactions allowed me to shift my involvement during play in subtle ways and to use music therapy interventions which would seem less directive.

The children introduced a wide range of musical activities into their play. These are represented in appendix 7. With sensitive and responsive co-playing, I was able to enter many different types of child-led musicking, and my position within the musical play became a tool to support and guide children on their developmental journey. My original intention had been to focus on child interactions, but by co-playing I was often the pivot around which the music and the interactions moved. At times I moved to the edges of the play, or stepped forward to scaffold further, but musical co-playing allowed me to do this in a flexible and subtle way. The central role of co-playing during musical play therefore meant that my actions and musicking played a significant role in facilitating cooperative play, and this is reflected in the inclusion of co-playing in my data, and the research focus on my strategies.

From an inclusion perspective, my close proximity whilst co-playing usually allowed me to monitor interactions and to redirect or intervene if necessary. Co-playing allowed me to model and scaffold the diplomatic 'director' style of leadership, and to support pro-inclusive social skills development. Observation of individual behaviours and interactions also allowed me to monitor children who might be potentially vulnerable to exclusion, and, if necessary, to offer support in subtle ways. In this inclusive setting, the support of children with learning support needs sits within a broader framework as all the children work their way through a developmental journey.

Limitations

This study was approached from a constructivist ontology. It is based on my perceptions of my notes and the musical play itself. This makes my findings highly subjective. Additional limitations include my stage of development as a music therapy student. My facilitation skills improved rapidly during the musical play project, as illustrated in vignette 1, but with more experience and time, my facilitation would probably have developed further. My confidence in the role of music in facilitating pro-inclusive play also grew throughout the musical play project, and was affirmed by the research and writing process itself. In particular, my increasing appreciation of the value of co-playing is likely to have changed the quality of my interactions with children during play as the project

progressed. In addition, the research was based in a decile 10 school, with a higher proportion of families identifying as European/ NZ European/ Pākehā than the national average; 86%, compared with 74% recorded in the 2013 NZ Census (StatsNZ, 2015).

Conclusion

So, in conclusion, what strategies did I use to promote child-led cooperative play during the musical play project? I identified five themes reflecting levels of social participation in musical play; meeting individual needs, facilitating involvement, encouraging participation, encouraging interactions and supporting play stage development. Within these themes, I identified 'encouraging interactions' as the key theme relating to cooperative play and the most significant in fostering pro-inclusive social skills. Core musical actions identified within this theme were chords, rhythm, sung instructions, and musical parameters to gain children's attention, synchronise their playing, encourage peer interactions and facilitate turn-taking. Non-musical actions included stepping back, verbal mediation and following children's leads to encourage collaboration, support child leadership and allow space for children to develop their verbal social skills.

Musical co-playing was identified as a significant facilitation method, allowing non-directive facilitation of play and flexible movement between roles. It also enabled modelling and scaffolding of pro-inclusive social skills and leadership styles, and allowed monitoring of children's interactions and subtle support for potentially vulnerable children within the broader context of child development across the whole syndicate.

I understood the musical play project to sit within a Community Music Therapy framework, identifying the project as participatory, resource-oriented, ecological, performative, activist, reflective and ethics-driven (Stige & Aarø, 2012). Although the time and format restrictions of my degree did not allow me to use the model outlined in *Creating Music Cultures in the Schools* (Rickson & McFerran, 2014), my collaborative working within the junior syndicate aligns with the idea of fostering a music culture based on the existing system at my placement.

By using social play as a means to improve inclusion, emphasis was placed strongly on inclusion as a social issue to be addressed systemically. Underpinning this was the belief, supported by inclusion theories in the literature, that positive social interactions would help to build positive relationships, encourage collaboration and help children to value the diverse identities of their peers (Eilat & Raichel, 2016; Elefant, 2010; Jellison et al., 2017; Jellison et al., 2015; Kern, 2004, 2015; McFerran & Teggelove, 2011; Twyford, 2012). Whilst it was beyond the scope of the current study to assess the success of my strategies in promoting

inclusion, over the two terms, I noticed progress in the social skills development of a number of children, and this was corroborated by anecdotal comments made by staff.

I defined inclusive education as a process to increase acceptance and valuing of diversity by all members of the school community; students, parents and whānau, educators, school leaders and Boards of Trustees. The ecological nature of Community Music Therapy has the potential to effect this kind of change (Stige & Aarø, 2012), and there is evidence in the literature that increased intergroup contact has positively impacted inclusion within wider communities (Eilat & Raichel, 2016; Elefant, 2010; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Even in contexts where vulnerable children are not segregated, encouraging peer interactions and staff interactions has been shown to positively impact inclusion outcomes (Jellison et al., 2017; Jellison et al., 2015; Twyford, 2012).

There is certainly scope for further research to evaluate the impact of play-based learning, and particularly the support of pro-inclusive social skills, on in-group/ out-group trends in later school years. Other future research avenues include exploring the position of child leadership within pro-inclusive play, and where a music specialist is not available on site, how staff might be resourced to use music in an inclusive way. In addition, I would be interested in exploring the effectiveness of strategies used to promote child-led cooperative play on inclusion, and whether pro-inclusive social skills development generalises to wider school and community contexts.

This study provides an example of how inclusive music cultures could be fostered within primary schools (Rickson & McFerran, 2014). The strategies identified could be used to introduce musical play within play-based learning programmes in primary schools, and are also relevant within pre-school free play environments. It also highlights the necessity for facilitators of play-based learning to be aware of inclusion issues, to examine their own personal biases, and to directly support potentially vulnerable children and their peers by promoting pro-inclusive social play.

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Appendix 1: Session Notes Template

<u>Musical Play</u>

Term 2: Week   :   Date:

Participants:	
Play-based learning objectives:	Inclusion objectives:
Further Play-based learning observations:	Further inclusion observations:
Reflections:	Reflections:

Appendix 2: Anecdotal Note Form

ANECDOTAL NOTES: LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

NAME: **Date:**   **Photo: Yes / No**

URGES							
Gathering	Transporting	Deconstruction	Construction	Enclosure	Enveloping	Connection	Posting
Patterning and Order	Families	Rotation	Orientation	Transformation	Climbing	Jumping	Digging and Burying
Tug of War	Tumbling and Wrestling	Running and Chasing	Playing with Water	Playing with Fire	Trajectory		

STAGES OF PLAY				
Onlooker	Solitary	Parallel	Associative	Co-operative

FUNCTIONS OF PLAY				
Motor / Physical play	Socio-dramatic Play	Constructive	Fantasy	Games with Rules

KEY COMPETENCIES				
Thinking	Relating to Others	Using language, symbols and texts	Managing Self	Participating and Contributing

OBSERVATIONS			
CURRICULUM AREAS	WAYS I COULD SUPPORT / ENRICH THE PLAY	RESOURCES	RESPONSE TO TEACHER INPUT

Appendix 3: Detailed explanation of data analysis

Phase 1: Familiarisation with data. I began by going through the data, giving each document a location code by type of document, week number and document number (e.g. ANF7.2 referred to anecdotal note form; week 7; 2nd form). I then numbered each line in each document and as I copied text from the data into a spreadsheet with a row for each chunk of text, I included a column to identify its location in the raw data. Where a section of text seemed to contain several self-contained ideas, I split the text into smaller chunks, and where a section of text contained multiple ideas intertwined, I copied the text and created further rows as necessary. I used a third column titled 'interpretation' to draw out the key ideas from each chunk of text and used different font colours to highlight key words and phrases in both the text and the interpretation. Initially, I used purple for musical strategies, yellow for practical strategies, green for unsuccessful strategies and red for strategies I wasn't sure about.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes. To explore my strategies in promoting inclusion, I defined a strategy as an action to achieve a goal and created two further columns in the spreadsheet; 'action' and 'goal'. At the suggestion of my supervisor, the keyword was placed first, followed by any qualifying words in brackets. This was completed for both actions and goals. I also reviewed the interpretation of each data chunk at this stage to ensure that I was capturing the key concept in each code.

Phase 3: Searching for themes. Using the sort function on the spreadsheet, I sorted the data alphabetically by action and then by goal. I went through the data, grouping action codes together and using a further column to describe the actions I had used and the goals they were supporting. For example:

Gestural cueing	Participation (encouraging)	I used gestural cueing to support learners to participate with their peers, for example by supporting them to read lyrics during group singing, to help them synchronise their movements during instrumental activities and help them reduce noise levels to allow group interactions.
Gestural cueing	Participation (encouraging)	
Gestural cueing	Participation (supporting lyric reading)	
Gestural cueing (for silence)	Attention (facilitating group interaction)	

Phase 4: Reviewing themes. I created a thematic map to review the themes and group them by action type. This gave me four overarching themes; musical actions, non-musical actions, responding to child's lead and wider actions (see appendix 6). Whilst this was interesting, I didn't feel it gave a complete picture, and I wondered what my themes would look like if I swapped the order in which I sorted my action and goal codes. I therefore repeated the phase 3 process, sorting the spreadsheet by goal and then action, and describing the actions I had used to work towards each goal.

This gave me a much richer description of the strategies I had used in musical play, and helped me to clarify my goal codes to ensure that they were as clear and accurate as possible. Some required refining, with minor changes to maintain consistency, for example 'Collaboration (allowing peer)' and 'Collaborative process (teacher)' became 'Collaboration (peer)' and 'Collaboration (teacher)'. Some goal codes were changed completely to describe the goal in different ways. By considering the intention behind my actions more closely, I changed the goal describing 'Tempo' from 'Participation (encouraging)' to 'Interaction (encouraging)' and my action 'Invitation to play' from 'Participation (inviting)' to 'Provocation', a key strategy in the play-based learning environment.

However, 'Participation' remained a very large and vague category and I became increasingly interested in how the different stages of play were implicated in my goals around participation. Some of these 'Participation' goals were changed to reflect the movement of

children to specific play stages when this was had been my primary intention, but it was too complex to view participation solely through stages of play. So the 'Participation' code was split into specific types of participation like 'Participation (extending)' and 'Participation (confidence building)', codes which were much clearer than 'Participation (encouraging)' or Participation (enabling)'. This also allowed me to report more clearly on strategies I considered unsuccessful under a goal code 'Participation (barrier)'.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes. I created another thematic map to review my new themes and group them by goal type. My new thematic map felt like a better fit to describe my strategies, and also reflected a progression in goal orientation from meeting individual needs to allow voluntary participation in musical play, to encouraging learner involvement, facilitating direct interactions through the musical play and then a number of actions that were undertaken with the specific intention of moving children to a different play stage. My overarching themes became:

1. Meeting individual needs

2. Involvement

3. Interactions

4. Play stages

The order of goal codes within these themes were also changed to reflect this progression. I took a two week break from the data and asked my supervisor and a peer to review my analysis.

Phase 6: Producing the report. During my analysis, I had produced a brief description of the actions I had used to support each goal and I used this as the basis to write my findings. Where more detail was needed, I went back to the original data for more context and I tried to include more details about the musicking itself. Once a first draft of my findings was complete, I felt the sections within my 'involvement' theme, and particularly 'participation',

were still not clear, so I defined more clearly what I meant by 'involvement', 'participation' and 'interaction' and realised that 'participation' was a distinct category in itself and that my strategies needed to be resorted under these three themes. Defining these themes also highlighted that I was perceiving a progression in musical play, from initiating involvement in music making, to encouraging active participation and then more direct interactions.

Appendix 4: Example analysis

Location	Raw data	Interpretation	Action	Goal	Theme
R2:64-68	I noticed a boy standing at the sofa, with his back to the other musicians. He was playing the bongo drums quite softly. I approached, and he told me he used to play drums 'in another country'. I asked which country, and he said he had come from the UK, but before that he had lived in Iran. I started singing Nami Nami along to his drumming. When I finished, I explained this was a lullaby in Arabic that I heard an Iranian lady sing. He moved away, and I thought my aim had gone wide.	Solitary play. I attempted to connect with him by singing Nami Nami.	Familiar music	Connection (making)	I identified or attempted to identify familiar music to make connections with learners and facilitate co-playing. For example, a conversation about cultural background prompted me to sing an Arabic lullaby in time to a learner's drumming, moving from solitary play to co-playing. The learner returned later to play another lullaby next to me (parallel play), which then developed into co-playing as I responded and cooperative play as nearby peers joined in as well.
AN5:1:6-8	I asked; 'what do you want to do?' Jennifer; 'rock you'. Identified as Queen song We Will Rock You. Charlotte enthusiastic too. Began by playing the chords, intro, chorus which brought the children together. Charlotte suggested initial lyrics;	Identified Jennifer's choice of song.	Familiar music	Connection (making)	
AN7:2:9-11	This continued for a few minutes, and then Henry suggested some rock music, playing a faster, more accented beat on the bongos. Ethan pointed to the noise meter & Carina suggested a lullaby. I began finger picking and singing Twinkle Twinkle. The children followed, playing more softly and slowly. I slowed at the end. Kaleb made eye contact, raising his beaters as he anticipated the last few notes.	I rit, Kaleb watches and we play together. I probably also use my head and body, but I wonder who leads? Am I following him, or is he following me?	Gestural cueing	Interaction (encouraging)	I used gestural cueing and changes in tempo to encourage learners' interactions with me during co-play.
AN7:2:9-11	This continued for a few minutes, and then Henry suggested some rock music, playing a faster, more accented beat on the bongos. Ethan pointed to the noise meter & Carina suggested a lullaby. I began finger picking and singing Twinkle Twinkle. The children followed, playing more softly and slowly. I slowed at the end. Kaleb made eye contact, raising his beaters as he anticipated the last few notes.	I rit, Kaleb watches and we play together. I probably also use my head and body, but I wonder who leads? Am I following him, or is he following me?	Tempo	Interaction (encouraging)	

Appendix 5: Example information sheets and consent forms

Example facility, caregiver and child information sheets and consent forms are presented below.

Facility Information Sheet

Proposed Research Title: Can I play too? Strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school.

Dear [name],

As you know, I am required to research about music therapy as part of my Master of Music Therapy training, and I am writing to you to ask permission to review the clinical notes and records I am keeping during my work on placement at [School] for my research.

For my research topic, I would like to explore the strategies developed to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into [junior syndicate's] play-based learning programme. As a result of this project, I hope to explore new perspectives on the use of music therapy techniques to facilitate inclusion within mainstream primary schools, and to provide insights into how the musical play programme was developed which might assist other music therapists, music educators and/or primary school teams to implement similar programmes in other schools in an inclusive way.

My research process will involve looking back at my session notes and journal reflections about implementing musical play within [junior syndicate's] play-based learning programme. I would like to use notes about work I may do with key staff members and notes about conversations relating to my topic, and if you agree to support my research topic, I would ask you to approach those teachers to request their informed consent to use such notes (sample information sheet attached).

If specific examples in my work with the children are pertinent to my research topic, I may also ask for your assistance in approaching children and their families for informed consent to use data from session notes in my research. This would involve taking parents and students through the information sheets (samples attached) and asking them to sign a consent form. If we record play sessions as part of the work, it may also be useful to use data transcribed from relevant video-taped sessions in my research, provided that informed consent is obtained from all participants. If I were to use examples of my work with children, they would be presented as case vignettes and pseudonyms would be used to protect students' identities.

To help preserve confidentiality, I will not use names or other information that can potentially identify the school, staff or students in any publication or presentation of this research. However, there is a possibility that the school may be recognised as there are few music therapists in schools in New Zealand and a limited number of schools currently embarking on a play-based learning initiative. Nevertheless, I will make every attempt to protect the privacy of the school and its community.

All written records and consent forms for this research will be stored in a locked cupboard at the New Zealand School of Music. Electronic information will be stored securely on a password protected computer. All records will be kept for 5 years and access will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors. After 5 years it will be destroyed.

You are under no obligation to agree to my research topic, and there are other areas of my work at [School] that could provide a suitable focus for my research. If you decide to give permission for me to use my clinical notes and

records to explore this topic, you have the right to withdraw information from the research up until the end of the data analysis period (proposed date: 30/9/18). You will also be provided with a summary of the results of this study once it is ready for publication in early 2019.

My research will be presented to my examiners at the end of my Masters. Victoria University library will hold copies of the thesis and it will also be available in an electronic repository. I may also present the findings at conferences, if appropriate, or offer them for publication in music therapy or other relevant journals.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the New Zealand School of Music Postgraduate Committee. The Victoria University Wellington Human Ethics Committee has given generic approval for music therapy students to conduct studies of this type (Ethics Approval: 22131). The music therapy projects have been judged to be low risk and, consequently, are not separately reviewed by any Human Ethics Committees. The supervisors named below are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns please contact them, or if you wish to raise an issue with someone other than the student or the supervisor, please contact the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Convenor Susan Corbett; [number] [email].

If you have any questions about my research, or about giving permission for me to use my clinical notes and records to explore this research topic, please feel free to discuss them with me. You can also contact my research supervisors Carolyn Ayson and Daphne Rickson if you have any further concerns or questions: Carolyn Ayson; [number] or [email]: Daphne Rickson; [number] or [email].

If you feel you have obtained sufficient information about this research and are happy to give permission for me to review records generated during my placement at [School] to explore this research topic, please sign both copies of the enclosed consent form and return one to me.

Yours sincerely,
Emily Hunt

Master of Music Therapy Student Victoria University
Tel: [number]; email: [email].

Facility Consent Form

Proposed Research Title: Can I play too? Strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school.

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 at any time.

I agree/ do not agree * for the student to use clinical notes and records collected during her placement at [School] to explore the above research topic.

I agree/ do not agree * to assist the student to obtain informed consent from relevant members of staff to use notes relating to collaborative work on the musical play-based learning project, or data transcribed from video-taped play sessions they may take part in for reflection and analysis for research purposes.

I agree/ do not agree * to audio or video recordings of play sessions being used for reflection and analysis for research purposes, provided that informed consent has been obtained from all participants, including caregivers and child(ren) where students are involved.

I agree/ do not agree * to assist the student to obtain informed consent from children and their families to use audio or video recordings and/ or clinical notes if examples of work are identified that are pertinent to the research topic.

I understand that I can withdraw information from the research up until the end of the data analysis period (30/9/18).

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name (printed):

Caregiver Information Sheet

Research Working Title: Can I play too? Exploring strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school.

Dear [name],

My name is Emily Hunt, and I am currently on placement at [School] as a music therapy student. This is my final year as part of a Master of Music Therapy degree at the New Zealand School of Music, Victoria Wellington.

As part of my placement work at [School], I have been involved in an initiative to introduce musical play into [junior syndicate's] play-based learning programme. This has involved working alongside the [junior syndicate] team during play-based learning sessions to facilitate child-led music-making, fostering musical creativity in play and offering suggestions and opportunities to enrich children's play. Participation has been voluntary and available to all the children in [junior syndicate]. [Junior syndicate] educational goals to develop self-efficacy, creative thinking, emotional regulation, problem solving skills and social skills align with music therapy goals in this community setting, and I have been particularly focussed on ensuring that musical play is an inclusive experience for the children who choose to be involved.

I am required to research about music therapy as part of my training. For my research topic I have chosen to explore the strategies developed to promote inclusion during musical play within the context of [junior syndicate's] play-based learning programme. As a result of this project, I hope to explore new perspectives on the use of music therapy techniques to facilitate inclusion within mainstream primary schools, and to provide insights into how the musical play programme was developed which might assist other music therapists, music educators and/or primary school teams to implement similar programmes in other schools in an inclusive way.

My research process will involve looking back at my session notes and journal reflections about implementing musical play within [junior syndicate's] play-based learning programme. I will be writing a document about my research and there will be a section called a case vignette which will describe a particular point in musical play sessions that illustrate musical experiences or meaningful interactions that are relevant to my research topic.

I would like to ask you to give written permission for some materials recorded in my notes and reflections, and/or audio recordings of session(s) to be included in this research. This information contains specific musical and personal experiences with [name] during musical play sessions. I will be looking at the notes and/or recordings to learn about my own approach rather than studying [name].

To help preserve confidentiality, I will not use names or other information that can potentially identify the school, staff or students in any publication or presentation of this research. However, there is a possibility that the school may be recognised as there are few music therapists in schools in New Zealand and a limited number of schools currently embarking on a play-based learning initiative. Nevertheless, I will make every attempt to protect the privacy of the school and its community.

If your child is still participating in musical play sessions with me, I would like to assure you that there will be no changes whether you give your consent or not. This research will be discussed with your child in a way they can

understand and I will not proceed without their agreement. You are under no obligation to agree for information about your child to be used in my research, and there will be other families that I can approach if you want to say no. If you decide to allow it to be used you can ask any questions about the study at any time until it is completed. If you change your mind about giving consent, you can do so up to the end of my data analysis period (30/9/18).

All written records and consent forms for this research will be stored in a locked cupboard at the New Zealand School of Music. Electronic information will be stored securely on a password protected computer. All records will be kept for 5 years and access will be restricted to the student and her supervisors. After 5 years it will be destroyed.

My research will be presented to my examiners at the end of my Masters in early 2019. Victoria University library will hold copies of the thesis and it will also be available in an electronic repository. I may also present the findings at conferences, if appropriate, or offer them for publication in music therapy or other relevant journals. You may request a summary of the findings and the section that applies to [name].

This project has been reviewed and approved by the New Zealand School of Music Postgraduate Committee. The Victoria University Wellington Human Ethics Committee has given generic approval for music therapy students to conduct studies of this type (Ethics Approval: # 22131). The music therapy projects have been judged to be low risk and, consequently, are not separately reviewed by any Human Ethics Committees. The supervisor named below is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns please contact her, or if you wish to raise an issue with someone other than the student or the supervisor, please contact the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Convenor Susan Corbett; [number] [email].

If you have any questions about my research or about giving permission to use notes and/or transcripts of video-taped sessions from my work with your child, please feel free to discuss them with me or with my clinical liaison at [School], [name]. You can also contact my research supervisor Daphne Rickson if you have any further concerns or questions: Daphne Rickson; [number] or [email].

If you feel you have obtained sufficient information about this research and you are happy to give permission, please sign the attached consent form and return it to me.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Hunt
Master of Music Therapy Student Victoria University
Tel: [number]   email: [email]

<u>Caregiver Consent Form</u>

Research Working Title: Can I play too? Exploring strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school

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 at any time.

I agree/ do not agree * to the student's notes about her work with my child being used for reflection and analysis for research purposes.

I agree/ do not agree * to the student's noes from meetings and/or discussions being used for reflection and analysis for research purposes.

I understand that I can withdraw my information from the research up until the end of the data analysis period (30/9/18).

I agree to my data being used in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name (printed):

Child Information Sheet

Research Working Title: Can I play too? Exploring strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school.

Dear [name],

As you probably know, my name is Emily Hunt and I am a music lady. I like to do all kinds of music with children at [School] to help them to do and learn things and I have been helping children to make music during learning through play time.

I am going to write a story about doing music with children. I am writing to ask if you would like to be a part of this story. I am asking you because we have played music together before, or still play music together now. I am writing this story to help me understand our time together. The story will talk about our instrument playing, singing, dancing, and the songs we made up together.

I will share this story with mums, dads, teachers and other people so that they can understand what we do together too. It will not have your real name in it. It is OK if you don't want to be in the story. There are other children I can ask. If you are unsure or don't understand, you can ask lots of questions about the story project before deciding.

If you do want to be in my story you need to say 'OK' to the teacher, and if you can, write your name on the paper behind this one. Someone will write your name if it is too hard.

If you say 'OK' I will be happy. If you don't say 'OK', I will still be happy. Thanks you for reading or listening to my letter.

Best wishes,
Emily Hunt
Music Lady.

<u>Child Consent Form</u>

Research Working Title: Can I play too? Exploring strategies to promote inclusion during the integration of musical play into a play-based learning environment in a mainstream primary school

This consent form will be held for a period of 5 years

Someone has read me the letter about Mrs Hunt's story and I understand what it is about. I have had time to think about whether I want to be in the story and I have asked all my questions.

It is OK for Mrs Hunt to write a story about the music we did together.

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name (printed):

Appendix 6: Action oriented thematic map

Action Type	Description	Fine Description	Goal
Musical Actions	Call and response		Extending participation
	Chords		Attention
			Extending participation
			Supporting existing play
			Turn taking
	Familiar Music		Connection
			Supporting existing play
	Harmony		Extending participation
	Musical Quality		Wider engagement
	Rhythm		Impulse control ((self)regulation)
			Invitation to join play
			Synchronisation
	Sung instructions		Turn taking
	Symbols into music		Contribution (valuing)
	Tempo		Interaction (encouraging)
	Volume		Impulse control (regulation)
			Supporting child leadership
			Synchronisation
Non-musical Actions	Gestural cueing		Attention
			Interaction (encouraging)
			Invitation to join play
			Supporting lyric reading
	Verbal	Cueing	Supporting lyric reading
		Encouragement	Confidence building
			Invitation to join play
			Permission
		Enrichment suggestion	Contribution (expanding)
		Intervention	Negative interaction (preventing)
		Mediation	Sharing
		Redirection	Associative play
	Visual cueing		Impulse control (self regulation)
			Stimulation (reduction)
Responding to child's lead	Following child's lead		Child-led co-playing
			Exploration
			Supporting child leadership
			Reengagement
	Interpreting behaviours positively		Success (promoting)
	Stepping back		Collaboration (peer)
			Collaboration (teacher)
			Cooperative child-led play
			Verbal social skills development
Wider Actions	Encouraging teacher participation		Collaboration (teacher)
	Environment (monitoring and accommodating)		Stimulation (reduction)
	Invitation to play		Provocation

Appendix 7: Types of musical play during the musical play project

Sound production	Exploring instruments; timbre and sound production; materials and construction
	Developing body percussion
	Using loose materials to create instruments
Instrument games	Call and copy games
	Start and stop games
	Conducting games
	Turn-taking games
	Parades
Group musicking	Improvising as a group - 'jamming'
	Recreating familiar songs - 'being a band'
	Rehearsing performances to share
	Forming orchestra 'sections'
Songs	Sing-a-longs of familiar songs
	Parodies of familiar songs
	Improvising new songs
	Writing song lyrics individually
	Group song writing by brain storming
Musical stories	Creating sound effects
	Improvised musical stories with a plot
	Incorporating music with drama and set design
Notation	Creating graphic scores to describe music
	Using letter names to play familiar music
	Experimenting with different ways of writing musical ideas