

## Performance and Performing!

The Performing strand of the Music curriculum emphasises the importance of active music making. At its core is the song singing aspect from which instrument playing and experiences in literacy grow.

The three strand units of the Performing strand are:

- Song singing
- Literacy
- Playing Instruments

The emphasis in the strand units is on 'performing' rather than 'performance', focusing on the process of actively engaging with the activities rather than viewing them in terms of an end product. The central approach in each of these strands is to encourage the child to be actively involved in experiencing and making music. Active music making involves the child in actively listening, attending and participating in making music, developing in his/her own musical understanding.

Song-singing is at the core of **active music making** in the Performing strand. Children are active as they recognise, imitate, echo and sing melodies. They are enabled to sing with the musical elements in mind, strengthening their understanding of these elements.

Activities in the song singing strand support the development of musical literacy. Children not only learn about song singing; they learn through song singing, that is, songs become the springboard for other activities in music, most notably musical literacy. 'The inclusion of musical literacy as an integral element of song-singing' is central to this Music curriculum' (Teacher Guidelines p8). Melodic intervals and rhythmic patterns inherent in songs provide a reference point for children as they engage with them in literacy activities.

Song singing also provides a means by which children can come to play instruments. Simple percussion instruments are used in the initial stages to support the beat and the rhythmic elements of songs. Children move on to more detailed accompaniments to songs and to performing tunes from memory and notation. Playing instruments and development in musical literacy may be linked on these occasions. As the Teacher Guidelines state (p104), 'Very significant dimensions are added to music learning through playing instruments as the child sees, hears and feels rhythm and pitch relationships'.