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**An Investigation of Parents' and Children's Perceptions of  
Applying "Orff-Schulwerk" Approaches to  
Children's Private Piano Lessons**

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

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by

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## **Abstract**

In recent years, Orff-Schulwerk has experienced rapid and widespread acclaim as a holistic and inclusive approach to music education. Yet, despite its success in classroom music education programmes, limited attention has been given to the potential of such approach to be applied to individual instrumental lessons. More importantly, little consideration has been given to children's and parents' perspectives of learning their instrument through an Orff Schulwerk approach. This research seeks to respond to these gaps by investigating children's and parents' perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk principles to individual piano instruction. An instrumental case study was used to examine the perceptions of seven children who were taught Orff-Schulwerk principles alongside their individual piano lessons over an eight week period. In addition, parents' perceptions were also examined. The findings revealed that both children and parents perceived the Orff-Schulwerk approach to enhance their creativity, musicianship and awareness of ensemble playing. However, it was also found that parents' preconceived beliefs and agendas for engaging their child in instrumental lessons were a barrier to accepting Orff-Schulwerk as a viable and powerful form of music education. This study demonstrates the potential of applying Orff-Schulwerk methodologies to individual instrumental instruction and also highlights the need for further research to consider the voices and perspectives of parents and children.

# **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my grandfathers:

**Oliver James Clibborn Ruff (Peter)**  
**(1907-1980)**

Extraordinary pianist whose repertoire of classical and modern piano placed him in demand for radio broadcasts, weddings, parties, and family gatherings

**David Winston Christie**  
**(1911-1986)**  
Pianist and music-master at Takapuna Grammar

Both modelled that music is best when used to convey love and unity.

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And lastly to the Lord our God for opening my eyes to see Your Truth. The more wonder we explore, the more wondrous it becomes. To You be the glory.

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# **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

## **1.1 Personal Narrative**

My first introduction to Orff-Schulwerk was during primary teacher training when Orff-Schulwerk was in the first stages of being introduced into New Zealand primary schools through the teacher educators such as Stuart Manins and Roger Buckton. I recall that first introduction had a narrow impact on me at the time. I failed to appreciate the artistry of the philosophy, and had a rather simplified interpretation of the music presented through the elemental instruments. Later, with the benefit of more experience as a teacher in music, I was able to draw a comparison with an Orff-Schulwerk workshop at Waikato University which had a significant and profound effect on me. The simplicity of the programme contrasted significantly with the more complex repertoire that I had developed as a pianist.

It was not until I began studying in 2014 at a master's level that I had the chance to explore and understand the philosophy more deeply. I had trained under a piano examiner from the Royal Schools of Music, London and had become conditioned by competitive standards of piano playing in concert hall environments. I became aware then, and moved, at the essence of the Orff message which seemed to harness the language of music in a way that I had not encountered before. I could see that the Orff approach was simplistic with its themes of elemental music, but it was not simple. It connected deeply with me that music, through the Orff process, could touch the human soul and bring about change in perceptions among participants leading to enhanced experience. I wanted to learn more about the effect of music education as a tool for wellbeing, not just as a way of making excellent musicians.

It also seemed that the power of music existed in the perceptions of the people involved in music with, or without, music training. I felt that the language of music could be communicated effectively away from the concert stage, and leave a powerful impact using the influence of the Orff approach. In a similar way, I felt that the Orff's elemental instruments, the importance placed on movement, and eloquent rhymes and canons, inspired students to make music of their own even in the event of their own lack of formal training, or perceived lack of musical ability. Students appeared to discover the impact that music has on their creative potential. Working with children as a piano teacher allowed me to connect with

parents and consider the impact that their perceptions had on children's progress.

It is for this reason that I aim to investigate the application of an Orff-Schulwerk programme to children's piano lessons. The following section provides a brief background to the Orff-Schulwerk approach before introducing the aims of this research and outlining the context that this research will take place.

## **1.2 Importance of the Study**

The piano tradition has been driven on practices kept alive during the past few centuries. With time, questions have arisen about this tradition and how it relates to present innovations in educational understanding.

Yong and Cheah (2011) responded to some of these concerns by writing a guidebook for new graduate piano teachers. This guidebook drew on research to obtain deeper insight into the piano teaching of experienced piano teachers. The findings from the research indicated there were areas of piano pedagogy that needed addressing, including the development of musicianship skills and the benefits of group learning. It suggests that there is need for a different approach to piano teaching, one that enhances students' musicianship. The Orff-Schulwerk is one approach that places musicianship at its core. The traditional paradigm in music education is one where newcomers into piano tuition are expected to study the music of Western Europe, and trained to imitate the performances of others as if this is the best or only approach. Authentic musicianship is not necessarily acquired along the journey (Andrews, 2011). The theories of Orff-Schulwerk are not simply "what works" methodology, but are a means of changing the world through improving the lives of those involved (Andrews, 2011, p. 306).

This study investigates the outcome of the application of Orff-Schulwerk approaches to individual piano instruction, as seen from the perceptions of parents and children. Until now, there have been only a few studies that have explored the application of Orff-Schulwerk techniques to piano lessons or to instrumental studies in general (Mainz & Nykrin, 2000, as cited in Gwakin, 2004), and no studies that have explored parents' and children's perceptions of this experience. There is a need to study parents' and children's perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk into piano lessons because any music education

approach applied into piano lessons is a benefit only as it is determined through the participants' perceptions.

Without the study, the possibilities for a piano teaching approach that has been dominated by the Western European musical tradition is in danger of being frozen in a perpetual present (Parakilas, 2002). Therefore, there is need for research to investigate children and parents perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk approaches to piano instruction. The following section provides a brief background to the Orff-Schulwerk approach before introducing the aims of this research and outlining the context that this research will take place.

### **1.3 Orff-Schulwerk**

The Orff-Schulwerk approach has had a significant and widespread influence on music education. Cunha and Carvalho (2011) claim that the approach is one of the most adopted and successful musical teaching and learning approaches in the world. Post-World War II, Carl Orff identified the need for an accessible music education system. Because of this, the Orff approach differs from traditional musical education approaches because students actively engage in discovering their own responses to rhythm, singing and overall musicianship (Frazee, 1987; Gray, 2002). Johnson (2017) recognises that the actual nature of the Schulwerk transcends the use of the “Orff instruments” that many see as descriptive of an authentic Orff classroom. The children feel rhythms in their bodies, experience their imaginations in a state of stimulation, and explore the sound of speech leading to melody. As chapter two explains, Orff-Schulwerk has achieved widespread acclaim as an approach to music education, yet its potential has seldom been considered in the context of individual instrumental instruction. I aim to address this gap by conducting a case study of children's and parents' perceptions of an Orff-Schulwerk approach to individual piano instruction at the Helena Rubinstein School of Music. In the context of this thesis, 'perception' is defined as what a participant believes to be true, and a successful musical approach is defined as a participant's perception of how good such approach is (“Perception,” 2015). The following section provides a brief introduction to the research context before introducing the research aims and questions.

## **1.4 Context**

As chapter three explains, this research employs an instrumental case-study design. The Helena Rubinstein School of Music is the case that will be used to examine the phenomenon of children and parents' perceptions of the application of Orff-Schulwerk to individual piano instruction.

The Helena Rubinstein School of Music began in 1955 and provided instrumental tuition for young students along with the opportunity to play in an orchestra or ensemble. In the 1990's vocal music was added and the name changed to its current name. The Helena Rubinstein School of Music is a not-for-profit organisation and has a strong focus on community. One of the school's aims is fostering a lifelong love of music. Another is excellence in music through the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (2017) examinations, as well as opportunities to play in recitals, choirs and a range of concert performances. Rock bands and jazz combos are examples of two ensembles that take place alongside the one on one instrumental and voice tuition, and graded orchestras. 'Try an Instrument Open Days' are an annual event in Christchurch for the public to interact with staff and play many unfamiliar instruments. The school runs two Orff-Schulwerk classes on Saturday mornings for pre-school and primary age children, and are overseen by the school's director. I am employed at the school as a piano teacher. Part of my role is to prepare students for examinations and recitals.

## **1.5 Research Aims and Objectives**

This research aims to investigate the following overarching question:

*What are parents' and children's perceptions of applying "Orff-Schulwerk" approaches to children's private piano lessons at the Helena Rubinstein School of Music?*

This research seeks to do this by exploring the following research questions:

1. *How is the Orff Schulwerk approach to piano instruction perceived by children and to what extent do they perceive that it enhances their rhythmic capabilities and musicianship?*
  
2. *To what extent does the application of Orff-Schulwerk approaches to piano instruction enhance children's enjoyment of music?*

3. *To what extent do parents perceive that Orff-Schulwerk approaches enhance their child's musicianship?*
  
4. *To what extent do parents perceive that the application of Orff-Schulwerk approaches to piano instruction influences their child's enjoyment of music?*

## **1.6 Chapter Outlines**

This section provides a brief outline of the thesis. Chapter two explores the literature used in this study. It does so by firstly introducing the history of the Western piano tradition from the invention of the modern piano in 1711, and exploring piano tuition trends to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It goes on to explore the “Orff-Schulwerk” music education approach used worldwide and then demonstrates why parents’ and children’s perceptions are important for helping to shape children’s experience of life through music. It concludes by demonstrating how there is limited literature that has examined parents’ and children’s perceptions of the application of Orff-Schulwerk to piano instruction.

Chapter three presents the methodology and research design used in this study. It begins by a discussion of the interpretivist and qualitative paradigms that provide a foundation to the approach taken in this study. It then introduces the instrumental case study research design used in this study which enabled the focus to be on the perceptions of participants within the boundary of the Helena Rubinstein School of Music. Finally, it introduces the research methods and design used in this study.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study. First, it identifies how the children’s perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk approaches to their piano lessons enhances their musicianship. Next, the parents’ perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk approaches to their children’s piano lessons are examined, with findings revealing that this approach is perceived to enhance their children’s musicianship and enjoyment towards music. Finally, four broader themes that emerge from each of the findings - ‘enhanced creativity’, ‘enhanced benefits in ensemble playing’ and ‘barriers to implementing Orff’ are presented.

Chapter five is a discussion of the findings from chapter four and focuses on the broad areas of the findings chapter. First, ‘enhanced creativity’ is discussed in the light of an Orff-Schulwerk class in which children follow their individuality, and natural curiosity for discovering new ideas, within an ensemble setting. The perceived benefits in ensemble playing are presented with a discussion about the contribution the group can make towards a student’s perceptions of his own individuality. In turn, those individual perceptions contribute towards the ensemble and create a whole new experience of music. Lastly, ‘barriers to acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk’ discusses cultural concerns and lack of knowledge that parents have of the programme.

Lastly, chapter six concludes this thesis by revisiting the key findings, identifying the limitations of this study and by making recommendations for future research.

# **Chapter 2 - Literature Review**

## **2.1 Background**

This chapter begins with an outline of the history of piano teaching from the invention of the piano in the beginning of the 1700's. It investigates the methods of piano teaching that were practiced from a drill and repetition approach that would produce a mechanical, technical result, to an approach where the individuality of students was considered.

The chapter then introduces and explores the work of German composer, Carl Orff, whose approach to music education became instrumental as a powerful agent of change. The latter part of the chapter investigates the impact that Orff-Schulwerk could have on the traditional piano teaching approach. This chapter concludes by demonstrating how children's and parents' perceptions have a strong influence on musical success, and argues that there is a strong need to investigate these perceptions in order to understand how an Orff-Schulwerk approach to piano tuition is perceived.

## **2.2 History of Western Piano Tradition**

The Western piano teaching tradition began in the 1700's when the modern piano, as is known today, was invented. Conservatories and private instrumental teaching studios grew, as music educational opportunities began to expand alongside the development of compulsory schooling (Lassonde, 2013; Parakilas, 2002).

In 1711 the piano was “invented” by a Florentine mechanic named Cristofori (Parakilas, 2002), although this instrument differed from the existing keyboard instruments in only two musically significant ways:

- 1) The capacity for the piano to respond to touch, using a flexible and sensitive approach. This was a progression from the mechanical effect of the existing keyboard instruments; and
- 2) The touch was instilled through tuition and was *not* instinctive (Parakilas, 2002, p. 14).

This invention enabled a whole new idea of expressiveness that Matthews (1891) states helped to make the 1700's one of the most memorable in the history of music.

Cristofori's invention occurred at the time when Europe was developing periodicals and communication was occurring on a grander scale (Parakilas, 2002). This meant that the piano became widely sought after by virtuosic performers, families wanting to play hymns at home, and also young women wanting to gain an acceptable education. This led to a demand for piano instruction in which musicians could develop a technique and become part of the new social order in which piano playing was an obligatory part of social life. The piano both defined and crossed social borders making it indispensable to people not only from elite and professional backgrounds, but to people from all others too (Parakilas, 2002). The development of several instrumental teaching environments met the variety of needs that were becoming more and more apparent. As a result the teaching methods also varied, a response to teachers' perceptions of their students' needs. However, these were not always in the students' best interests.

Literature shows inconsistency about the approaches to tuition in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Music education in the conservatories and private tuition programmes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were frequently taught through drill and repetition. Rather than piano tuition being a pathway towards greater understanding of the true nature of music, mastering technical skills took precedence. Parakilas (2002) called this the loss of imagination and individuality, with hearts closed to the beauty of music.

One of the greatest teachers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Polish pianist, Theodor Leschetizky, who developed for his students the well-known "Leschetizky Method", a contradiction in terms because Leschetizky did not have a method (Bree, 1902). "Even in technique it is impossible to have a method, for every hand is different", he emphasised, preferring also to leave his mind a blank for the pupil to fill in (Peterson, 1946, p. 290). Leschetizky appreciated the individuality of his students.

This approach was in contrast to the technical playing common in the music conservatories. Parakilas (2002) referred to the "machine age" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with less than ideal implications for the methods of practice in piano tuition. Because the piano was a more complex mechanism than earlier

instruments, the ideal of the machine was extended to the way the piano was played, or precisely, how it was taught to be played at this time (p. 115). However, Leschetizky's focus was to 'draw out' the artist and he had no thought of imitation for a technically masterful result.

Another great teacher in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was French music teacher, César Franck. Peterson (1946) describes the method-rich style of teaching popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the conservatories. Franck's knowledge of the individual pupil contrasted with the trend of professors who poured into a variety of young minds, the same identical and trivial material. They would fail to realise that what was good or harmless for some, may be hurtful to others (Peterson, 1946). Franck's approach has influenced modern understanding of embracing holistic approaches to learning and teaching, in which students' individuality of experience is valued (Thomas, 2016).

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of order, beauty and achievement as musical accomplishments up until then demonstrated (Matthews, 1891). Teaching methods were a mix of innovations of the private teaching studio, mechanistic approaches in the music conservatories, and universities treating music education as a subject to be learnt through an apprentice system rather than through intellectual means (Parakilas, 2002; Caswell & Smith, 2000).

The year 1914 brought the First World War and with the effects of the war people's needs changed. Mark (2015) referred to the change saying that people no longer had a clear sense of their national identity. Bouchat et al. (2017) found people's restlessness following World War I resulted from a sense of needing to acknowledge and mitigate a sense of harm done to others, to become a better 'self' compared with the old. Carl Orff, a composer in Germany at the time, responded to these new needs. He was inspired to approach music education differently from the accepted methods leading up to the new century and the war.

## **2.3 Carl Orff**

Orff's musical experiences had a significant influence on his beliefs about music education. Orff graduated from the music conservatory in Munich at a time when conservatory teaching had become stiff with its overdependence on the written score, the rise of larger orchestras and more fixed compositions (Goodkin, 2004). Responding to the growth of gymnastic and dance schools in Germany post-

World War I, Orff began teaching music at the Günther School of professional gymnastics and dance students, in 1924. His approach to music education was different from the didactic teaching methods of the previous century in which learners were taught how to produce the simplest works by Bach or Mozart (Gray, 2002, p. 12). Instead, Orff saw movement as the starting place for musical education. Being a composer, he wanted an approach that allowed for a student's artistic response, and he believed that movement was the way for this to be discovered. To Orff, music education could come *only* from movement, and when combined with rhythmic improvisations, speech and melody, an approach was created that was active and learner centred (Gray, 2002).

Orff was interested in the tonal quality of instruments right from the beginning, in order to create aesthetic environments that acquaint children with their profound need to create something of beauty (Orff, 1932; Goodkin, 2003). Orff's artistic sensibilities as a musician had him approaching music education not as a subject to learn, but a source of energy to be affected by (Orff, 1963).

Orff's interest in the relationship between movement, rhythm and music came from the teachings of Aristotle. Aristotle (300 B. C.) spoke of the place of musical taste and cultivation in education when he said that "gymnastics" and "music" were two of four "customary branches of education" (Matthews, 1891, p. 65). Ancient Greek poetry that lead to singing and Greek theatre provided inspiration to Orff who was fascinated by the mythology and language of ancient Greece (Nash, Tower, & Shamrock. 2001). The combination of speech, music and dance provided for him the ideal of music education that cultivated the soul and the body along with the mind (Nash et al., 2001).

Aristotle's ideals were not the only influences in Orff's vision. Thomas (1969) mentions Orff's interest in the layers of Western languages from ancient Greece up to the Romantic period that focused on simple forms because these forms enabled the naming of primary life experiences. These occurred through sayings, verses and fairy tales, the childhood life stories of everyone. It is this interest in a unity of the elemental forms of movement, speech and music that gave Orff's work impetus. In particular, he was interested in how children's speech utterances developed into expressions of singing. Orff wanted the child to discover music, not learn about its artistic offerings through handed down music education. Orff maintained that when the child created his or her own melodies from the natural progression of movement, rhythmic sense and speech, the child

discovered the wonder and influence of his or her own artistic expression (Keller, 1962; Nykrin, 2010; Orff, 1932; Regner, 1975, 1984; Thomas, 1969).

It was illogical to Orff that music should be discovered in any way other than the classroom of gymnastics and dance. His argument was that movement helped a student to develop an awareness of pattern and form (Locke, 2010) and lead to his or her awareness of sense and imagination (Orff, 1963). From there, music would be experienced as an original idea, not one where music is accurately reproduced. Orff also maintained that improvisation, not written notation, is key to supporting children's musical learning. The children's musical ideas would flow from their experience of movement, not from previously learnt concepts. Orff's ideals target the development of a human being *through* music, rather than an education in music for its own sake.

Orff's approach to music education focused on elemental concepts that are a foundation for all subsequent music making and interpretation. Orff understood the significance of the elemental in music education because it enabled children to hear: becoming enlightened and guided through their own playful discoveries.

After World War II the Günther School was reduced almost to rubble from fire. Although the Günther School had closed forever, Orff's ideals remained. A recording of the music was rescued from the burnt-out buildings and introduced to the head of Bavarian educational radio. Songs, poems, singing and clapping rang out through the airwaves and connected with the war-weary, scarred hearts and minds of the children. Orff's gift of generative music began a life of its own (Gray, 2002), and the beginnings of "Orff-Schulwerk" (school work) emerged.

## **2.4 “Orff-Schulwerk”**

Orff identified the need for a music education system that is accessible to everyone and one that considered the wellbeing of students. He believed that if this need was met, this made a way for artists to recognise their own unique contributions. He said:

*“It is a question of developing the whole personality. This surpasses by far the aims of the so-called music and singing lessons found in the usual curriculum. It is at the primary school age that the imagination must be stimulated...It worries me profoundly to know*

*that today there are still schools where no songs are sung, and many others with very defective music teaching” (Orff, 1963, p. 154).*

The Orff approach differs from the traditional musical education approaches because students discover their own responses to rhythm, singing and overall musicianship through active engagement, and discovery (Frazee, 1987; Gray, 2002). One of the reasons for its acceptance is that it is well recognised for developing a child’s intrinsic rhythmic understanding, singing, and musicianship (Lillemyr, 1980). As Nykrin (2010) states, the children do not count the bars, they feel the rhythm in their bodies. They play “to sing from their souls and not like trained birds” (p. 274).

The Orff-Schulwerk classroom is one where a child is actively involved in creating music through improvisation of rhythm and melody, and nearly always in collaboration with others. From the very start children learn that music is a social pursuit, with meaning making occurring only in social contexts (Green, 2005). This includes the use of natural forms of movement, speech, games, folk dance from which rhythmic and melodic improvisations flow (Frazee, 2006; Goodkin, 2004). The absence of notation in the first stages of the Orff-Schulwerk classroom is an important point of departure from previous music education traditions. Orff justifies this by making an analogy to a child’s painting. He explains that though primitive, a painting is meaningful because it records a child’s experience. He argues that written music ought to occur in the same way (Orff, 1932). Teaching music without notation is possible when children improvise their own rhythms and melodies from their own playful discoveries. Body percussion and singing echoes derived from a child’s first speech attempts, and first improvised attempts at playing on elemental instruments, are all steps towards children’s making music that is personally meaningful to them.

There are a few key elements that are typically present in an Orff-Schulwerk lesson. From a teacher’s perspective the very style of delivery carries a certain way of doing, being and presenting oneself as a teacher. For example, first, the teacher might open the lesson by singing a rhyme in repetition...

*Din don din don,  
C'est la cloche du matin,  
Qui sonne au lever du jour;  
Bonjour, bonjour!*

...after which the children join in. The group is divided into two, then four and the melody becomes a round. There is no spoken instruction. Later the teacher

may ask the children to blow a piece of cotton wool into the air and keep it aloft. The action of breath is an introduction into recorder playing where a kind of breath control draws out the medieval quality of the recorder.

The Orff-Schulwerk programme focuses on a healthy musical concept from the earliest experiences. Children encounter singing experiences through play with the innate instruments of their own bodies (Keller, 1962). Through clapping, stamping, dancing and children's singing games a child enters the world of singing through play, and is instinctive for a child (Keetman, 1970). That music evokes a spontaneous movement response in a child as yet untrained is confirmed by Keetman (1970), who says we must try to preserve that which is intuitive and original while trying to bring it to conscious form at the same time. Schools that claim singing as the first introduction to children's music education experiences have failed to recognize the importance of play, using the innate instruments of children's own bodies, prior to the singing experience itself. According to Keller (1962) a preliminary focus on expressive body movements allows a natural outflow towards vocal expression. He says, "no child will keep still while he or she is singing" (p. 122). Further, children's first experiences playing prototypes of instrumental music are a natural outcome from expressive body movements (Keller, 1962).

According to the International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg (IOSFS) there are 45 Orff-Schulwerk associations in 38 countries around the world (International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg, 2017). Goodkin (2004) says the Schulwerk can be referred to as the "Orff approach" or the "Orff process", but never the "Orff method". It is a process that is "over 50 years old, has travelled the world and back again leaving its mark in over 25 countries" (p. 2). This highlights the widespread influence that the Orff-Schulwerk approach has on music education throughout the world.

## **2.5 Application of Orff-Schulwerk to Instrumental Teaching**

While the Orff-Schulwerk approach has been widely adopted into classroom settings worldwide, research into the application of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy in instrumental lessons has so far failed to justify the critical importance of the Orff approach in instrumental lessons (Gwatkin, 2004; 2008; McMillan, 2011). One reason for this is suggested by Mainz and Nykrin (2000)

who attempted to incorporate the Orff-Schulwerk principles into piano teaching but found the commercial success of the programme failed, possibly because of teachers' insecurity and lack of knowledge about the Orff programme (Mainz & Nykrin, 2000, as cited in Gwatkin, 2008). This suggests that there is scope to further explore the possibility of applying Orff principles to piano teaching.

In the following section I look at the existing attitudes and perceptions surrounding classroom music education and piano studio education practices, and for each suggest how Orff-Schulwerk addresses the diversity between the two. In doing so, it is hoped that the review will show that the application of Orff-Schulwerk into piano (and other instrumental) lessons is not only necessary, but critical to understanding the possibility for Orff-Schulwerk to enhance children's musicianship and creativity.

There has been a longstanding belief that the master-apprentice model is the best approach for piano instruction. Such a model focuses on skill transference between an experienced practitioner and beginner, with less significance given to issues of the intellect or emotions inherent in the process. Gwatkin (2004) found that since piano teaching developed from a master-apprentice system, little attention had been given to developing piano teachers to understand educational philosophies, psychology, child development, lesson planning, group teaching and mentoring programs.

Among Gwatkin's (2004) suggestions for piano teacher professional development are improvisation, group teaching, the use of the body for internalisation of music, and developing musical concepts away from the instrument. All of these principles are contained in the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Orff-Schulwerk provides a broad and alternative approach to music education that differs from this master-apprentice model. This suggests that a broad approach to music education may be necessary for piano instruction.

There are many aspects of the Orff-Schulwerk approach that have the potential to strengthen musicianship. Indeed, Orff (1963) stressed the need for a broad approach to music education to ensure that music is accessible to *all* children and enhances musicianship. Yong and Cheah (2011) wrote a guidebook for new graduate piano teachers following research with experienced piano teachers to obtain deeper insight into piano teaching. The findings from the research indicated there were areas of piano pedagogy that needed addressing, including the development of a broader musicianship programme less centred on the

examination syllabus, improvisation, the benefits of group learning, and the development of a strong rhythmic sense. All areas are features of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Orff-Schulwerk provides opportunities for the student to create one's own composition through improvisation, experiencing beauty of musical sound by playing on instruments with absolute tonal quality, and arriving at rhythmic understanding from the language of childhood, and through movement. However, despite this potential, little research has examined the application of Orff-Schulwerk to instrumental instruction. What is clear is that Orff identified that musicianship often fails to be developed because of teacher ineptitude and failure to recognise the individuality of all students (Orff, 1963).

This Orff-Schulwerk approach contrasts starkly with the piano teaching trends that preceded it. Some academics have raised concern about the longstanding focus of graded music examinations in private piano tuition because it limits creativity and musicianship. Salaman (1994) states that exams "fail to nurture some of the most important aspects of a truly musical education", among which are "ensemble playing", "improvising" and "musicianship" (p. 221), which are all aspects of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Learning to read music is an indispensable part of the exam process. Salaman says this method could be in conflict with the aim of promoting musicianship. The lack of notation focus of the Orff approach contrasts too with the piano teaching style that prepares a student for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music instrumental examinations. Graded music examinations focuses on learning to read music, and less on the process of a musical education that enhances creativity and musicianship.

Gwatkin (2004) referred to Orff-Schulwerk as being an approach that adds creativity to the traditional piano approach. Creativity represents a new approach for piano teachers who have been, in the main, trained in an examination context in which measurable elements are used to assess progress. The measurement of aesthetic matters such as musicianship are more difficult to quantify (Salaman, 1994). With development of musicianship at the heart of an Orff-Schulwerk approach, the focus is not on criteria that can be easily measured in an examination context.

The Orff-Schulwerk approach has the potential to strengthen piano tuition for important reasons. However, there is no research that has explored the unique contribution that Orff-Schulwerk might make into piano studies. Orff-Schulwerk

provides a window of opportunity for a student's potential to be realised because the approach focuses on the development of the student through music, rather than teaching music itself. The benefit of this is that the student's creative potential is realised in terms of his or her individuality as a person, not just success as a musician albeit an important outcome. This has implications not only for his or her development as an instrumentalist, but also for other areas enhancing life experience such as creativity and motivation.

This review of literature strongly signals a need to implement approaches, such as Orff, to enhance musicianship. Yet, up until now, this review of literature has focused on teachers' perceptions of appropriate piano-teaching techniques. With this in mind, it is necessary to also consider parents' and children's experiences and perceptions of instrumental learning, and to consider how these perceptions have shaped music education. The following section reviews literature to gain a clearer understanding of both parents' and children's voices.

## **2.6 Parent Perceptions**

Literature relating to parent perceptions of music education demonstrates that parents have a powerful role to play. It also demonstrates that parents are unaware of the extent of their influence. Parental influence over children's motivation and achievement has been known since the 1950's (McPherson, 2009), however only recently it was found that children's perceptions of competence are shaped more strongly by parents than by teachers (Pomerantz, Grodnick, & Price, 2005, as cited in McPherson, 2009; Wallace & Walberg, 1991, as cited in Creech & Hallam, 2003).

There are many motivations that parents have regarding their child's instrumental learning. Laureau (2003, as cited in Reeves, 2015) raises the idea that music instrumental lessons are chosen by parents as a strategy for social advancement. Students who possess similar cultural codes to their teachers do have a higher likelihood of educational success (Dumais, 2006, as cited in Reeves, 2015; Sullivan, 2001, as cited in Reeves, 2015), while in the world of work cultural practices may indicate a sense of identity (Rivera, 2012, as cited in Reeves, 2015). Parent perceptions about instrumental lessons in the United States demonstrated that instrumental lessons are believed to help to reverse the "declining fortunes" of educated Americans, and that increasing their children's "cultural engagement" through such lessons would develop the necessary confidence and

poise to stand out in the competitive job market (Lareau, 2003, as cited in Reeves, 2015, p. 496). What this literature did not explain was how students actually achieve success in the work place, whether success comes from mastering the difficulties of their instrument, or whether they gain confidence and poise from being affected by the aesthetics of music.

Reeves (2015) carried out research on the perceptions that parents had towards music instrument lessons in terms of the reasons they gave for encouraging such lessons. Results found that the most common reasons for parents encouraging their children to learn an instrument were for enhancing family ties and the perception of 'natural' talent in their children. Other research showed that parents who encouraged music participation perceived their children as musical, while those who did not, perceived a lack of musicality in themselves and their children (Torche, 2007). This shows that whatever parents believed about their children's musicality had a strong influence on the choices they made. In contrast, research proved that parents who perceived their children were 'unmusical' often did not encourage music lessons at all because of their belief that musicality is somehow innate (Reeves, 2015). Other literature confirms the view that musicians are born rather than made (Davis, 1994; Gagné, Blanchard, & Bégin, 2001; Lehmann, Sloboda, & Woody, 2007; Winner, 1996). It is apparent that parental perceptions about their children's participation in music lessons is strongly influenced by their beliefs about their children's musicality.

In addition to parents having a strong influence on their child's engagement with instrumental tuition, there is also evidence that parents have strong influence on their child's musical competence. Literature has demonstrated that the more accurate are a parent views of his or her child's competence, the better that child will perform (Miller, Manhal, & Mee, 1991, as cited in McPherson, 2009). This was particularly noticeable in an underperforming New York school in the Bronx area that chose to place a music curriculum at the centre of its activities, creating a hundred percent turnaround in truancy. With music introduced most parents expressed positive expectations for their children's futures, even when school assessment revealed their child's struggles and weaknesses along the journey. It appeared parental attitude was a determining factor, even when assessment was discouraging (Dosman, 2017). This suggests that parents have a strong influence on the success of their child's engagement with instrumental programmes. For this reason, understanding parents' perceptions of programmes, such as Orff-

Schulwerk, is important to determine how this might influence children's engagement and receptiveness to such programmes.

It is imperative that parents' choices for their children are not based on incorrect assumptions about their ability, but are informed through knowledge of the deeper intentions behind music education programmes. This is supported in Youm's (2013) study which suggests that parents ought to receive education in high quality music education programmes so that they successfully fulfil their desire to help their children in the best way that they can. Youm's study showed the high majority of parents interviewed felt parent education about their children's music education was necessary, especially since it was revealed in the study that parents did not fully understand the depth of a philosophy or history behind their children's music programme. Comments such as wanting their children to know "emotional development", "contentment", "not to learn just rhythmic concepts", but to "listen to music for the heart not the head", "preparation for the future", engaging in "play through music so that it is a joyful experience" indicated parents had clear vision for the outcomes they wanted the music programmes to achieve (Youm, 2013, p. 289). Despite this, they had little idea how to go about being a successful influence, particularly those who were shy or lacked confidence in music. Nor did they understand the extent of the potential they had to influence their children, a point reflected in literature which shows 'parental influence' is an undefined term requiring clarification (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Parents' desire to help their children in the best way is made possible when their choices are based on correct assumptions. Parent-targeted education programmes enable this to occur.

This review of literature seems to suggest that parents look to skill on an instrument, indicated through results in examinations, as a marker of how much potential their child might possess. However, this thesis puts forward the argument that parents could better understand the potential that music has for developing musicianship.

Additionally, a review of this literature has revealed that parents need to become more aware of the powerful potential they possess for influencing their children's musical development. Importantly, there is no known literature which has investigated parents' perceptions of the Orff-Schulwerk approach so it is unclear if parents perceive Orff-Schulwerk philosophy to be beneficial for their child's musical development. For this reason, there is need to examine parents'

perceptions of the application of Orff-Schulwerk approaches to individual piano tuition.

## **2.7 Children's Perceptions**

Understanding children's perceptions about their own learning is particularly important. While literature gives voice to the views of teenagers, less literature has considered children's own perceptions (Edwards, 2018; Horgan, 2009; Pike & Clough, 2005). Yet, it is essential that children's perceptions about their learning is understood because of the degree with which these perceptions impact on attitudes, motivations and beliefs in learning.

Demorest, Kelley, and Pfordresher (2017) found that children's views of their own musical competence are shaped by their beliefs. These beliefs are in turn influenced by parental perceptions about their children's musical competence as revealed above. Additionally, Demorest et al. (2017) showed that whatever children believed about their musical competence was more powerful than the more objective assessment of their musical ability. This was true even in the face of a teacher's assessment. Children's perceptions about their competence was more influential even than family background (Clements, 2002).

Mizener (1993) confirmed that whatever students perceived about their own abilities did not accurately reflect their actual abilities. This has important implications for a child who is developing in a school music class or private instrumental lesson who is assessed using a test or examination, or an adjudicator's report and audience reaction in a piano competition. It appears from Mizener's (1993) study that such assessments may have long term consequences for a student who might choose to underperform for fear of his or her extreme talent being overlooked and the social loneliness that follows.

While children's perceptions about their own learning are particularly important, their voices are seldom considered in research on piano teaching methods. Understanding children's perceptions about their musical experiences, and beliefs about their competency is essential not only for their future musical engagement and success, but also for helping to increase levels of engagement and motivation. This was an aim that Orff wanted to convey because of the advantages music presented to a child when approached from the perceptions of a child's experience (Orff, 1963).

To conclude, the Orff-Schulwerk approach is one of the most adopted and successfully musical teaching and learning approaches in the world (Cunha & Carvalho, 2011). The approach is well recognised for developing a child's intrinsic rhythmic understanding, singing and musicianship (Lillemyr, 1980). However, the potential to apply this approach to instrumental lessons, until now, has never been explored. Furthermore, there have been no known studies that have explored parents' and children's perceptions of this experience. This study intentionally places parents' and children's perceptions into the foreground by seeking to examine their perceptions of an Orff-Schulwerk approach to individual piano instruction.

# **Chapter 3 – Methodology**

This chapter presents the research design, methodology, data collection and analysis employed in this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the interpretivist and qualitative paradigms as the meta-theoretical foundations of the study. Then, an explanation of an instrumental case study research design follows, including a justification for the paradigms and data collection methods chosen. Next, it presents how participants were recruited, how the data was collected, permissions sought and barriers faced. Finally, the chapter concludes with an explanation of the data analysis method used to analyse the data collected through interview, personal reflection and field notes.

## **3.1 Meta-Theoretical Foundations**

### **3.1.1 Interpretivism**

Researchers carrying out studies using the interpretivist paradigm do so from the position that reality is constructed individually by each person in each situation they face (Thomas, 2016). Such a perspective of reality enables a researcher to interpret the social world in its completeness by investigating the subjective thoughts and perceptions of its participants. The paradigm accommodates multiple perspectives and versions of truths which makes it particularly effective in social research (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In addition, the interpretivist paradigm considers the individual perspectives of participants from a range of cultures (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In contrast, an objective assumption of reality occurring ‘outside’ of the participants reduces the participants into divisible components, undermining the complexity of human experience (Thomas, 2016).

Interpretivism allows for in-depth description and deep immersion into participants’ musical experiences that are given particular meaning depending on the richness of participants’ own perceptions. Green (2005) explains that even while music exists as an objective reality (separately from human perception) music assumes its greatest and most meaningful characteristics when interacted with and responded to by the individual involved. For example, studying a person’s ‘musicianship’ can be understood better from studying participants’ experiences, backgrounds and points of view, rather from measurement of some universal truth (Thanh & Thanh, 2015; Salaman, 1994). As a researcher studying music I am interested in understanding how people make sense of the world. I

am wanting to find out how children and parents perceive rhythm, singing and musicianship through the application of Orff-Schulwerk activities in the children's piano lessons. Understanding parents' and children's multiple perspectives leads to more comprehensive understanding of their needs (Klen & Meyers, 1998, as cited in Thanh & Thanh, 2015; Morehouse, 2011, as cited in Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The interpretivist paradigm is, therefore, the most suitable.

### **3.1.2 Qualitative Research**

The qualitative paradigm arose as a result of the perceived inadequacies of quantitative methods (Cicourel, 1964). Flick (2014) explains that the deductive methods of *quantitative* research rely on theory and testing against empirical evidence and cannot be appropriate to apply to the rapidly changing social world. Flick (2014) explains further that such worlds of participants can be hard to reach. This might be because of their diverse experiences from a range of cultures, and that children present a range of abilities in a subject such as music which involves high demands (McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002). It could also be because their needs are not always clearly expressed in a world of music education that in itself is diverse (McKenna & Millen, 2013). The goal, Flick says, is not to test what is already known, but to discover and explore the new (p. 16). Because my study investigates parents' and children's perceptions in music education environments the qualitative method is the only one suitable. Such an approach takes into account the diverse life worlds of participants who present diverse needs. Researching the impact of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy on the traditional piano teaching approach described from the perspectives of the variety of participants will, I hope, reveal some rich material for investigation.

Adding to the complexity of the research environment is the subjective reality of the researcher who brings her own social and political experiences, background, and personal preferences (Mutch, 2005). One of the characteristics of qualitative research, Mutch says, is the relationship of trust that exists between researcher and participants, not one of objectivity and detachment. Because of this, it is important in this paradigm that the researcher is explicit about her involvement when interpreting the data. In addition, according to Flick, the variety of approaches and methods of data collection in the qualitative paradigm always focuses on a particular concern within a small group in an holistic manner. This means that broad understandings can only be reached by focusing on the small details (Cicourel, 1964).

## **3.2 Research Design**

### **3.2.1 Instrumental Case Study**

This study uses an instrumental case study as the research design to examine children's and parents' perceptions of applying the Orff-Schulwerk approach to piano tuition. Case studies encourage a rigorous and thorough analysis of a bounded case, which provides an in-depth, detailed and rich description of a phenomenon (Bryman, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Mutch, 2013; Stake, 2005). For this research the case study is a suitable choice because it maintains the uniqueness of the participants' voices, taking into account their multiple experiences. In an instrumental case study, the case is only important as far as it illuminates the study of a phenomenon of interest (Stake, 2005). In this study, an instrumental case study approach enables the Helena Rubinstein School of Music to be the bounded case that is secondary to the examination of the phenomenon of children's and parents' perceptions of Orff-Schulwerk methodology. Cultural experiences, values, education and beliefs have the opportunity to be explored in an instrumental case study. For this reason, the instrumental case study is an appropriate method to take into account parents' and children's perceptions.

The Helena Rubinstein School of Music was chosen because of its longstanding and well-run Orff-Schulwerk music programme. The school runs two Orff-Schulwerk classes on Saturday mornings for pre-school and primary age children, and are overseen by the school's director.

As a piano teacher at the school I have taught a variety of children for examinations and recitals, and built up a relationship with parents. This historic and personal involvement with Orff-Schulwerk makes the Helena Rubinstein School of Music a valuable case to examine children's and parents' perceptions of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. In order to protect the confidentiality of the school, the pseudonym 'Helena Rubinstein School of Music' has been used.

## **3.3 Research Strategy**

### **3.3.1 Procedure for Selecting Participants**

The steps involved for selecting participants began first with an approach to the director of the Helena Rubinstein School of Music for her consent to invite children and their parents to participate in this study. Adhering to the ethical guidelines provided by the University of Waikato, a formal letter of information

outlining research aims and objectives, the selection of participants and the procedure for gathering data was provided, and this included a written consent form for signing (see Appendix A and B). Students were selected for their length of time in tuition in the Helena Rubinstein School of Music. It was felt that those who were still in the early grades in their piano tuition would be more likely to present authentic perceptions, and less likely to be influenced by prior experience. The students invited to participate represented a range of ages from eight to fourteen years. All were at grades one to four of piano tuition, and demonstrated a range of musical aptitudes. None of the children have had any previous experience of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. At the time of selection, it was not apparent whether or not the parents had had any experience in, or knowledge of, the Orff-Schulwerk process.

Once permission to conduct research was obtained from the Director of the Helena Rubinstein School of Music, potential participants were invited to participate in the study by way of information letters to the parents and children. The information letter to parents explained the purpose of the research, the aims and objectives, the procedure for gathering data, and an invitation for them to take part (see Appendix A). An additional information letter was provided to children using appropriate language for the children to inform them of their involvement in this research (see Appendix C). A consent form for the children to sign was also provided (see Appendix D). Of the seven children and parents invited to participate in this research, seven agreed to participate. Consent forms were signed before research commenced. Table 3.1 (overleaf) provides an overview of the participants who participated in this study.

Pseudonyms\* have been used to protect the identity of the participants, and to adhere to University of Waikato ethical requirements:

**Table 3:1 Overview of participants**

	<b>Child</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Previous Experience</b>	<b>Parent</b>
1.	Joon*	10	Korean	Four years of piano tuition	Grace* (mother)
2.	Gi*	8	Korean	Three years of piano tuition	Grace* (mother)
3.	Antoinette*	11	Chinese	First year piano tuition, five years violin	Andrew* (father)
4.	Niu Niu*	9	Chinese	Three years of piano tuition, six months of piano tuition in China	Daquan* (father)
5.	Alexandria*	8	NZ European	One and a half years of piano tuition, pre-school sessions of musical play for three years that had very similar activities to Orff-Schulwerk sessions	Anya* (mother)
6.	Erana*	11	Māori	Three years of piano tuition	Maia* (mother)
7.	Liezcel*	14	Philippino	Three years piano tuition	Alon* (father)

### **3.3.2 Process for Engaging Students**

As a practitioner-researcher, my research strategy involved incorporating Orff-Schulwerk methodology to my piano teaching. Orff-Schulwerk piano lessons were conducted with each piano student for eight weeks. Each individual session took place at the end of each child's individual piano lesson, for around ten minutes each time. On each occasion the parent in this study attended the sessions. In addition, all seven piano students were invited to attend two collaborative Orff-Schulwerk group lessons which were conducted in week four and week eight. The collaborative sessions were conducted to implement the rhythmic and singing activities carried out during the individual lessons in the preceding weeks. Integrating Orff-Schulwerk methodology with piano instruction involved choosing three primary aspects of music - rhythm, singing and musicianship. These aspects were implemented at the end of each lesson.

This approach was based on literature about Orff-Schulwerk (Keller, 1962). The following provides an overview of what was taught in each lesson:

**Table 3:2 Overview of Orff-Schulwerk teaching approach**

<b>Week (2017)</b>	<b>Teaching method</b>	<b>Individual or collaborative session</b>
Week 1 (16 <sup>th</sup> September)	Introduction to body percussion and spoken body percussion	Individual session
Week 2 (23rd September)	Body percussion improvisation	Individual lesson
Week 3 (30 <sup>th</sup> September)	Rhythmic improvisation	Individual lesson
Week 4 (14 <sup>th</sup> October)	Improvisation and ensemble playing	Collaborative session
Week 5 (28 <sup>th</sup> October)	Pitch (singing using hand signs)	Individual lesson
Week 6 (4 <sup>th</sup> November)	Introduction to rounds	Individual lesson
Week 7 (11 <sup>th</sup> November)	Semi-structural Interviews	Individual lesson
Week 8 (16 <sup>th</sup> December)	Ensemble playing	Collaborative session

### **3.3.3 Week One: Individual session**

Each individual Orff-Schulwerk session took place at the end of each child's individual piano lesson, for around ten minutes each time. In this first session, I introduced the following:

- I modelled body percussion, using four, four beat rhythms with an emphasis on maintaining a steady tempo. (*Stamp, patch, clap and snap (feet, knees, hands, fingers)*). The children followed my modelling, changing to a different part of the body every four bars.

Although this was a simple concept the intention was to encourage a proactive behaviour to rhythmic understanding. Because children in general have always used their bodies to express elemental rhythms, body percussion is a natural starting point for them to understand rhythm in their own child-like comprehension (Orff, 1963). In contrast, the piano lesson traditionally focuses on a reactive, rote response to notated rhythm, even from the first lesson.

- The children then added their spoken voice to body percussion, by speaking the following rhyme (while maintaining a steady tempo):

*“As round as an apple,  
As deep as a cup,  
All the King’s horses  
Cannot pull it up.” (Frazee, 1987, p. 15).*

Keller (1962) points out that rhythm is an innate impulse and involves the body by using the hands and spoken voice to make rhythm. This is a natural starting place for singing and later, instrumental music. The activities chosen for the lessons reflect the progressions that flow from innate rhythmic impulses that Keller describes, and are reflected too, in Orff-Schulwerk processes.

- To conclude, I sang simple two pitch (soh-me) phrases to the children: “What is your name”. They answered, also singing with the two pitches. I used hand signs, although did not explain these at the time.

### **3.3.4 Week Two: Individual session**

This second lesson built on the previous week by developing body percussion improvisations. Improvisation is not always developed in the piano class so this was a key focus in this second lesson:

- The children responded to two bar rhythms with an echo and then two bars of improvisation.
- Then, non-pitched percussion instruments were added to the spoken rhyme, with improvisations included.

The ‘echo’ approach comes from a sense of dialogue in musical forms that has existed since earliest times (Keller, 1962; Matthews, 1891; Parakilas, 2002). Using the echo approach in this week’s exercise, the children responded to my modelled rhythms with improvised rhythms of their own. Their own body’s involvement the week before was instrumental in these personally created rhythms.

### **3.3.5 Week Three: Individual session**

This week I involved children in the development of rhythmic improvisations from a combination of body percussion, singing and instrumental playing in week’s one and two, to prepare for an instrumental ensemble in week four.

- I modelled on a xylophone a canon phrase from “In Canon” (Bisgaard & Aaron, 1978);
- Ostinato phrase added (repeated motif);
- Bordun added (open fifth);
- Octave added. Each child echoed;
- We discussed ‘ostinato’, ‘bordun’ and their meanings.

### **3.3.6 Week four: First collaborative session**

In this session, I gathered children together in a collaborative music-making session. This session extended on week three’s focus on rhythmic improvisation. The children learned to play to a steady beat by combining their parts, their first attempts at ensemble playing as a group. Then, successive entries:

- Beginning with the octave for two bars,
- Adding the bordun two bars later,
- Adding the ostinato two bars later,
- Adding four canon identical melodies each beginning two bars after each in succession,
- A new, sung melody was added (me).

Here the children responded to others in the group by listening and keeping in time with each other, (although there was some effort needed for the children to hear and keep to the beat), and to maintain tempo. The activity developed the concept of relationship between beats and tempo further. It also supported the children’s ensemble playing relationship with each other by helping them to hear the first concepts of primal harmony (octaves, fifths, thirds) and to help them to hear the improvisations of others. This helped them to generate ideas of their own. The combined effect was musically exciting. Two-bar improvisations were added while the remaining instruments were quiet. While the children are experienced in more complex piano performance, improvisations in front of others proved to be a challenge.

### **3.3.7 Week five: Individual session**

The previous activities were a combination of play, rhythmic movement and words, which are a natural starting point for melody to form and be expressed (Orff, 1932 as cited in Gray, 2002). This session, therefore, built on the echo singing that was introduced in week one. I modelled:

- The pentatonic scale, and introduced the whole scale briefly, using hand signs. The children copied short sung tunes and improvised their own.
- A tune in preparation for a round.

### **3.3.8 Week six: Individual session**

In this lesson, the children were introduced to the words and melody of a round. They developed their understanding of melody and rhythms involved in a short musical cricket story that would take place at the final collaborative session. This activity was chosen to develop the children's visual imagination, which was intended to help them to have greater success with improvisation (Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997).

### **3.3.9 Week seven**

This lesson began with semi-structured interviews which will be discussed in the following section. Teaching for data collection purposes resumed at week eight.

### **3.3.10 Week eight: Second collaborative session**

Much of the benefits that the group can have on learning success of children are documented in educational psychology (Regner, 1975). In the case of music lessons, collaboration occurs in a creative sense and ideas are generated and exchanged in a process of trans-active, or transforming, reasoning (Kruger, 1992). Kruger noted that discussions between peers during a musical composition activity featured more and qualitatively different transacts than did discussions between adults and children.

Prior to this session an excerpt from "What is Aesthetic Education" (Goodkin, 2003) was read to parents to provide them with a deeper understanding of the intention behind the choice of activities. The collaborative session involved the following:

- Word/sound picture. I created an imaginary picture for the children in which an autumn leaf floated to the ground and left an impact on its fall. I encouraged the children to picture the point of impact with drops of water being flung off the leaf, and a cricket finding its chance to explore the leaf with its light spring on to the leaf. My intention was to try to encourage the children to notice movement, life and colour in a way that would stimulate their sensibility. I was mindful of the high paced, and high stimulus world in which children live today, thus compromising their perception of smaller, quieter moments:

*Spoken: “A leaf crashes gently to the ground. A cricket lands lightly on it”*

*Fingernails imitate a cricket landing (rhythmic motive on xylophone);*

*Spoken: “And tunes itself for a song”;*

*Improvisation on soprano xylophone. An example was modelled first.*

- The session finished with a “Bubbles” exercise in which the children were given imaginary large soap bubbles to keep in the air with a sung “la” and a spoken “pink!” when they landed. The intention was to open the children to vocal expression in a fun activity, and to counter their stage shyness shown during the singing part of an aural test in a piano exam. The essential nature of play and spontaneity as a starting point to bring out what is within, and why, is extensively described (Keller, 1962; Orff, 1932; Orff, 1932 as cited in Gray, 2002; Günther, 1932). Singing in a collaborative activity such as this helped the children to experience combined voices singing at once, the first attempts of harmony in music through playful discovery.

## **3.4 Research Procedure**

### **3.4.1 Procedure for Gathering Data:**

In order to understand parents’ and children’s perspectives of the Orff-Schulwerk approach, data gathering included children and parents’ perceptions of the Orff-Schulwerk approach undertaken in these collaborative and individual lessons. This research used three data sources to investigate the parents’ and children’s perspectives of applying the Orff-Schulwerk approach to private piano instruction. These data sources included 1) semi-structured interviews with all parents and all children, 2) transcribed recording of the second collaborative session, and, 3) a reflective journal. The following section details each of these data sources.

### **3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interview**

Semi-structured interviews were chosen so that participants have some flexibility in the way they answer the research questions (Menter, Elliot, Hulme, & Lewin, 2011). The research questions chosen were sufficiently broad so that the parents’

answers might provide the in-depth data for rich insight characteristic of qualitative research (Menter et al., 2011; Patton, 2002; Willig, 2009). (See Appendix E for parents' questions and Appendix F for children's questions.)

Semi-structured interviews are also conversational and informal in nature, and an inextricable part of the research process because of the flexibility and openness in interview style which made no interview the same as the other (Scott, 2004). As a musically trained practitioner, I chose the conversational nature of the semi-structured interview as it encouraged the views of children to be openly shared avoiding their inhibition where possible. Individual interviews with children limited the likelihood of the children's perceptions being influenced by the comments of others, including their parents. In addition to this, the conversational and informal nature of the semi-structured interview allowed parents to reveal their perspective of the Orff approach.

It had been my original intention to conduct interviews at week four but for reasons out of my control, for example parental availability, this shifted my original timings. It appeared to me that parents were willing to participate in the study, but were less encouraged to adhere to prior timings with comments such as 'lack of transport', 'new baby to consider', and so on. This was the reason for my altering the timings to accommodate the parents' availability. This fact did cause me to reflect later on a possible reason for their response to the timings in the way that they did.

At week seven I conducted individual, semi-structured interviews with each of the parents and individual, semi-structured interviews with each of the children. The research questions were developed to understand parents' and children's perceptions of applying the Orff-Schulwerk methodology to piano instruction (refer to Appendix E and F). The semi-structured interviews were conducted when parents and children were all available. Due to prior commitments and the adjusted interview schedule, it was difficult for all parents and children to participate in the interviews on the planned date. It became apparent that both parents and children needed to have participated in a sufficient number of Orff-Schulwerk sessions, including a collaborative session, so that their comments would have some background to refer to.

All parents and children participated in the semi-structured interviews which took place at the conclusion of each child's lesson at week seven for around ten minutes each time. With consent, each interview was recorded using a tape

recorder. The questions were given to the parents in written format for the interview session the corresponding week before. Therefore, by providing the research questions a week early the parents had a chance to think through their responses in their own place and time to better reflect what it is they wanted to say. The process for children differed slightly. To avoid a parent answering a question for a child during the week I interviewed the children without the questions being provided beforehand to obtain their authentic voice. Later, I reflected on this choice, especially when the younger children answered a question with an “um” or with silence. A different approach on my part (such as separate interview questions) may have resulted in a better response from the younger children. A technical malfunction occurred in the recording equipment during Daquan’s interview which meant only his child, Niu Niu’s, interview could be kept.

The parents responded to the interview questions willingly. However, I felt that with more time both in the number of Orff-Schulwerk sessions leading up to the interview, and the length of the interview itself, richer data would have been obtained. The parents sensed this and expressed their desire for more Orff-Schulwerk sessions for the full benefits to be realised. While a semi-structured approach was chosen for these interviews, I found the parents were very willing to discuss topics that were unrelated to the interview questions, and I found I needed to stay closely to the interview questions more with parents, than when interviewing the children.

The children required a more conversational approach to encourage their conversation back to me. Reading the questions to them sometimes produced silence from the younger children as if searching for the ‘right’ answer and failing to find it. With further questioning they would progress from silence to a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response. Sometimes I found questioning them further was unhelpful and I would move on to the next question rather than persist and cause discomfort. It was apparent to me that my approach with the younger children might have been more effective if I had given them the questions beforehand to let them know what would be happening and to reduce a feeling of having to respond with a ‘correct’ answer rather than what they really felt. They would have had time for greater ease with the questions being asked. The older children responded to the semi-structured interview more conversationally and provided responses that showed an in-depth level of thinking. On later reflection I felt that a separate set

of interview questions for the younger children that were less direct, may have encouraged their confidence and been more appropriate.

### **3.4.3 Second Collaborative Session**

The second source of data used in this study was a transcribed audio-recording of the second collaborative Orff-Schulwerk session. It was intended that this audio recording would enable me to understand children's perspectives from a deeper and broader perspective. Also this data was an important way to triangulate my research findings. This collaborative session was audio-recorded, transcribed and later analysed using thematic analysis as explained below. It was evident on listening to both collaborative sessions that the children used no dialogue in either. They responded with singing, playing and improvisations. The children were responsive to each other's contributions and were engaged and focused throughout. These perceptions were gained in terms of musical data, not words. It was not possible, in the circumstances, to read the transcript back to them. In retrospect a further interview would have been valuable to ask the children about their perceptions of this experience. For this reason, data gathered from this collaborative session did not inform the research findings as much as I had originally hoped.

### **3.4.4 Reflective Journal**

A reflective journal was used to triangulate data and strengthen the interpretation of the interview and collaborative session data. It is important for myself as researcher to provide all the relevant details so that others can see how conclusions are arrived at (Menter et al., 2011). Mutch (2005) suggests a reflective journal is one way of becoming reflexive, to consider how one's history and position influence impact on the decisions made. During the lessons I kept a notebook of brief observations and reflections from week one through to week eight. I used a combination of longhand and shorthand.

### **3.4.5 Data Analysis**

Since data collection occurred within an instrumental case study in which the phenomenon being investigated was the perceptions of participants, it was necessary to analyse the data in an holistic manner (Thomas, 2016). This means that meaning must be arrived from the constructions that participants give to their perceptions of their experience, and proceed from these meanings alone. These perceptions were analysed through a process of thematic analysis (Mutch, 2005) which began firstly, with writing transcriptions of participants' interviews.

The interviews were transcribed directly onto my computer from the audio-recordings. They were recorded as an exact transcription and included all hesitations and colloquialisms. Flick (2014) says exactness in transcription are a factor in interpretive social science, and in this study care was taken to transcribe, and report on, participants' words exactly as they were spoken and in their entirety, even when the conversation went beyond the research question. I explained to the parents the need for confidentiality and that parents needed to understand the need for their transcripts to be an accurate account of their views.

The transcripts were returned to participants with the request that they review the contents to ensure what was written reflected their intended view. Seeking their approval was a way of ensuring confidentiality; that information about them could not be traced in any way to the contents of the transcript (Flick. 2014). No transcript was returned for updating. Erana and Maia spoke Māori during their interview. I clarified the spelling and translation with a text to Maia after the interviews, in order to discuss deeper meaning behind the translations. The precise translations did not convey the intended meaning until Maia explained the Māori idioms behind the phrases she used. Erana also explained the Māori terms she used so that I understood what she intended.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. This involved a process of looking for patterns and themes, repeated words, strong emotions, metaphors, making comparisons and contrasting information (Mutch, 2005). The data was coded manually using a highlighter to mark ideas and key words, and included underlying meanings. Flick (2014) distinguishes between codes that are expressed verbally, and latent codes that have underlying meaning. He reminds us of the importance to keep in mind the context of an extract to avoid missing the intended meaning behind what was said. This was especially apparent when participants used language that, in its literal sense, appeared to have little resemblance to the musical activity at the time. Their language was their perception of the musical activity and required interpretation to arrive at the possible intended meaning. An example is when a parent referred to an inanimate instrument as "friendly". Categories that arose from this process were made, and then compared afresh. I then formed concept maps by writing out key words and ideas and shuffled them under the categories that emerged from the data. This analysis involved placing data such as comments and reflections from the interviews and reflective journal onto a matrix which had the research questions outlined. The third step involved reanalysing data to uncover major

themes. Aggregating themes enabled major subject headings to be established, and then sub-themes within these. The data was ordered under these headings using colour markers, with linkages and relationships established between different words with similar meanings. Repeated words and phrases within and between transcripts helped to establish the themes. Sometimes the children and parents would use different words to say the same thing. With speculation, the words used would sometimes be an indication of some other meaning and would become clear when compared with similar phases in other transcripts, and when seen in context with surrounding language.

## **3.5 Ethical Issues**

### **3.5.1 Anonymity/Confidentiality**

To ensure confidentiality I began the sessions outlining the need for information not to be discussed outside the group sessions. Data obtained from the participants was coded to avoid identifications and pseudonyms were used to safeguard the parents', children's, and the music school's identities in the reporting processes.

### **3.5.2 Potential Harm to participants**

Care was taken to ensure that participant perspectives and intentions were accurately represented in this research process to ensure that no harm was caused by unintentional misrepresentation. To avoid potential harm to the participants, the details of the study were provided to them before they agreed to participate in the study and prove that they were not coerced into this research. Also, to avoid misinterpretation of the data, the transcription of the interview was returned for validation by participants. According to Horgan (2009) one of the most important things that needs to be kept in mind when interviewing children for qualitative research, is how rarely young children are asked for their views outside the family setting. Consequently, the use of open-ended questions typical of semi-structured interviews can result in the children, and young children in particular, giving answers that are not directly related to the research questions (Horgan, 2009). However, in the study explored in this thesis, it was necessary to use open-ended questions to encourage the children to express their views. While I employed a balanced approach to questioning, the children's responses reflected their lack of familiarity with the process. The short ten minutes chosen for the children's interviews was a consideration in terms of the time it might take to put children at ease.

Two of the children were preparing for exams to take place at an unspecified time in term four, and though good preparation meant that pressure to be ready in time was reduced, this may have been a deterrent to those parents wishing to participate. To assure parents that exam preparation was not compromised I offered extra time for the eight weeks duration of the research, independent of the research schedule. This was outlined to parents in the introductory letter. Extra time for exam preparation was provided for these students during the weeks of data collection.

### **3.5.3 Conflicts of interest**

I experienced conflicts of interest in the data collection timings because of prior commitments by parents preventing them from maintaining their agreed schedule. Data collection occurred for ten minutes at each of the children's piano lessons. Because the parents were paying for piano lessons I sensed their priority was with piano lessons, rather than with the study, though they had agreed to participate. Baumann (1996) offers practical insights about the conflicts that can occur in the balance between teaching and research including timing and ethical issues.

For example, the roles and duties associated with teaching might conflict with plans for gathering, analysing, and reflecting on research data (Baumann, 1996). For teacher-researchers to do teaching and research at the same time, research projects must contain elements of flexibility for adjustments to be made to suit specific situations (Keffer, Carr, Lanier, Mattison, Wood, & Stanulis, 1996). Using a reflective journal was one measure that helped me to reconcile the tension between the two roles because I had a daily record of the research experience. Collecting data from parents and children using semi-structured interviews and my own reflections, enabled me to compare and investigate similarities, and increase the validity of my research findings (Mathison, 1988).

### **3.5.4 Cultural and Social consideration**

The families approached for this study come from Asian, Philippino, European and Māori descent. Cultural and social considerations relevant to the participants were taken into account prior to the research process. An example is preferred communication styles in the research environment. I found that parents (more than children who were all brought up in the New Zealand education system) needed different approaches during the semi-structured interview sessions, depending on their confidence with the English language.

### **3.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter sought to outline the meta-theoretical foundations and the research design and methods used to undertake this research. The instrumental case study design was identified as the most appropriate research design for this study, and the semi-structured interviews with parents and children, the transcript of the second collaborative session and my reflective journal were used as data sources in this study. Six parents and seven children were interviewed for their perceptions in this study. Using an interpretative approach the participants' comments were analysed through the use of codes and themes and sub-themes determined. Meaning was obtained through the constructions that participants applied to their experience of the two music education approaches.

# **Chapter 4 – Findings**

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the findings of the research questions as identified in chapter one. Importantly, it sought to answer the overarching research question: *What are parents' and children's perceptions of applying 'Orff-Schulwerk' approaches to children's individual piano instruction at the Helena Rubinstein School of Music?* This chapter will begin by synthesising data from the interviews, collaborative session and reflective journal to present the findings from each of the five research questions. The second half of the chapter will then present the findings on the four broader themes that emerge from this analysis.

## **4.1 Children's perception of rhythmic development**

The analysis firstly sought to respond to research question number one: *How is the Orff-Schulwerk approach to piano instruction experienced by children and to what extent do they perceive that the Orff-Schulwerk approach helps them to play the piano rhythmically, sing in tune and enhance their musicianship?* In order to do so, this first section focuses on children's perceptions of their rhythmic development. Findings show three children perceived that the Orff-Schulwerk programme enhanced their rhythmic capabilities. Antoinette, Liezel and Alexandria found that being part of the group helped their concept of beat, as indicated in the following comments:

*Antoinette: Doing it with other people, or doing with somebody else, kind of forces you to have to stick onto the beat. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Liezcel: When you are doing Orff-Schulwerk you have to listen to what the other person is doing and instead of, you know, doing it on your own. It helps. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Alexandria: Because there were lots of rhythms and they just helped to keep the beat...I just did mine and then I listened to the other children doing it and then I did mine again. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

These findings demonstrate that Antoinette, Liezel and Alexandria felt that the group Orff-Schulwerk activities enhanced their understanding of rhythm. I

reflected on this relationship between the Orff approach and rhythmic understanding. An entry from my reflective journal confirmed this, saying:

*Today's session freed up a discussion about Antoinette wanting to play percussion for orchestra. This is the first time I sense Antoinette truly opening up. (Personal Reflection, 16 September, 2017)*

Liezcel's response also implied a more natural understanding of rhythm:

*Liezcel: Yeah, it has helped me understand rhythm because when you play you just do it, you don't have to think about it. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Notes from my reflective journal show Alexandria's increased understanding of rhythm that occurred for her in the group context. Alexandria had a minor role maintaining the beat on octaves while the group built more complex lines successively. However her comment in the semi-structured interview showed that she understood rhythm has meaning:

*Alexandria: When I'm on my own it's kind of hard to keep the rhythm because there is no one else doing the same rhythm as me...when I did mine people sort of looked at me and then they did theirs. It's kind of like a story. Each person reads a page. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

These findings show Antoinette, Liezel and Alexandria felt that the Orff-Schulwerk activities helped their concept of beat and understanding of rhythm. In contrast, Niu Niu felt playing the piano, rather than Orff-Schulwerk, enabled her to engage with rhythms:

*Niu Niu: I think I can, like, play [on the piano] some different things. Do what I like, want. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Though she was playing music from the written page, piano playing was still 'more creative' for Niu Niu than Orff-Schulwerk activities in which she was called to create rhythm from nothing.

Erana related her understanding of rhythm to her kapa haka experiences by using *takahi* (moving her feet to the beat), and to piano playing by using her fingers and counting in her head. She relaxed into improvised rhythms from her kapa haka experience with natural ease, and indicated that *takahi* enabled her to keep time by beating with her foot. However, during the collaborative Orff-Schulwerk

session, she found beating time with her foot difficult because she was sitting on the ground. Even so, Erana commented that Orff-Schulwerk helped her keep her beat by listening to other people's beats, and maintaining the beat's tempo by keeping up with group. The comment highlighted perceptions between her cultural kapa haka experiences, individual piano lessons and the Orff-Schulwerk approach in which rhythmic understanding develops from movement. Anya observed a similar understanding:

*Anya: You just sit at the piano and get told. You can't even tap your feet! (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

This shows that, in most instances, children perceived that this Orff-Schulwerk programme enhanced their rhythmic capabilities in terms of being able to keep a steady beat, and in terms of understanding rhythm as a meaningful musical concept beyond a mechanical reproduction of the beat and its divisions.

## **4.2 Children's perceptions of singing**

This section focuses on the children's perceptions of the singing activities carried out in the Orff-Schulwerk sessions in order to respond to research question one. The findings show that not all children perceived the Orff-Schulwerk approach enhanced their singing capabilities. For example, all the students who took part in the playful, collaborative, singing activity that involved using a bubble responded with some inhibition. Antoinette, Liezel and Alexandria commented on their feelings of reserve.

*Antoinette: I think everybody in the room struggled with that because we just weren't used to having so many people, and nobody was really used to letting themselves go because we really didn't know each other. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I made a comment in my reflective journal following the singing session:

*Antoinette was the oldest one present today. She made an unexpected comment. She found it hard to loosen up when part of the group because she felt the others would look up to her and expect her to get it right, and not forgive mistakes. She felt inhibited for this reason. (Reflective Journal, 30 September 2017)*

Although Alexandria felt the sessions made her ‘a bit nervous,’ I felt that Alexandria, being young, was an ideal candidate for the singing sessions and therefore

*..willing to try new things, and less indoctrinated in existing systems. (Personal Reflection, 30 September, 17)*

Liezcel’s experience of the relaxed, casual atmosphere of the singing session helped her to build more confidence:

*Liezcel: I’m not comfortable with singing. But it helped me, you know, step out of that as well – and everyone else is doing it. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The children’s fear of making mistakes is an observation I made in my reflective journal:

*There is some inhibition at being with the other students, who being fellow piano students, are regarded with some competitive instinct. It was hard for the children to make the shift to a shared, teamwork activity. (Personal Reflection, 14 October, 2017)*

It was interesting that Maia and Anya observed that the children’s inhibition was a sign that they were having to “find their unique voices” within the group. Despite a fear of making mistakes Anya felt the activity helped them to learn to express themselves:

*Anya: It was like the ski-instructor who said if you don’t fall over you don’t learn. People want to enjoy the process... [and] just wish to express themselves. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Both Anya and Maia felt that the activity was an opportunity for the children to see beyond the reactions of others in order to find self-expression using their voices. Maia observed that:

*Maia: ... it would be quite hard for those who ... whilst they see each other passing in and out of the room, it’s different again when they’re actually working together all of a sudden, and then suddenly they’ve got to sing a song and they don’t know really how confident they are...Because quite often some sounds might seem ‘beautiful’ to some and quite funny to others, just the reaction of others, eh. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The sessions were an opportunity for the children to show not just confidence to sing in a group setting, but determination in the belief that their contributions were valuable:

*Maia: when you are uniquely your own voice and it's different from others sometimes it can be quite a courage, and strength to show that whatever comes out of you is going to be different to others, and how would others react to that? How would yourself react to that when you're already thinking 'that person over there has got a beautiful voice, I don't have a sound like that. Is it still fine to show what I've got?' (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

These findings reflect an indirect, but interesting outcome. Despite the children's reserve when having to sing as part of an unfamiliar group, the experience was an opportunity to help them discover their own unique voice. In this way, the children were enabled to contribute their individuality into the group.

### **4.3 Children's perceptions of their enjoyment of music**

This section reports on children's perceptions of their enjoyment of music as a result of engagement in the Orff-Schulwerk programme. The findings reveal that the Orff-Schulwerk approach enhanced their enjoyment of music. However, responses also indicated that some children demonstrated resistance to Orff-Schulwerk, while at the same time others appreciated its collaborative benefits.

All of the children in this study found that the Orff-Schulwerk programme helped their enjoyment of music. Antoinette, Alexandria, Liezel, Joon and Gi noted a feeling of relief from constant instruction they experienced in their individual piano tuition:

*Antoinette: You can just let the music flow through and just be able to play it. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Alexandria: It was fun to make up my own and not having to be told what to make the rhythm like...I could just go and do it my own way. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Liezcel: I think doing Orff-Schulwerk is really good, because it's more casual... because you know, it helps you do your own thing. You can do whatever. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I noted in my journal after two sessions evidence of the children's increased engagement and motivation for learning. The spontaneity I observed in Joon and Gi contrasted with the more subdued responses they usually gave me:

*Today Joon and Gi met me at the door, opening it for me with an enthusiastic 'Hi Wendy'. It is the first time! Normally they do not respond to my greeting...but become relaxed shortly after the lesson begins. Both asked me if we were going to do the clapping today, I thought, enthusiastically. (Reflective Journal, 23 September, 2017)*

A change in Antoinette was also noticeable:

*Today is the first time I sensed Antoinette truly opening up and allowing me to peek inside to what she thought, what mattered to her, and who she was. I have never seen that before. She was very shy, but I could tell she was happy with a little smile playing on her lips. (Reflective Journal, 23 September, 2017)*

It appeared that the freedom that this Orff-Schulwerk approach provided motivated Antoinette to open up to me with a higher level of enjoyment of music. Erana found that she could now play something on the piano without having to look at any books. This was an interesting revelation from Erana, given that she was attending piano lessons to learn to read music. It appeared that Erana was experiencing a greater level of enjoyment when her focus was on music making and less on reproducing the notes from the written page.

I noted on 9<sup>th</sup> November that positive change was occurring in the children in numerous ways:

*Of all significant changes almost all are occurring within the children. The children are freer, more expressive, more open, more communicative, more themselves, more alive, as if the sun has come out on days that are eternally, musically hopeful, but always grey. Orff-Schulwerk has introduced joy into the children's responses to me. (Reflective Journal, 9 November 2017)*

However, as well as these positive experiences, there were also instances where Orff-Schulwerk made no change to students' enjoyment. Evidence of this occurred in Niu Niu's remark that piano lessons were her main interest:

*Interviewer: In which way can you express yourself with music the best?*

*Niu Niu: I think in piano.*

*Interviewer: That is more creative for you?*

*Niu Niu: I think I can, like, play some different things. Do what I like, want. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Niu Niu's comments throughout her interview reflected a preference for piano over Orff-Schulwerk. Her only concession was that the group work of Orff-Schulwerk was an enjoyable experience:

*Niu Niu: I think it was pretty fun doing everything and doing it with others because I don't normally get to do it if I'm on my own. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I noted in my reflective journal that Niu Niu seemed 'glued' to a traditional approach and was the most advanced in piano compared with the other students. Being advanced as a pianist for her age compared with the other children may have caused her to feel more inclined towards an individual mind-set, despite her enjoyment in taking part in the group activity:

*Seemed 'glued' to traditional approach. Of all my students Niu Niu responds most intuitively to what I teach. Often her work is prepared in a fraction of the time it takes everyone else. Niu Niu is an example of a child who could be termed gifted in music. Or her responses are from other influences. Her personal presentation speaks to an awareness of beauty of form. So far, the Orff-Schulwerk offerings seem an affront to this, I think. (Reflective Journal, 30 September 2017)*

These findings show that the Orff-Schulwerk programme enhanced most children's enjoyment of music, and that the most noticeable difference was that it contributed to feelings of relief from conformity to playing from notated music. Happiness, enthusiasm and joy seem to be the emotions that describe the Orff-Schulwerk experience for five of the seven children. From my perspective, I saw children who seemed less reticent and more ready to express their feelings during the lessons. This gave me a greater sense of purpose in my piano teaching than I had experienced before.

#### **4.4 Parent's perceptions of children's musicianship**

The following section explores parents' responses to how they felt the Orff-Schulwerk experience affected their children's musicianship. These findings respond to research question three: *To what extent do parents perceive that an Orff-Schulwerk approach enhances their child's musicianship?* Four parents felt that the Orff-Schulwerk programme enhanced their children's musicianship. These parents commented on characteristics of the Orff-Schulwerk approach that 'brought out' the musician from within the child, rather than a process that taught music to children. Andrew, Antoinette's father, felt that Orff-Schulwerk helped the children to understand the sound, and to understand the true meaning of the music:

*Andrew: ...especially the percussion because that was more focused about understanding the sound and working together and I think that's quite an important element...This way of learning is about making children actually understand and that music isn't actually just a process. It's an emotion, a feeling, an experience. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Grace, Joon and Gi's mother, noticed a greater enjoyment in Joon and Gi's piano practice that lead to more creativity and self-motivation:

*Grace: When I make them to practise piano they normally don't enjoy the time, but I think Orff-Schulwerk for children is feeling like playtime. They have more free to try new things. So I think enjoying things has made them more creative and self-motivated. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Without the burden of the keyboard and reading notation, Anya and Alon, Alexandria and Liezel's parents, felt that the children could focus on the act of producing music:

*Anya: It allows Alexandria to think about rhythm and playing in time without the complications of looking at music and worrying about the keyboard, and the repetition of some of the activities, because they are relatively simple allows Alexandria to think about timing. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Alon: There is no pressure on memorising things. It's not formal. They're just playing or something like that, they produce a tune in the music. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

With these comments there is a sense that musicianship is something that can be brought out of a child and accessed with a logical approach, such as removing unnecessary activity. For Anya, simple repetition helped Alexandria to think about timing without the complication of unnecessary reading. This suggests that musicianship cannot be taught as a subject to learn, like any other. Liezel's father, Alon, made a comment confirming this after the first session:

*..he could see how music would be brought out, rather than just taught. (Reflective Journal, 16 September, 2017)*

Later I reflected on this notion in my journal:

*Actually where children are changing is not musically, as in music being an outward entity that they are 'let into knowing more of'. The change is internal. Music is acting as an agent on their whole responses, so that they feed back into music with greater confidence, greater freedom and enthusiasm, greater 'can-do' attitude, greater accessibility that in the end has a much more powerful effect than just teaching them more and more about rhythm, pitch and musicianship for its own sake. The children are learning music to make them better, freer, more capable, more in touch with their abilities.*

*(Reflective Journal, 9 November, 2017)*

Maia (Erana's parent) felt that it was mutual piano lessons that enhanced the children's musicianship through a sense of 'commonality' as pianists which gave them a 'bonding agreement'. But she conceded that Orff-Schulwerk enabled group work for such musicianship to be expressed:

*Maia: It has helped her [Erana] and helped all the children, I believe, to see that they can with that commonality they've found like, I think, like an agreement – not a secret agreement but this bonding agreement, knowing that they all love piano and so together they are able to, and you can actually see how well they're doing in piano because they're quite quick to pick up in hearing the instruments. They weren't afraid to pick the tune up, or the stick up, and to give it a go. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I asked her if she was talking about the essence of musicianship:

*Maia: Essence. Yeah! It's like you've got a code, that musician's code eh. Because, as parents we were outside. We had no part in it because we don't have that code, you know, of musicians.*

*Musicianship eh, as pianists. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

This showed that most parents perceived Orff-Schulwerk as an approach that supported the development of musicianship in their child.

## **4.5 Parent's perceptions of children's attitude to music**

This section responds to research question four by reporting on the findings of parents' perceptions of how Orff-Schulwerk impacted on their children's attitude to music. Overall, parents' comments show Orff-Schulwerk had a positive impact on children's motivation and engagement to learn.

Four parents felt that the Orff-Schulwerk approach affected their child's attitude to music in positive ways, however these factors were not always easy for parents to define. These parents all commented on the need for the sessions to be longer for their full benefits to be seen. Comments by Antoinette's father, Andrew, reflected those of the other parents:

*Andrew: Because we have only begun the process, therefore, I don't think we've seen the benefits of it yet. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Anya, Alexandria's mother, felt that there were 'subtle benefits' not easily seen, but felt:

*Anya: ..we will talk about a particular chord and how it made her feel. I think that those are some of the subtle things that come through in what she does and we can't exactly define but I have a feeling about it. Alexandria may not be aware of [the benefits].*  
*(Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Despite the effects on the children's attitude being elusive to describe, Alon, Grace and Maia (Liezcel, Goon, Gi, and Erana's parents) noticed their children's extra interest in music lead to increased activity. Liezcel showed an increased love for music:

*Alon: Yes, from the start of Orff-Schulwerk. I noticed that [her interest in music increased] and also Liezcel frequently played piano during the week, not just before the piano lesson on the Fridays so, yeah...And not only piano but she is also shows interest in playing other instruments as well.*

*Interviewer: Why do you think Orff-Schulwerk has been the inspiration?*

*Alon: I think the love of music, I think the love interest for music becomes more for Liezel inside, the interest. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Grace noted that Joon and Gi spent more time at the piano and making up melodies:

*Grace: They play on the piano without me forcing them to do. They enjoy making some melody.*

*Interviewer: Has that been after the Orff-Schulwerk?*

*Grace: More playing on piano after they had Orff-Schulwerk. And using some melody that I taught them and they create more things that I taught them. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The findings show a suggested relationship between Orff-Schulwerk and the children's increased motivation to learn. Parents noticed that an increase in their child's love of music, longer time spent at the piano, and creation of melodies resulted from time spent with Orff-Schulwerk. Four of the parents commented on the need for more time in the programme for full benefits to be experienced.

## **4.6 Enhanced Creativity**

This section focuses on three broader themes that have arisen in the findings. These themes included enhanced creativity, enhanced benefits through ensemble playing, and barriers to acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk. These will now be explored in the remainder of the chapter. The findings produced many comments from the participants about creativity being enhanced through an Orff-Schulwerk approach to private piano tuition. For three children, it was a lack of having to conform that gave them the freedom to be creative.

### **4.6.1 Lack of Conformity**

Three children, Liezel, Alexandria and Antoinette, felt that having to conform to a preconceived set of 'rules' prevented them from discovering musical concepts through their own efforts. They felt that the presence of rules discouraged creative responses and instead made the piano lesson seem a mechanical pursuit. In contrast, the Orff-Schulwerk approach appeared to enhance children's creative responses because they were not confined to the recreation of piano pieces.

Liezcel felt it was important to express her own ideas. Antoinette and Alexandria felt the same:

*It is important to get your own ideas out there, instead of having ‘Oh, you should do this, you should do that’, and that impacts on what you think and what you do. It is important to do what you think and what is in you. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Antoinette felt the process allowed her explore what she was capable of, rather than just learning to play existing music on a page:

*Antoinette: It kind of opens you up to what you **can** do. It’s showing you another side to what music is more than just having pieces and learning them. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Liezcel’s comment throws light on the Orff-Schulwerk belief that all children can develop a creative, musical attitude through exposure to elemental music (Regner, 1975). Later comments revealed that the opportunity for creativity was a welcome one. I noted in my journal:

*I have found the children to be more communicative to me, commenting about rhythm, ‘It is easier and freer to make up your own rhythm’, ‘better than having to keep all the rules all the time’. (Reflective Journal, 14 October, 2017)*

In contrast Niu Niu felt the need to do what she wanted, which was to sit piano exams, apply for scholarships and perform as a pianist, rather than participate in Orff-Schulwerk activities.

However, Grace, Joon and Gi’s mother, noted that Goon and Ji responded with creative activity after only two sessions. As mentioned above, Joon composed a song using a composition App, ‘My Singing Monsters,’ following the Orff activity which appeared to encourage an original response. Gi’s response was to look beyond the expected piano practice and begin writing her own melody:

*Grace: Yeah, I remember they made their own melody with the words you gave them. Actually at the time you just gave them just a piece of paper. Gi, as soon as she saw the words she made some melody. It was good. (Parent interview, 11 November, 2017)*

In a personal reflection I commented on Maia’s perspective that non-conformity is related to creativity, that one is needed for the other:

*When creativity is in place then other subjects, science, etc. can be wrapped around that interest. As adults we fit a mould, conforming, we have lost our way. (Reflective Journal, 16 September, 2017)*

I made some notes in my journal that expanded on Maia's belief that creativity is denied when there is an expectation of having to conform:

*Artists find a way to be themselves in their art – there is no imitation, and no pretence. When the originality of performance is heard, it is a winning sound. It can make an audience weep.*

*Today's session with the xylophones and the simple cricket speech was designed to bring out just that quality. The moment of reality where the cricket really did land on a leaf, and really did leave a breath of sound, and the leaf had fallen for winter to enter in, and the cricket's energy gave it life again. It is imagination that is stimulated, and unique to every child as stars. Children appear to me, the children this morning, appear so indoctrinated with systems and performance and ways of doing, and standards to match, that their imaginations are sadly in deficit. They need to be kick started with several opportunities to relax, and to just sense, imagine, feel and explore sensory impressions made more real with word pictures and sound pictures. The world is as real as it is perceived. But so many times the world is not perceived. It is created for them and they merely adopt other's ways. (Personal Reflection, 16 December, 2017)*

The findings suggest that children respond to an imposed structure without being aware of their creative potential within that structure. There is a need to balance children's experience of imposed structure with their recognition that they have creative potential, realised through their playful discoveries in music-making. When opportunities for the children to use their imagination were given, their response was to offer a 'correct' answer, apparent in their reticent and questioning responses. The activity aimed to let the children's imaginations flow freely so that they would relax and experience the joy and happiness of a 'real' encounter.

#### **4.6.2 Musicianship**

Another theme that was evident in the findings was that Orff-Schulwerk seemed to enable students to gain a much deeper understanding of music. Parents,

Andrew, Alon and Anya, felt the programme allowed for a truer understanding of music that came from feeling and experience:

*Andrew: ...so you can play it off the music, have no feeling at all, no understanding of the true meaning of the music, just play mechanically from the sheet. You're not really appreciating and enjoying the music. So this way of learning is about making children actually understand and that music isn't actually just a process. It's an emotion, it's a feeling, an experience. (Parent interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Alexandria commented on hearing different sounds and rhythms in the group context.

*Alexandria: Well, it's quite nice because there are different sounds and different rhythms. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Niu Niu made similar comments.

*Interviewer: What was really good about it? Was it making music?*

*Niu Niu: Yeah. I like the part that we get to work with others in doing it*

*Interviewer: And because you were with other people who were trying to do the same thing and you were all in the same boat, all having a go.*

*Niu Niu: Yeah. And it felt interesting using all the different instruments. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I noted that Alexandria is very receptive to different sounds and rhythms at her private lesson and so her comment seemed pronounced. Although Alexandria was the beat keeper of the group, her part the most simplistic of all the parts in the group, she appeared to find personal meaning in this experience:

*Alexandria: It's kind of like a story, each person reads a page. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

It appeared the Orff-Schulwerk helped students to gain a deeper understanding of music. Appreciation and enjoyment were important factors. Experiencing music as an emotion, a feeling, lead to deeper understanding of the true meaning of music. The group experience appeared to be the catalyst for both the children,

Alexandria and Niu Niu, experiencing sounds and rhythms that were different and interesting, compared to that of their individual piano lessons.

Many commented on a feeling of lack of pressure which appeared to provide them with opportunities to experiment and use their imagination. Liezel, and parents Alon, Grace and Maia, referred to the simplicity of the activities in the Orff-Schulwerk programme which encouraged active, creative, engagement. Liezel, the oldest of the children, noted that limited music experience was not a detriment to creative input:

*Liezcel: Doing Orff-Schulwerk gives you the chance to be creative and do your own thing...You don't have to have lots of experience in music to be able to produce something that sounds good. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The concept of simplicity in approach and choice of instrument was commented on by Liezel's father, Alon. Alon mentioned an absence of pressure to conform and the gentleness and friendliness of using a basic instrument. These words suggest that a feeling of ease contributes to a feeling of confidence in actual creative music-making:

*Alon: I think this approach is quite gentle and friendly, using a basic instrument. I think that helps a lot with rhythm. There is no pressure on memorising things. (First parent interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Alon's comments stand in contrast to the experience of piano lessons in which ease is not always descriptive. The important point revealed in Alon's comment is a feeling of being able to accomplish whatever goals are set.

Alon's daughter Liezel and Erana's mother Maia also referred to ease which provided space for creativity:

*Liezcel: It's relaxed, its casual, there's less pressure to it. It helps you be creative. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

*Maia: They weren't afraid to pick the tune up, or the stick up, and to give it a go. Just seeing Erana wanting to harmonize and experiment with sound. So creativity in herself is coming out. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Liezcel explained that the lack of pressure helped her to feel greater empathy with a composer. This suggests the inspiration for creativity can come from the expectation of an echo, musical form having its origin in dialogue (Keller, 1962):

*It gives less pressure when you are actually playing off the music sheet because it's not just 'Oh you have to do this'. 'You have to do that'. It's what someone created and you relate to the person who made the sheet music because it's not just a thing, it's what they created. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The findings showed that limited music experience was not a detriment to creative input. An absence of pressure lead to feeling of ease, and in turn, to greater confidence for the children to show creative input. The findings also stood in direct contrast to piano tuition in which ease in playing is often obtained with effort; pressure to conform to a standard and memorizing music, are descriptive of the full flowering of the artist.

#### **4.7 Enhanced Benefits through Ensemble Playing**

This next theme identified that parents and children saw benefits through ensemble playing. The findings revealed that seven participants thought that there were benefits in ensemble playing. Four parents felt the ensemble experience enhanced their children's future opportunities. A sub-theme "Musical Interaction" emerged in which participants indicated possible reasons for their enhanced experience in group music making. There was also a complex counter-narrative in which the children said they loved being part of a group, but also loved the individuality of not having to conform to any imposed structure.

Four parents commented on group work being valuable for future musical opportunities. Alon, Liezel's parent, commented on the importance of group work for learning to interact with other musicians for future opportunities, and requested further Orff-Schulwerk sessions after data collection was complete. Grace, Joon and Gi's mother, looked forward to the possibility of Joon and Gi being able to help on the worship team at church. Anya, Alexandria's mother, felt group work was:

*really good preparation for working with other people in the future, other musicians. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Maia, Erana's mother, saw development of listening skills for future opportunities in orchestral work:

*Maia: ...if she was a lot older and wanted to become part of an orchestra, that she will have those fundamental listening skills to be part of that. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Maia's comments echoed the implied feelings of responsibility the parents felt came with group participation:

*Maia: They have a responsibility with that. So it helps the child to be more disciplined with their one piece, so it might be something simple, but if it's not maintained it can change the whole fullness of a sound. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

I noted in the audio-recording of the second collaborative session evidence of Maia's comment. When the children sang the round, one group of three children were responsible for maintaining the simple rhythm and melody of their own part, while another group of three children sang two bars later. This enabled harmonies to emerge, and the fullness of counterpoint sound to be experienced. This suggests that discipline is required in collaborative music making, even with a simple song.

#### **4.7.1 Musical Interaction**

Musical interaction refers to musical benefits that occur when music-making takes place in a group situation. The findings do not make it clear whether these benefits occur from musical contributions that others provide, social contributions or both, and what the implications for each may be. The children in the study are accustomed to individual piano lessons and any feelings or comments inside their individual experience of music education remain unexpressed, unless a group experience occurs. This makes the following comments about the children's experience of group work in music-making, significant.

Three children, Alexandria, Niu Niu and Erana, felt that the ensemble experience was enhanced through the interaction of the group:

*Alexandria: It's quite nice because there are different sounds and different rhythms that just makes music a whole lot nicer. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Alexandria's comment stood out because the rhythms were no different from what she had encountered as a pianist. If anything they were simpler, and the xylophones being used were unsophisticated. It may be that her experience came from the shared experience of music-making that enabled Alexandria to experience sounds and rhythms that she had not encountered before. Maia suggested that music-making at its best is supposed to be a shared experience:

*Maia: So you could have one beat, Bim Bim Bim Bim, and you know people are going, 'Oh poor you, what a boring piece', but then the pieces start adding and adding and then you've got an 8-piece music. What's that saying, 'United we stand, divided we fall?'... You can put all those proverbs of, um... 'Ahakoa he iti he pounamu'. Translated it says, 'Although it is small, it is greenstone'. Even though it's small, it's still great. That is what I think Orff-Schulwerk is supposed to interpret. You might have one drop of water, but together you've got a rushing waterfall, eh. Music is supposed to be shared. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Advanced piano student, Niu Niu, spoke about the difference in sound that came with group music-making. Though she was otherwise resistant to Orff-Schulwerk activities, I have never heard her speak with more passion or sincerity when she said the group work was the most important thing for her about the sessions.

Antoinette's father, Andrew, associated "understanding the sound" with "working together", which was for him "an important element". Andrew felt that understanding the sound occurred when musicians worked together, not independently. That he felt this was "an important element" makes the comment interesting, particularly in light of his tendency towards a lack of interest in the programme. Orff-Schulwerk, in his view, was no different from what Antoinette had already experienced in early childhood with the Suzuki philosophy, and therefore was something he already understood.

However, while Alexandria, Erana and Niu Niu indicated enjoyment when part of an ensemble, like Antoinette and Liezel, they also indicated difficulties when playing music away from the group. Alexandria noticed the difficulty she experienced keeping the rhythm when playing on her own, and yet liked to be able to make her own decisions and not be told what to make the rhythm like:

*Alexandria: When I'm on my own it's kind of hard to keep the rhythm [yet] it was fun to make up my own and not have to be told*

*what to make the rhythm like. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

At the same time she thought the group was like a story, the concept of a whole once there were several people with a role to play:

*It's kind of like a story, each person reads a page. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The example illustrates that Alexandria sensed the individuality of her Orff-Schulwerk experience, in terms of having some sense of autonomy over her choices, enhanced the whole and did not detract from it. Autonomy was apparent in Liezel's comment. She noticed that being able to create her own rhythms and participate in a group caused her to listen to the offering of others. It also lead to understand better the message of other musicians:

*You have to listen to what the other person is doing. When you're making up rhythm yourself and being creative you get a greater sense of control over your own music. It's like you relate to the person who made the sheet music because it's not just a thing, it's what they created. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

As I wrote above, Niu Niu valued being part of a group with much sincere feeling. Yet her other responses indicated she valued the individual path of a skilled pianist leading the way, just as much. I wrote in my reflective journal:

*Having natural musical aptitude, Niu Niu was unwilling to be included in a musical environment with other children – her social antennae uncomfortably plucked by the wrong kind of environment.*  
*(Personal Reflection, 16 December, 2017)*

When I asked Niu Niu in what way she felt she could express herself with music the best, whether piano or Orff-Schulwerk, she replied:

*Niu Niu: I think in piano. I think I can, like, play some different things. Do what I like, want. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

However, all of the music she played was the compositions of other musicians. There appears a conflict here. Niu Niu found that playing the music generated by other people enabled her to do what she wanted. It was not clear what Niu Niu was referring to here, whether freedom for her was through imitation of a

professional musician, or finding her own voice by finding empathy with the composer's intentions.

The findings show that four parents felt the Orff-Schulwerk experience enhanced their children's future opportunities. Five participants - two parents and three children, felt the collaborative nature of ensemble playing enhanced their experience of music-making in positive ways, and that the presence of other people made the difference. Parents, Andrew and Maia, both felt ensemble playing was an essential, or important element. Five children found Orff-Schulwerk allowed for their individual expression of rhythm. Their autonomous choices contributed to the ensemble experience and did not detract from it, because of their greater understanding of music as a whole.

## **4.8 Barriers to Implementing Orff**

A further theme that emerged from the data was some of the barriers to implementing Orff. In this section I draw on two themes that identify some of the factors that inhibit the implementation of Orff-Schulwerk into private piano tuition: a parental lack of knowledge of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy, and parents' cultural background that prevented acceptance.

It was apparent as the weeks of data collection progressed that six of the parents interviewed had reactions to the Orff-Schulwerk experiences ranging from seeing the benefit of continuing with the programme (Alon, Grace, Anya, Daquan), to some lack of engagement (Andrew and Maia).

### **4.8.1 Lack of Knowledge of Orff-Schulwerk**

I noted that although the parents, Andrew, Alon, Maia, Anya, Daquan and Grace, responded to the sessions and interview questions with positive comments about the benefits of Orff-Schulwerk, they did not have the depth of understanding about the programme. I noted this in my reflective journal:

*What else I have suspected is that parents more than children, have pre-conceived expectations about music education, and on the whole parents more than children received the Orff-Schulwerk classes with an edge of suspicion, and clearly did NOT fully understand the depths of Orff-Schulwerk. But then the lack of time prevented that from occurring. (Personal Reflection, 16 December, 2017)*

To remedy this I began the second collaborative session by reading to both parents and children *What is Aesthetic Education* by Doug Goodkin (2003), an internationally recognised teacher of Orff-Schulwerk. This article may have illustrated to the parents that the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy took into account children's creative contributions and as a consequence their independent views were considered valuable. I reflected on this in my reflective journal:

*I spoke to the parents (following the article reading) about how I felt their perceptions were very valuable because any music education environment has the power to bring out the best in the child, whether or musical or not, in a way that is unique. For that music education environment to be effective it was necessary to allow the participants to feel able to use their creativity and sense of innovation and natural intelligence in an environment where 'advice and information' is given, not 'instructions and decisions'. (Personal Reflection, 16 December, 2017)*

Parents spoke about Orff-Schulwerk and piano tuition in general, though not answering the interview questions directly. This discussion was notable because of the unreserved manner in which the parents spoke compared with the more measured responses in their interview sessions. The discussion revealed their frustration with elements of their experience of music education. Anya felt that:

*Because the soul of the child is left out of many existing music tuition environments that position a child for failure and fear for 'not measuring up', mistakes are frowned on. There is no room for trial and error required for the child to be creative. (Semi-structured interview, 16 December, 2017)*

Anya commented that the performance orientation of the examination and recital environment was not always welcome. The article I read to them at the start of this session appeared to release their voices to express their views. The following quote from Antoinette's father, Andrew, is referring to Antoinette just days before her piano exam. It seemed he believed the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy was no different from the Suzuki method which Antoinette had already experienced, and that the Orff-Schulwerk was not important enough to detract from Antoinette's piano goals:

*...what you're trying to teach is something she has learnt already therefore I already understand it...What Antoinette really wanted to achieve and what she was focusing most of the time on during the*

*last week of [piano] practice was more about the aesthetics of the [exam] piece. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Another quote from Erana's mother, Maia, shows her perception of Orff-Schulwerk as a positive programme but not one that captured the deeper benefits that Orff intended:

*I'm sure the Orff-Schulwerk will give her the strength to be creative, to carry her on and try other instruments and learn amongst others and even seeing and listening to the different beats in the Orff-Schulwerk. I thought the beats were amazing! (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Maia's interest was the piano and the benefits of private piano lessons and the opportunity these lessons provided for Erana to learn to read notated music:

*[My daughter has] done a couple of recitals so it's just wonderful to see [my daughter and Erana] extending in their music formally. I've never had a formal lesson in music as such where I've had a teacher, so that was the whole reason for, both [naming husband] and I...they get this opportunity learn formal lessons because it has extended them. Even the theory lessons. [Erana] will have a recording system, she will be able to transcribe that on to paper, and then give that to a band and then they will be able to play that music! (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The Orff-Schulwerk sessions revealed the need for parents to gain a greater understanding of the philosophy so that it could compete with measureable piano tuition such as music examinations. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (2017) examinations provide measurement in the form of marks and certificates; Orff-Schulwerk has no comparable way of measuring how its benefits occur.

Overall, it appeared the parents' regular attendance at piano lessons revealed the importance they placed on measureable outcomes as evidence of progress. This was so, even though they reported favourably on the less measureable benefits of Orff-Schulwerk such as creativity, motivation, and understanding music. The gaps in their understanding about the deeper intentions of Orff-Schulwerk acted as a barrier to implementing the philosophy. Antoinette's father, Andrew, was unable to see the Orff-Schulwerk might increase Antoinette's competence because of his own barrier to acceptance. His parental influence could, in turn, lead to

Antoinette herself not understanding the potential that exists in her own development (Pomerantz et al., 2005, as cited in McPherson, 2009; Wallace & Walberg, 1991, as cited in Creech & Hallam, 2003):

*Because Annabelle has already had experience in this particular environment, she has already applied that to her music anyway in everything that she does. (Semi-structured interview, 11 November, 2017)*

The frustration I felt over the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy not being fully appreciated is shown in the following journal entry:

*It is as if the real purpose of music resumes when the ‘real’ lesson resumes in terms of exam preparation, theory lessons, and mastery of formal, classical piano performance and skill. (Personal Reflection, 9 November, 2017).*

These findings show that for all parents there was a lack of knowledge about Orff-Schulwerk, despite their willingness to contribute. The decision to read an article to them resulted in a discussion. One parent commented about her frustration with existing music education environments that focus more on having to ‘measure up’ than on the soul of the child. Parents revealed a mixture of loyalties towards both measurable outcomes such as examinations, recitals and learning to read, while also expressing appreciation for the increased creativity, motivation and understanding of music that Orff-Schulwerk provided.

#### **4.8.2 Cultural Background and Past Experience**

‘Culture’ is defined as the way of life of an entire society, including manners, language, rituals, behaviour and belief, and the ultimate goals of society (“Culture”, 2016). The findings showed that parents’ and children’s own cultural background appeared to influence their receptiveness to the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Andrew, Antoinette’s parent, is Chinese. He seemed to view the Asian based Suzuki violin teaching philosophy (with its focus on Western classical music) as providing a foundation for adaptation to an Orff-Schulwerk approach:

*The philosophy around [Orff-Schulwerk] is really really good, but because Antoinette has already had some sort of introduction via the Suzuki method...she has already applied that to her music any way in everything that she does. (First individual interview, 11 November, 2017).*

Andrew appeared to find complex finger manoeuvres in violin playing and technical aspects in Antoinette's piano playing, lead to a meaningful musical experience:

*With a violin it is easier to get the little wee twirls and then you get more emotion out of it, whereas piano is – I mean you can get [emotion] out of using pedals which helps soften the sound, and you can play the notes harder, or softer, but at the end of the day a note when you press a key on the keyboard produces one sound...*

*...but the interesting thing is, while she was focused on the mechanics of the notes, what [Antoinette] really wanted to achieve and what she was focusing most of the time on during the last week of practice was more about the aesthetics of the piece. (First individual interview, 11 November, 2017).*

Andrew's comments reveal his preference for the Western classical music tradition in which technical mastery of an instrument conveys emotional significance and meaning.

Another instance where cultural background influenced receptiveness to Orff-Schulwerk was Maia (Erana's parent). It was clear that kapa haka provided meaningful musical experiences for Maia and Erana. Piano lessons were taken only to enable Erana to develop the skill of reading music:

*If we did not have kapa haka in our lives, then yes I would see [Orff-Schulwerk] as quite beneficial to Erana...it's wonderful to make music with others. For both [naming husband] and I [piano lessons] was first and foremost getting Erana to learn how to read music.*  
*(First individual interview, 11 November, 2017)*

Additionally, family was an important factor for Erana. Though Orff-Schulwerk focuses on group music-making, there is no comparative emphasis on family involvement.

*So it just comes through my generation, my mum and my koro. My mum's dad, he was one of the best Haka men. But he would do it with his face because all the other Haka men they would be like Kaiārahi-maurākau and stuff, but he used his facial expressions. His nannies taught him, which are pretty famous in the Māori world.*  
*(First individual interview, 11 November, 2017)*

As data collection progressed I began to realise the gap that existed in my understanding of Maia and Erana's musical culture and my own. This was particularly evident when Maia referred me to Hirini Melbourne, known in New Zealand for his work surrounding the revival of Māori culture, and the artist Brian Flintoff, to help me broaden my understanding. I felt then that if I had a deeper understanding of well-known Māori cultural icons in New Zealand before introducing her and Erana to Orff-Schulwerk, then Maia and Erana may have been more receptive to this Orff-Schulwerk approach. My reflective journal refers to this:

*It was easier to see why I am sensing a slight negative reaction.  
Maia talked at length about the Māori approach to music. Maia has directed me to Hirini Melbourne ad Brian Flintoff to help me understand more. I know the Orff-Schulwerk/Māori connection is developing in New Zealand. (Reflective Journal, 30 September 2017).*

The findings indicate that for two parents, past experiences and cultural background contributed to a barrier towards their acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk programme.

## 4.9 Chapter Summary

The findings demonstrate that students felt that their understanding of beat, rhythm, pitch and musicianship increased through participating in a short-term Orff-Schulwerk programme. This Orff-Schulwerk programme also seemed to enhance their creativity and support their understanding and awareness of ensemble playing. It was also perceived to enhance their musicianship through deepening their understanding of music. Barriers to acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk approach were presented by parents who experienced a lack of knowledge of the philosophy, and previous experience of an alternative programme. The cultural background of two parents suggested there were factors that contributed to their lack of acceptance of the approach.

# **Chapter 5 – Discussion**

This chapter presents a discussion of findings collected and reported in chapter four. The discussion will focus on three broad areas of the findings chapter: that children and parents perceived the Orff-Schulwerk approach, when applied to individual piano tuition, enhanced children's creativity, and enhanced their ability to play in an ensemble. Finally, it discusses perceived barriers to implementing Orff-Schulwerk within instrumental teaching from parents' and children's perspectives.

## **5.1 Enhanced Creativity**

A key theme that emerged from the findings is that the application of an Orff-Schulwerk approach to individual piano tuition is perceived by parents and children to enhance their creativity. As chapter four revealed, parents and children perceived that the application of the Orff-Schulwerk approach to piano tuition enhances children's creativity through increased musicianship, enjoyment and rhythmic capabilities, and the ability to sing. These findings align with previous research that suggests that Orff-Schulwerk helps to develop self-expression and curiosity in children. Frazee (2006) calls the Orff-Schulwerk process one where children follow their natural curiosity, try things out and express what they really think or feel. As chapter four noted, the child Liezel felt that it was important to feel that her and others' voices were expressed in respect of their musical desires and experience, so that their individuality was a contributing factor in shaping everything they thought and did. Both Alexandria and Antoinette made similar comments, which suggests that the Orff-Schulwerk approach is instrumental in drawing children towards new possibilities of musical expression, perhaps independently of their past behaviours and beliefs.

This finding is not surprising as Orff saw Orff-Schulwerk education as one that provided the broadest of foundations for *all* children to take part, whatever their level of talent (Orff, 1963). Music education was an easily accessible world for all children since, Orff believed, completely unmusical children were very rare (Orff, 1963). It appeared that children would benefit whatever their level of musical talent, perhaps even in the situation of a learning disability. For Orff, the aim of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy was to access the individual child through his or

her active involvement in music and the discoveries that emerge from the child's explorations. It was not a system of teaching music for its own sake.

In this study, the children's frequent references to being allowed to "do their own thing" and their resistance to conformity were examples of their individuality finding expression. In many cases their views mirrored their perception that piano lessons were a series of rules to abide by. The children wanted to experience music, and to know what music was about more than just having pieces and learning them. The composition experiments described by Gi and Joon's mother, Grace, are other examples of the children stepping beyond the structure of the formal piano lesson and trying out their own thing. As chapter four noted the child, Antoinette, made reference to this idea explaining that Orff-Schulwerk opened her up to "more than" simply playing and learning pieces. Antoinette felt as children, Alexandria and Liezel, did: Orff-Schulwerk opens them up to what they *can* do.

Another way that participants perceived creativity to be an important benefit of Orff-Schulwerk was, according to the parents, that it encouraged children to experience, express and create a variety of musical sounds with confidence. Orff-Schulwerk's elemental instruments provided 'the way in' to a creative response, removing the act from the level of performing to a pre-determined standard. This was indicated in Liezel's father, Alon's, comment using terms for the sound that would normally be saved for description of a living being: he said that the "basic instrument" (xylophone) allowed for a "gentle and friendly" approach. Alon's distinctive description may have been his way of recognising a simplistic quality in the xylophone that did not require prior skill to execute. Orff (1932) noted that, "The greatest value is to be laid on the absolute tonal quality of the [xylophone]; a world of sound can only be created with tonally perfect instruments. All 'noise' is to be avoided..." (p. 102). An image emerges of a child hitting a toy xylophone for the first time in anticipation of the sound the colourful bars might make, but giving up in exasperation because the tinny sounds carry no resemblance of instrumental sounds in his or her short experience of life. Orff said music begins inside human beings by listening to one's own stillness, listening to one's own heart-beat, and breathing (Orff, 1932). In other words, music assumes meaning for a participant as it emerges from gentle beginnings that have meaning for a child. Regner (1975) summarised the Orff-Schulwerk model: the process removed perceived barriers to creativity with its example of simplicity, transparency and clarity that gave confidence to a student to produce

his or her own work. The Orff-Schulwerk experience encouraged the children to engage with creative music-making with confidence.

A further way that the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy enabled children to try out new ideas for themselves was in singing activities, leading to the children's greater understanding of what music was about. Three children had experienced singing aural tests in their individual piano examination in the months leading up to these Orff-Schulwerk sessions. This required them to sing in tune in a range of keys and to remember phrases after a single hearing. After the eight week Orff-Schulwerk programme, it was evident that children now responded more creatively and with more enjoyment with the singing activities. It was an example of children who "sing from their soul and not like trained birds" (Nykrin, 2010, p. 274). The experience was less sophisticated than anything else they had encountered at the Helena Rubinstein School of Music, but for the chance to be creative, very meaningful for their development as children. Keller (1962) explains that each child gives an individual character to what he discovers through singing games, just as he expresses his uniqueness as an individual in the way his first attempts at speech describe the outward appearance of things. The child learns about music through his or her own discoveries. What was interesting about the singing session was that the children were as inhibited at having to sing in front of their piano colleagues, as they were excited to try, and then see that their voices were valuable as unique, creative instruments belonging solely to them. They moved beyond the bubble game in which they had to find, hum and maintain a note, to moving physically together to sing their first round at the second collaborative session. Although an unfamiliar experience, each child successfully maintained his or her own part. The activity was made possible flowing on from the bubble exercise which helped them discover their own singing voices. Gone were the aural tests in which children were required to perform to pre-determined criteria, albeit useful in forming highly developed musical skills. Allowing children to discover music for themselves with playful singing activities lead to their greater understanding of music.

When children were given an opportunity to exercise imagery in their minds they were enabled to respond creatively by initiating meaningful action. Goodkin (2003) refers to the "discipline of seeing the world without an agenda" and guarding against "manipulating, controlling or using the world" rather than "noticing and praising" in attitudes of aspiration (p. 12). When the children were asked to picture a scene in their minds their senses had a chance to be stimulated

(Schnebly-Black, & More, 1997), and a basis was provided for their improvisations. At the last collaborative session the children were asked to imagine a cricket landing on an autumn leaf that had recently floated to the ground, making a breath of sound. Their eyes were closed for the imagery. In response to the cricket landing, Alexandria improvised the briefest of tunes on a xylophone. In order to distract Alexandria from a feeling of having to play correctly rather than playing from her imagination, the decision for the improvisation to be very brief was deliberate. By allowing an improvised response, the children were given the opportunity to respond in their own, unique way to the images in their minds. The act of improvisation was an outward expression of their own stimulated imaginations. The experience helped the children to be aware that a creative response to music-making could enable their piano playing to become a personally meaningful experience, even where piano works are being reproduced. An awareness of a composer's intentions in the piano piece may also be better appreciated. Encouraging a creative response from children through activities that enhanced their imaginations, helped them to initiate meaningful action.

The findings showed that opportunities for the children to try new ideas allowed them to discover their individuality through a creative response, within a group structure. Much of Orff literature emphasises the creative benefits that come from collaboration. Frazee (1987) notes that children will learn most effectively through imitation, and the discovery that much of the joy of musical creation comes from cooperating with others and the sharing of each other's ideas. Additionally, sharing ideas with the group in a manner of leadership become the children's first steps towards competent musicianship. The findings showed that the children had competing desires to conform to being part of the group because of the support that the group offered, while also wanting to be free of any kind of structure, to explore their potential to create. As the findings showed, they needed to "do their own thing" to achieve that. For example, Niu Niu was conflicted in her desire to uphold piano success because it enabled her unique musical ability to find traction and growth. Being advanced in piano compared to the rest of the children, she both rejected the Orff-Schulwerk opportunities for creativity, and longed for the comfort of group support. Niu Niu did not find creative satisfaction in Orff-Schulwerk and retreated to the creativity found in piano success, even though it was isolating. Whether the children found Orff-Schulwerk enhanced their creativity, or continued to find piano lessons the satisfying source of creativity, in both instances the children found satisfaction. I

believe this was for reasons beyond opportunities for rhythmic, singing and musicianship expression, but for the opportunity through creative discovery for the individual: in Regner's (1975) words, to realise themselves, to be affirmed. The children in this study found that engaging with Orff-Schulwerk enabled them to find their individuality while participating at the same time in an ensemble environment.

Overall the findings showed that Orff-Schulwerk increased the children's ability to play with rhythm and to sing, leading to greater musicianship and enjoyment. They showed that through providing opportunities to engage in music-making activities, creative potential was available to all children regardless of their level of talent. Further, findings showed that using an elemental approach and a variety of musical sounds, provided a 'way in' to their creative music-making. The children found a greater understanding of music through trying out new ideas in singing for themselves. Additionally, the act of improvisation was a creative response to a stimulated imagination, rather than playing something that was commanded. Lastly, the children found their individuality through trying out their own ideas within the group structure.

## **5.2 Perceived Benefits through Ensemble Playing**

This section discusses the second key theme that emerged from the data on parents' and children's perceptions of applying Orff-Schulwerk approaches to children's individual piano lessons. Ensemble playing was seen as a perceived benefit of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. As findings in chapter four reveal, children perceived the ensemble experience especially beneficial for developing their rhythmic capabilities. The seven children in the study whose previous experiences in ensemble playing was non-existent appeared to benefit the most.

The first perceived benefit from ensemble playing is that it appeared to enable children to enhance their rhythmic capabilities. This was identified in chapter four when Alexandria spoke of the ensemble being "quite nice because there are different sounds and different rhythms" that "just makes music a whole lot nicer". Alexandria's observation of different rhythms and sounds did not come from her own contributions as a member of the ensemble because, as mentioned in the findings, Alexandria experienced much simpler music and less sophisticated instruments at the Orff session than she was accustomed to as a pianist. As beat keeper, Alexandria's part was repetitive and had little in the way of musical

development throughout the session. However, from this experience Alexandria identified that she was now more aware of other rhythms within the ensemble. Understanding music through collaboration is one of the principles of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy, and is well documented in Orff-Schulwerk literature (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, Woods, & York, 2001; De Quadros, 2000; Haselbach, 2006; Kugler, 2011; Nash et al., 2001). In the current study, the children learned to listen to one another, learned to interact, learned to monitor their beats, and learned group dynamics which enhanced the finished musical effect in an eventual performance. With the support that the group offered, the children gained confidence to ‘try out’ improvised new ideas, especially when other members of the group provided inspiration with a freshly improvised rhythm or melody of their own. This shows that the intent of Orff-Schulwerk to enhance children’s rhythmic capabilities was recognised by children through their engagement in the group Orff-Schulwerk lessons.

Another perceived benefit of Orff-Schulwerk was that ensemble playing enabled children to understand that music is enriched and understood better when simplistic, individual expressions were combined with others’ offerings. For example, Erana’s mother, Maia, reminded me that a single drop of water is significant when comprehended in the context of a waterfall. “*Ahakoa he iti he pounamu, although it is small, it is still great*”. By this, Maia seemed to explain that the contributions individual children made into the ensemble experience were elemental, yet were ascribed enhanced meaning when practiced in a group context. Each part became no less significant than another, even if one part was simplistic to the point of repetition. An example of this was Alexandria’s faithful beat keeping on octaves on a xylophone. Alexandria found the experience enriching when her contribution was interpreted in the light of the presence of others all adding their interpretations. It became a “story” to her. Alexandria’s comment stood out because it appeared she was referring to something else besides the different sounds and different rhythms that solo pianists encounter. The rhythms were identical to what she had experienced many months ago at her very first piano lesson. Additionally, the different sounds were from xylophones, a collection of elemental instruments which while pleasant, were different from the potentially sophisticated sounds that are possible with a piano. In reflecting on this, it appeared that Alexandria was experiencing the layers of sound that occurs when others are there with her contributing to the collective sound. She is no longer creating all those different sounds and different rhythms herself, and no longer solely responsible for the different sounds that are possible as a

developing pianist. Being with others made the process less isolated, and she was able to share the experience. As Maia said “music is supposed to be shared”. Antoinette’s father, Andrew, felt that that working together in an ensemble was an important factor enabling students to understand the sounds they created. The Orff-Schulwerk enabled children’s simplistic, original creations to assume musical meaning when combined in a collaborative setting.

In addition, ensemble playing was perceived to enhance social engagement amongst children. Nash et al. (2001) identify the significance of the individual as member of a group. In essence, Nash et al. say, the group is a powerful dynamic that is brought to a whole new dimension with the contributions of each member. A single expression of music occurs and “brings people out of themselves into a dynamic relationship with others in the class and with the music” (Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997, p. 27). This shows that the intent of Orff-Schulwerk is to enhance children’s social engagement in music and this was recognised in this study by children’s engagement in the group Orff-Schulwerk lessons. This has interesting implications, particularly for children who learn through individual music instruction. This point will be revisited and discussed in greater depth towards the end of this chapter.

Another aspect of ensemble playing that children perceived to be as beneficial is that the group provided both the freedom to improvise, yet it also provided the structure of having clearly defined and delineated roles within an ensemble. The findings also uncovered a complex narrative in which the children loved not having to conform, but appreciated being part of the group because of the support that the group offered. Alexandria’s comments reflected this conflict. She found it was hard to keep the rhythm on her own, but that it was also fun to make up her own rhythm and not be told how to do it. Even Niu Niu wanted the chance to express herself in a way she would feel supported as an advanced pianist, yet longed for group membership. Salaman’s (2008) research supports this as it found that music students who focused on what they were trying to achieve rather than conform to instructions for what they should achieve, were more motivated and successful. The above literature illustrates that children develop understanding of music through collaboration, and the opportunity to explore ideas of their own with the structure of the group providing support.

The children’s desire to retain their individuality while wanting to be part of a group highlights differences encountered in the way ensembles are expressed in

both the Orff-Schulwerk classroom, and in a piano context. It is not correct to assume that the piano student is not accustomed to ensemble gatherings as a teaching method, although most lessons for pianists do take place individually. This solo approach to instruction is possibly in recognition of the fact that when a gathering of accomplished instrumentalists come together in a piano concerto, quintet, or small chamber group setting the piano student has reached a level of skill that is enhanced when playing with other individual, accomplished instrumentalists. It is interesting to note that a group piano teaching approach which accommodated the skills of the least skilled piano students in the class, did not in any way affect the other students' perceptions of the quality of their experience (Duke & Benson, 2004). Experiencing a piano ensemble through piano concerto, quintet or small chamber group enables the individual pianist to experience musical sense-making in the presence of other individual instrumentalists. It is not clear whether such a piano ensemble is pursued for the goals of performance skills or of developing musicianship, or both. As these findings show, children found that ensemble playing in the Orff Schulwerk activity allowed them to express their individuality while also being supported through the group structure.

In conclusion, both children and parents perceived that the ensemble playing aspects of the Orff-Schulwerk approach was beneficial for both enhancing students' rhythmic capabilities, but also for strengthening their social awareness of being a member of a musical group. Children perceived that music becomes meaningful when their simplistic contributions are combined with others. They perceived an enhanced social engagement in music occurred through participating in an ensemble. Lastly, children found freedom to improvise within the support of the ensemble.

### **5.3 Musicianship**

This section explores a third key theme that emerged from the findings; that parents and children believe that the Orff-Schulwerk approach enhances their musicianship. Chapter four revealed that most children and parents felt that the Orff-Schulwerk approach enhanced their rhythmic and singing capabilities, although these findings were not consistently reported on. This chapter explores these ideas and considers the implications of these findings.

As chapter four demonstrated, four parents saw the benefits of Orff-Schulwerk in enhancing musicianship in their child. Four of the parents in the study felt that the Orff-Schulwerk programme brought out their children's musicianship through their active involvement, rather than being a process that taught music to children.

An aspect of Orff-Schulwerk that children and parents perceived enhanced their musicianship was the deeper understanding of music brought about by actual music-making. Antoinette's father, Andrew, believed Orff-Schulwerk encouraged the children to understand music by realising that music is not just a process, but an emotion, feeling, an experience. Understanding music is the intention of Orff-Schulwerk (Regner, 1975) who states that the purpose of Orff-Schulwerk is to provide a "true understanding" of musical language and expression, discovered through actual music-making (p. 174). The Orff-Schulwerk enhanced a truer understanding of music through active involvement in music-making.

Another aspect that this heightened musicianship seemed to bring was enhanced enjoyment and engagement in music. For Gi and Joon the burden of piano practice was replaced with playful musical activities. Grace, Joon and Gi's mother, reported that her children showed greater motivation and enjoyment as a result of the Orff-Schulwerk programme which lead to Joon's composition on his computer, and Gi making up melodies at the piano. The Orff approach seemed to promote an enthusiasm and the motivation needed as a result of the children wanting to try new activities. This finding is supported by De Quadros (2000) who believed that achieving musicianship requires aspects of self-growth, self-knowledge, musical enjoyment and self-esteem. This suggests that the Orff-Schulwerk programme enhanced children's desire to participate in, and create music of their own.

Another aspect of Orff-Schulwerk that children and parents perceived enhanced their musicianship was the fact that it is not driven by external assessment. Chapter two demonstrated that piano examinations strongly drive piano instruction, however some argue that this has inhibited the development of musicianship. For example, Salaman (1994) felt in his analysis of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools exams that examinations failed to nurture some of the most important aspects of a truly musical education. Salaman (1994) believes these examinations focus on the skill of reading music which sits in conflict with the aim of promoting musicianship. However, Orff placed musicianship at the

centre of his approach to music education. From this perspective, all children have a natural ability to make music and to develop musicianship (De Quadros, 2000). In this study, when the focus of reading notation was removed, the children could get on with the act of producing music. This was evident when Alexandria's mother, Anya, saw how Alexandria focused on the musical elements in her pieces when unnecessary burdens such as looking at music and worrying about the keyboard, were removed. Liezel's father, Alon, also saw that the children were actively focused in their music-making when they were not also anxious about memorising the notes. As chapter four demonstrated, children's attempts at music-making with the burden of reading notation removed, showed an element of creativity.

This confirms Yong and Cheah's (2011) findings that suggest children need to experience the development of greater musicianship in their piano lessons that are less centred on examination syllabi. Salaman (1994) notes that learning to read music, while an indispensable part of the exam process, could be in conflict with the aim of promoting musicianship. An example of such conflict was seen in Erana's mother, Maia's, eloquent comments, "the essence of musicianship", and the "musicians' code" that children experienced when making music together, and yet Maia also saw great value in the advantages that came with the ability to read music in individual piano lessons. As chapter four indicated, Maia saw that piano lessons would enable Erana to have a recording system for transcribing music. It was her primary reason for engaging Erana in private piano lessons. Overall, parents perceived the Orff-Schulwerk process enhanced the children's musicianship through its lack of dependency on external examinations.

All of these findings point towards internal changes that I noticed occurring in the children. This was apparent in the Orff-Schulwerk activities when the children took an active role, more so than in the piano lesson when children respond to direction. I wrote in my journal that children were changing internally. They appeared to be more enthusiastic, more confident and more in touch with their abilities.

The findings showed the parents felt Orff-Schulwerk allowed children to experience a deeper level of understanding of music through music-making, leading to enhanced musicianship. It also enhanced children's enjoyment and engagement in music. Music-making that had burdens removed such as reading notation enhanced children's musicianship. Consequently, findings suggest the

examination system which assesses measurable aspects such as reading notation is in conflict with the aim of promoting musicianship. Lastly, enhanced musicianship appeared to lead to positive internal changes in the children.

## **5.4 Barriers to Acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk**

As the findings in chapter four revealed, there were barriers to the parents accepting the Orff-Schulwerk approach as a legitimate form of music education when integrated into their child's piano lessons. One of the reasons for this was the lack of knowledge that parents had of the philosophy. Another was parents' cultural background and past experiences which hindered their acceptance of the approach.

### **5.4.1 Lack of Knowledge of Orff-Schulwerk**

As chapter four demonstrated, this research showed that some parents experienced barriers to accepting Orff-Schulwerk as a valid and valuable approach to piano instruction. The parents in the study needed to better understand the intention behind the Orff-Schulwerk sessions. Parents such as Grace, Andrew and Maia had a favourable attitude towards the benefits of Orff-Schulwerk. However, their comments revealed a lack of depth in their understanding about Orff-Schulwerk.

Despite these encouraging comments, the parents appeared to value formal piano lessons with measurable attributes such as examinations, recitals and the ability to read music. An example was Antoinette's father, Andrew, who felt the Orff-Schulwerk process enabled his child to "actually really feel music", yet in practice, Antoinette's learning was focused on how to interpret the intentions of the composer of her [piano] piece prior to her examination.

Another example of this focus on measurement came from Erana's mother, Maia, whose purpose for formal piano lessons was to give Erana the opportunity to learn to read music. This focus on measurable 'outputs' has limited parents' receptiveness to the Orff-Schulwerk approach which enhances children's musical experience in ways that are less easy to define.

The findings addressed another aspect that was a barrier to acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk. It was apparent that parents' beliefs influenced their children's progress. McPherson (2009) found that the more fixed parents viewed their children's competence the more self-fulfilling was their perception. This had

implications in terms of the likelihood or otherwise of parents providing musical instrument lessons for their children and the level of involvement they had with those lessons (Reeves, 2015). Parents' views are powerful in the musical outcomes for their children.

Andrew was fixed in his view that Orff-Schulwerk could not enhance Antoinette's musical competence any further than her early childhood Suzuki experiences provided. This was a barrier to an open mind because Antoinette was influenced negatively by her father's beliefs. McPherson's (2009) research explains that parents will use measurable yardsticks to determine what they might suspect is true: that their child possesses musicality and formal instrumental training will help this to be recognised.

Parents' perceptions in the study have shown a bias towards measurable outcomes rather than towards the less measurable attributes of musicianship. Examples such as "ensemble playing", "improvising" and "musicianship" are a far more important aspect of a musical education, yet are not nurtured in exams (Salaman, 1994, p. 221). The tendency for parents to evaluate their children's musical success using systems of measurement is an example of parents socialising their children in ways that are consistent with their perceptions of how well they are doing academically (Eccles, 1983; Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997; Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2001). This external system of measurement is a barrier to the Orff-Schulwerk methodology, which could indicate why parents were less receptive to this Orff-Schulwerk approach to individual piano tuition.

Overall, as chapter two showed, literature demonstrates that parental influence over children's progress is more significant than parents realise, and is even more significant than the influence of teachers (Pomerantz et al., 2005, as cited in McPherson, 2009; Wallace & Walberg, 1991, as cited in Creech & Hallam, 2003). Parents' perceptions have a self-fulfilling effect on their children's musical competence (McPherson, 2009). Parents who saw their children as musical searched for measurable ways to confirm their perceptions. Conversely, parents who perceived their children as unmusical did not encourage music lessons. With this in mind, the children participating in this study might have responded quite differently to the Orff activities and research questions, had their parents viewed the Orff-Schulwerk approach with the same acceptance as they do piano examinations. For future receptiveness of Orff-Schulwerk applied to piano

lessons to occur among parents, a new revelation is needed. Achieving this would require further research conducted over a longer time frame, and would need to include information for parents about the philosophy's deep intentions.

Overall, the findings revealed that fixed parental views about their child's competence lead to a focus on measurable outcomes such as examinations and reading music. These fixed views acted as a barrier towards parents understanding the intention behind the Orff-Schulwerk approach.

#### **5.4.2 Cultural background and past experiences**

Cultural factors and previous experiences also appeared to limit parents' openness to an Orff-Schulwerk approach. Andrew felt that Antoinette's past experience with Suzuki was sufficient for her future engagement with similar philosophies. It was also possible that his Chinese heritage acted as a barrier to his acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy with origins in Western Europe.

Some cultures have favoured a Western classical music tradition in their expressions of music, by following a traditional paradigm of music education in which beginning musicians study Western European art music (Andrews, 2011; Huang, 2012). This is apparent in Andrew's interest in the technical side of violin and piano playing, especially as a means of producing emotion and aesthetics in Antoinette's piano playing. His comments show an echo of the values of technical mastery that were evident in the Western conservatories, and the supremacy of Western classical music in schools until relatively recently (Regelski, 2005).

Huang (2012) points out that Western preferences in the development of music in Chinese culture were founded on the belief that European music was superior; musical instruments from the West were seen as technologically advanced and came from scientifically-advanced nations. The Orff-Schulwerk methodology modelled an independent expression, separate from culture, but which brought something to life in the individual. Andrew's focus on technical instrument mastery as a way of producing emotion and aesthetic playing shows a bias towards Western classical musical values in instrumental playing.

Findings in this study revealed that a barrier to acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy came from Erana's mum, Maia. Of the six parents interviewed, Maia spoke with passion of a music education alternative, the kapa haka. Recent New Zealand literature has shown a greater recognition of the role culture plays in Māori identity and educational outcomes (Berryman, Egan, & Ford, 2017). Since Māori have obtained greater control of their own education with the creation of

Kura Kaupapa Māori schools and bilingual classes, the kapa haka has played a more significant role than ever (Douglas, 2001). This influence is extending to English speaking education environments. Whitinui (2010) also confirms the experience of participating in kapa haka has enhanced the social, cultural, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of what it means for Māori students to be included as culturally-connected human beings.

I knew that it was always Orff's understanding that the Orff-Schulwerk was an approach for all children through adaptation into other cultures. However, it could be critiqued that Orff-Schulwerk is not culturally responsive in indigenous cultures. It could be interpreted as a Western derived approach to music education that doesn't value local musical cultural traditions. After Orff witnessed the international dispersal of Orff-Schulwerk over three or more decades, Orff came to understand that local adaptation was inevitable, since it carried essential elements that enhanced the lives of children from all backgrounds (Orff, 1963). One of the enduring images associated with Orff-Schulwerk is Orff's "wild flower" - it just keeps appearing where it is needed without any pre-considered plan (Orff, 1963, p. 134).

While the organization Orff New Zealand Aotearoa (ONZA) has been created to establish an Orff-Schulwerk identity in New Zealand, and tertiary study begun at Waikato University in 2007, findings in this study reveal that parents such as Maia do not yet know about the potential that exists with their acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk in New Zealand. However, Orff himself spoke of the importance of beginning again when "doing" Schulwerk in foreign countries. The starting point, he said, must be from the basis of what the children experience, for example, rhyme and children's songs (Orff, 1978, as cited in Shamrock, 2013). Orff's view reaffirms Maia's own understanding of music that is best taught through one's own culture, and passed on from one generation to the next.

Having a deeper appreciation of Maia's perception of music that is relevant to her culture opens the way for Orff-Schulwerk to find an opening of relevance to Māori parents, like Maia. Such a link has begun through workshops for teachers by Orff New Zealand Aotearoa over the last few years, using Māori myths and Māori songs and dance (Locke, 2016). Locke refers to some tension around the indiscriminate use of so-called Orff instruments to indigenous music, showing that some sensitivity is required in this regard. Green's "delineated meanings"

may not be readily accessible to a person from outside the culture (Green, 2005, p. 80).

It is very likely that Maia would have been more receptive to Orff-Schulwerk had I approached the study from the starting point of her experience of culture expressed through music education. Maia and her family might have benefited from the progress of Orff-Schulwerk in New Zealand to the present, with greater awareness that Orff-Schulwerk has been used in important ways leading to children's well-being, whatever their background. The Orff approach has been utilised to enhance the self-concept of children with learning disabilities, work with children with hearing impairments and to treat autism (Barker, 1981; Birkenshaw, 1997; Hollander & Juhrs, 1974; Nichols, 1969, as cited in Beegle & Bond, 2016). Using an approach that begins from the perspective of a participant's culture is more likely to result in better acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk programme, and deeper appreciation of its benefits.

A further finding in the study is confirmed by Locke (2016) who suggests that the name Orff can lead to many people in bi-cultural New Zealand to resist the approach. Such an approach can lead people to believe the name implies a monoculturalism. My findings suggested that the name Orff was a barrier to acceptance. Both parents and children enquired often during data collection how to pronounce "Orff-Schulwerk", and wondered if I was referring to something "off-shore". It is interesting to note that Austrians and Germans refer to the Orff-Schulwerk as *Elementare Musik und Tanzpaedagogik* (elemental music and dance pedagogy), avoiding the name "Orff" altogether (Locke, 2016, p. 97).

In conclusion it was found that the barrier to acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk coming from Andrew was due to his previous experience in the Suzuki method of violin tuition. It was possible that his Chinese heritage contributed towards a barrier to acceptance because of a preference for the Western classical music tradition. Maia's acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk may have been increased with my deeper understanding of her perspective of music education. Searching literature revealed that kapa haka is becoming more and more evident in mainstream education as it represents lived experience for Māori. Findings suggest that listening to Māori parents' and children's voices is necessary in order to appreciate how the influence of an "off-shore" music education alternative might be better accepted. It was always Orff's intention that Orff-Schulwerk was beneficial for all children in general.

## **5.5 Chapter Summary**

In summary, the findings have revealed that the Orff-Schulwerk process enhanced children's creativity through activities that allowed for a creative response. Activities that increased children's ability to play with improvised rhythm and first attempts at trying out their singing voices in a group setting contributed to greater musicianship and enjoyment. Trying out their own ideas resulting from opportunities to use imagery lead to the children's improvisations and increased confidence. The children found the group enabled both the freedom to improvise, yet it also provided the structure of having clearly defined and delineated roles within an ensemble.

Parents felt Orff-Schulwerk allowed children to experience a deeper level of understanding of music leading to enhanced musicianship. The process also enhanced children's enjoyment, motivation and engagement with music. Music making that had notation removed enhanced children's musicianship. The aims of musicianship are more difficult to quantify and conflict with the more easily measured examination system. An example of this is the emphasis on written notation required for examination. Enhanced musicianship lead to positive internal changes in the children such enthusiasm, confidence, and becoming more in touch with their abilities.

Parents and children perceived that the ensemble experience was beneficial for strengthening children's social awareness. It also enabled children to discover that simplistic music became meaningful when played with others. Finding their own delineated role in the group environment was made possible through creating their own music in the group environment

Lastly, fixed parental views about their children's competence lead to their focus on measureable outcomes such as examinations and reading music. In addition, a barrier to acceptance resulted from one parent's background experiences which lead to his valuing technical instrumental skill as a way of producing emotion in music. The dominance of the Western classical music tradition on other cultures lead to a barrier towards acceptance. Lastly, reducing a barrier to acceptance would have resulted from approaching the study from the Māori perspective of music education.

# **Chapter 6 - Conclusion**

This chapter presents the summary of results from this study and justifies how this contributes to our understanding of children and parents' perception of the application of Orff-Schulwerk onto children's private piano lessons at the Helena Rubinstein School of Music. This chapter concludes by presenting the limitations of this research before providing recommendations for future research.

## **6.1 Key Findings**

### **6.1.1 Creativity**

Overall the findings showed that Orff-Schulwerk increased the children's ability to play with rhythm and to sing, leading to greater musicianship and enjoyment. They showed that through providing opportunities to engage in music-making activities, creative potential was available to all children regardless of their level of talent. Further, findings showed that using an elemental approach and a variety of musical sounds, provided a 'way in' to creative music-making. The children found a greater understanding of music through trying out new ideas in singing for themselves. Additionally, the act of improvisation was a creative response to a stimulated imagination, rather than playing something that was commanded. Lastly, the children found their individuality through trying out their own ideas within the group structure.

This research has made a significant contribution towards understanding how Orff-Schulwerk methodology is perceived by children and parents to enhance children's creativity. The findings showed the children perceived Orff-Schulwerk enhanced their creativity through being allowed to try out their own ideas. In this way they could use what was 'in them' rather than just follow rules.

The children perceived that Orff-Schulwerk's opportunity for non-conformity enabled them to find expression for their individuality. Opportunities for creativity also enabled the children to discover their individuality within the group structure.

Experiencing music through trying out their own ideas enabled the children to experience music leading to their better understanding of music. The parents perceived the singing activities were an opportunity for children to find their

unique voices. One parent and child felt that the Orff-Schulwerk instruments presented a “friendly and relaxed” approach to music, removing the act from the level of performance and enabling the child to produce a tune. Another parent felt Orff-Schulwerk encouraged her children to be more motivated leading to a composition being created by her child.

The creative process of improvisation enabled the children to exercise their imaginations, and is one of the principle activities of an Orff-Schulwerk programme. This allowed for the children to develop the imagery in their minds and for their creative improvisations to become more frequent. Therefore, applying the Orff-Schulwerk approach to individual piano instruction is perceived by parents and children as a way to enhance their own creativity.

### **6.1.2 Benefits in Ensemble Playing**

The children perceived that ensemble playing helped them with the beat and rhythm through being enabled to ‘try out’ their own ideas. Ensemble playing enabled students to understand the sounds they created through the inspiration that the group offered. Hearing polyrhythms helped the children to express a deeper understanding of music; even if the rhythm of one part was repetitive and simple, as this enabled music to become a richer experience.

The children found the ensemble experience enabled them to try out their own ideas in improvisation, yet provided them with support. Having clearly defined and delineated roles within an ensemble enabled the children to discover their own individual response to music.

The freedom to be part of the group while retaining individuality is a need perceived by the children in this study. One child felt her individuality was experienced as an individual pianist. This has implications for the perceptions of children who find their individuality by playing with other individual instrumentalists such as in a piano quintet, piano concerto or small chamber group. For these children, choosing an individual path of piano instruction is a journey towards an accumulation of skills that enable them to participate in such ensembles. It appears from the findings that children found the Orff-Schulwerk ensemble enhanced their sense individuality. It also highlighted the desire children may have to develop skills to play with other skilled individual musicians.

### **6.1.3 Musicianship**

Parents' perceived that enhanced musicianship encouraged their children to understand music. They also perceived increased musicianship lead to creativity, and to greater motivation and enjoyment. Children's musicianship was enhanced through an Orff-Schulwerk approach because it was not driven by external assessment. It was apparent that Orff-Schulwerk enabled children to focus on actual music-making without the burden of memorising notes or reading music, showing an element of creativity.

### **6.1.4 Barriers to acceptance of Orff-Schulwerk**

This research demonstrated that a lack of understanding about the Orff-Schulwerk approach contributed a barrier to parents accepting Orff-Schulwerk as a valid and valuable approach to piano instruction. Parents appeared to value formal piano lessons with measurable attributes such as examinations, recitals and the ability to read music.

### **6.1.5 Cultural background and past experiences**

Cultural practices appeared to influence parents' receptiveness to Orff-Schulwerk approach as some saw Orff-Schulwerk to be an outsider to their cultural foundations. It is believed that by approaching Orff-Schulwerk from the basis of what the children experience in their own culture, will lead to better parental acceptance of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy.

## **6.2 Limitations**

This research has brought new insights into the area of parents' and children's perceptions of Orff-Schulwerk when applied to children's piano lessons. However, there were limitations. First, the case study research design meant that only a small number of participants were included, and as a result the findings cannot be generalised to piano students as a whole. Also, the piano students in this study followed a traditional path to instruction which included examinations and recitals. Piano students who learned 'by ear' and were familiar with improvisation approaches were excluded. Because of this, it is difficult to generalise the findings of this study beyond the case of the Helena Rubinstein School of Music. Further research is needed to see if parents' and children's perceptions differ when they have experienced an alternative form of piano instruction. The Helena Rubinstein School of Music reflected the goals and practices of a music education environment that was particular to the city in

which it was situated. This may or may not have reflected the same practices and goals as those in communities elsewhere.

Secondly, providing one semi-structured interview for the children who varied in age from 8 to 14 resulted in uneven responses. For example, the youngest children tended to reply more often than the older children with monosyllabic answers to the questions, or no answer at all even with prompting. The older children would use these times to consider their replies and then answer with greater depth than the younger children. To address this I would plan to have an additional semi-structured interview questions suitable for the younger children.

A third limitation was the choice of audio-recording technology used in the semi-structured interviews. The device proved to be unreliable and was instrumental in losing an entire interview. To avoid this re-occurring I would use an audio-recording device from a reliable source. Finally, a limitation was experienced in terms of time. The study was conducted in eight, ten minute slots at the end of piano lessons, and two 45 minute collaborative sessions. Several parents commented on the need for more time in the programme for its benefits to be seen. The length of time did not allow sufficient immersion for the parents to develop a deeper understanding of the Orff-Schulwerk philosophy. If conducting the study again I would choose a six month time frame.

### **6.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Parental perceptions of their children's musical development has not been well researched. This study is, therefore, important in terms of providing a basis for further investigation into this area. However, longer sessions of an Orff-Schulwerk programme, for example six months, would enable parents to learn more about the Orff-Schulwerk programme. The children's imaginations would be stimulated through further opportunities to play, improvise and create their own music. There is, therefore, a need for a longer Orff-Schulwerk programme to be integrated in order to gain a deeper understanding of parents' perceptions of the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Increasing the research time to six months would ensure a deeper collection of data information.

Researching a larger number of participants would also help to reduce the limiting impact of the case study research design. Further research might focus on any of the following groups: 1) advanced piano students; 2) piano students

from programmes that consider the needs of the less advantaged communities such as El Sistema; 3) piano students from other cultures which might present differing perspectives in music education; 4) special needs students; 5) piano lessons that are founded on improvisation such as jazz piano. In this way, future research would be in a stronger position to study music between members inside a wider social context, and remove it from the views of a collection of individual participants. Most particularly, research that takes into perspective the perceptions of parents who have full view of the Orff-Schulwerk intentions would ensure their children are best represented.

## **6.4 Concluding Statement**

This research has focused on parents' and children's perceptions of Orff-Schulwerk applied to their children's piano lessons. As I wrote in the opening introduction my aim was to investigate children's and parents' perceptions since I felt the power of music existed in the perceptions of people who participate in music. Initially, I had not considered as well as I could have the impact that music could have away from the traditional Western European model of piano performance, especially since I was conditioned in a competitive concert hall environment. The Orff-Schulwerk legacy has shown that music is powerful when approached from an elemental and imaginative starting place, and this demanded recognition of the discoveries about music as seen through children's eyes. If these moments are not perceived they are lost forever.

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# **Appendix A**

## **INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS**

September 2017

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research project that investigates parents' and children's perceptions to the application of "Orff-Schulwerk" approaches to children's private piano lessons at the Christchurch School of Music. This research is conducted as partial requirement for a Masters of Education at The University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. The research aims to find out how parents' and children's perceptions are impacted by the application of the Orff-Schulwerk processes on children's rhythm, singing, musicianship and attitude to music. The overall aim is to investigate how these perceptions impact on and define my understandings as a music teacher of the benefits of music lessons on children. This research study has been approved by The University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee.

This information letter aims to invite you to:

- 1) Attend eight of your child's consecutive lessons from 23<sup>rd</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> November;
- 2) Participate in two 10 – 15 minute face-to-face interviews with the researcher. The purpose of these interviews is to determine your perception of how Orff-Schulwerk(\*) approaches affects your child's musicianship and attitude to music. The interviews will be conducted at the conclusion of your child's lessons on 14<sup>th</sup> October and 25<sup>th</sup> November at the Christchurch School of Music. With your permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded. The interviews will be transcribed and returned to you within a week to allow you the opportunity to review, edit and amend the interview transcript so that it accurately reflects your perspectives.

(\*) The CSM Orff-Schulwerk classes are currently conducted by the director, Celia Stewart on Saturdays and elements of these classes will be introduced into the piano lessons for the period of this research. The impact to the traditional lesson

will be minimal but will give opportunities for your child's increased contribution into the piano lesson. The activities are simple, easy to accomplish and close to a child's own experience of music making. There is no emphasis on performance.

The purpose of this interview is to determine how you as a parent perceive Orff-Schulwerk processes affects your child's musicianship and attitude to music.

- 3) Attend two (30 minute and 40 minutes respectively) collaborative sessions in which the children create a simple musical composition together (7<sup>th</sup> October and 18<sup>th</sup> November).

The children will be invited to:

- 1) Attend eight consecutive lessons from 23<sup>rd</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> November.
- 2) Take part in two interviews which will ask the children how the activities have helped them with their rhythm, singing, and with their overall enjoyment of music.
- 3) Attend the two collaborative sessions on 7<sup>th</sup> October and 18<sup>th</sup> November.

The activities will be included in the first part of the student's usual lesson and will include the following over the eight weeks of lessons:

- Creation of rhythms using the spoken word in a rhyme, "body percussion" and percussion instruments
- Hear others' create a rhythm (the first attempts are often extremely simple)
- Take part in simple singing echoes to encourage pitch accuracy and tone production
- Creation of own melody on the spot using the echo technique
- Participate in a round with the other students

Participate in two 30-40 minute ensemble sessions using the weeks' progressive activities to introduce group playing, keeping the beat when playing with others and improvisation (creating one's own music). Using a bordun and an ostinato will be introduced. There will be a maximum of seven students in the group and the students' differing experience levels will be taken into account. However, the activities are designed to encourage confidence, rather than performance.

To ensure you that exam preparation will not be compromised I will offer extra time during the eight weeks duration of the research if necessary, independent of the research schedule.

All your responses will be treated confidentially. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and the school. Your name will not be identifiable in any publication, presentation, or dissertation report to ensure that data gathered from you is kept confidential. A one-page summary of the key findings of this research will be given to you at the conclusion of this research.

Agreeing to participate in this research is entirely voluntary. However, you will only be able to withdraw your interview data on or before:

Interview 1 - 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017;

Interview 2 - 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017, three days following your verification of the data.

You can withdraw by contacting me directly to my mobile \_\_\_\_\_ or to my email: \_\_\_\_\_. Should you have questions concerning the ethical conduct of this research project, please feel free to discuss them with me in person or you can also contact my supervisor by email: Dr Donella Cobb (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz).

If you are willing to participate in this research, please complete and sign the consent form which is attached to this letter.

Yours sincerely

# **Appendix B**

## **CONSENT FORM - PARENTS**

### **Notification of Intent to Support**

This is to notify that I

\_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Participant Information Sheet for this study and have discussed the details of the research with the researcher Wendy Christie. I have been informed about the study “An investigation of parents and children’s perceptions of applying “Orff-Schulwerk” approaches to children’s private piano lessons” and I give my consent to participate.

Please indicate with a tick ( ) each of the following statements to show that you give consent to participate in this interview:

- I understand that my participation in this research study is completely voluntary
- I agree to attend eight of my child’s consecutive lessons from 23<sup>rd</sup> September to 25th November
- I agree to take part in two 10-15 minute interviews with Wendy Christie on 14<sup>th</sup> October and 25<sup>th</sup> November, totalling a maximum of 20-30 minutes for both.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time.  
However, I will only be able to withdraw my interview data on or before:

Interview 1 - 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017;

Interview 2 - 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017, three days following my verification of the data.

- I understand that I am free to decline to answer any particular questions in the study

- I understand that these interviews will be audio recorded and the interview transcripts will be returned to me for reviewing over the course of the week before the next lesson.
- I understand that all information will be treated confidentially and the research will make every effort to protect my identity by using pseudonyms.
- I understand that my identity will not be identified in any publications or presentations that report the findings of this study.
- I understand that I will be given a one-page summary of the research findings at the conclusion of this study
- I understand that any concerns about the research process or ethical matters can be discussed with the researcher or with her supervisor: Dr Donella Cobb (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz).

I \_\_\_\_\_ give my permission for my child  
\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this study.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix C**

### **INFORMATION LETTER FOR CHILDREN**

September 2017

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am going to be using some ideas in your piano playing. I would be really interested to know what you think about those ideas and I will have some questions to ask you. I would love you to be involved in this study. It will help me to understand better how you experience piano lessons, how music lessons make you feel about music, and if you think it makes you a better musician overall.

My letter is to invite you to take part in this study. If you would like to part then you can sign the form to show that you give your permission. If you do not want to take part then that is OK. Your lessons will carry on just as before.

Kind regards

Wendy

## **Appendix D**

### **CONSENT FORM – CHILDREN**

#### **Notification of Intent to Support**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am a student of the researcher Wendy Christie, who is also my teacher.

I have had explained to me what will happen during this study and this note shows that I have given my consent to take part.

Please show with a tick ( ) each of the following sentences to show that you give permission to take part in two “question” sessions:

- I understand that my taking part in this research study is completely my choice
- I agree to attend eight of my lessons from 23th September to 25<sup>th</sup> November as far as I am able (as long as I don't get sick or something else happens that I don't expect).
- I agree to take part in two 10-15 minute interviews with Wendy.
- I understand that I am allowed to withdraw at any time. However, my answers to the questions in the first interview will not be able to be withdrawn after 24<sup>th</sup> October, and the second interview after 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017.
- I understand that I am free to say no to answering any questions in the study
- I understand that these interviews will be audio-recorded and that I am allowed to check that what I really said is what is written by Wendy afterwards. Wendy will read the answers to me if I need help with reading of them. I understand that another name will be used in place of my own name so that no one will know who I am and what I said.
- I understand that I (my identity) will not be known by anyone who might look at and read any publications or presentations that report what is found out in this study.
- I understand that I will be given a short paragraph or two of what the study finds out at the end of the study.

- I understand that if I have any worries or problems then I can tell Wendy about them. Or I can ask her supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz) who can tell me any other thing I want to know.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E**

### **INTERVIEW WITH PARENTS**

1. What is your perception about how Orff-Schulwerk activities helps your child with rhythm?
2. What is you perception about how Orff-Schulwerk activities helps your child play in time?
3. How do you think the Orff-Schulwerk activities have helped your child with singing?
4. Can you give a specific example?
5. Do you think implementing Orff-Schulwerk processes has impacted your child's feelings and attitude towards their piano lessons? For example, do they talk about the lesson afterwards?
6. Do you think implementing Orff-Schulwerk music processes has helped or not helped your child to become a better musician?
7. If yes, in what way?

## **Appendix F**

### **INTERVIEW WITH CHILDREN**

1. Have the Orff-Schulwerk activities helped you to keep the beat? Why/why not?
2. Have Orff-Schulwerk activities helped you with rhythm in a way that helps you to learn a tricky passage in the music? Why/why not?

Can you give me an example of a rhythm pattern that has helped you?

4. Have the Orff-Schulwerk activities helped you with your understanding of rhythm?
5. Have the Orff-Schulwerk activities helped you with singing? Why/Why not?
6. Do you think the Orff-Schulwerk activities have helped you to sing in tune better? Why/why not?
7. Do the activities make you feel any differently about your enjoyment of music? Can you explain?