



Parent Handbook



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WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL'S INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

Dear Students and Parents,


I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of our students and their families who are considering joining our instrumental music program at Stretton State College. Our program is conducted by a very professional and musically talented team of music teachers who have many years' experience both as teachers in schools and as professional musicians.

Your commitment to participation in this program is highly valued in our school with the performances often placing our school at the very forefront of community involvement supporting groups from elderly citizens to promoting state education. Apart from your regular commitment to instructional lessons once per week and regular band or ensemble rehearsals, you will be often required to perform for a variety of audiences to promote goodwill and enjoyment for love of The Arts.

The student's commitment to this valuable program is a whole family effort with parents often called on to support the home practice sessions and transport performers to and from performance venues. I would like to thank parents for encouraging their child to participate in this learning extension program and trust you will enjoy watching your child grow musically over the future years. I am always extremely proud when our students perform both at community events and in instrumental music competitions.

Together we look forward to beginning this journey of learning with you and your child.

Regards,



Mrs Jan Maresca
Executive College
Principal

OVERVIEW

Education Queensland provides an Instrumental Music Program in our school. This program provides free tuition during school hours in Woodwind, Brass and Percussion instruments. Ensemble experience is provided through participation in a range of large and small ensembles outside of school hours or during lunch time. Attendance at these groups is compulsory and an integral part of the Instrumental Music Program. Tuition classes take place on a small group basis with 3 to 7 students of similar ability level learning together.

OBJECTIVES

The aims of this program are:

- to provide opportunities for motivated musical students to develop instrumental music skills via weekly group lessons and daily personal practice
- to provide opportunities for students to experience playing music in large and small groups (e.g. concert bands, string ensembles, jazz ensembles, percussion ensembles, small ensembles, etc.)
- to provide an enriching dimension to the school's classroom music program.

STAFF ALLOCATION

Instrumental music teachers are specialist teachers who are allocated to our school based on the number of students interested in participating in the instrumental music program. Please check with your child's instrumental music teacher the times he/she is present in the school for tuition and available times for personal interviews if required.

Due to time allocation of lessons and number of places in the program, there is a limit of students we can take in the program. Based on the size of the school, Education Queensland allocates instrumental teachers according to a staffing formula. Currently our staffing is:

Jan Maresca	Executive College Principal
Brad Stewart	Illaweenaa Campus Principal
Adam Hornagold	Deputy Principal Year 7
Trish Allan	Head of Department – Director of Instrumental Music
Emily Matthews	Brass Specialist Teacher
Thomas Sweeper	Percussion Specialist Teacher
Jessica Long	Strings Specialist Teacher
Melonie Taylor	Woodwind Specialist Teacher

SELECTION OF STUDENTS

Students are selected on criteria of:

- musical aptitude
- physical appropriateness
- academic strength
- emotional and social development.
- Behavior

Due to the high demand on the limited resources available to the school, the number of children who can participate in the instrumental music program is limited. It is necessary therefore, to operate a selection process for admission to the program. This in turn, ensures balance to the various groups.

Selection of new instrumental music program participants occurs during term 3 and 4 and is for students in year 3. To maintain consistent learning progression, new student groups are not started at other times during the year or at other year levels except in particular circumstances. Students enter the program at year 4 for strings, woodwind, brass and percussion.

INSTRUMENT ALLOCATION

In the instrumental program, children audition to be included in the program, NOT for a particular instrument. This ensures all ensembles are balanced for sound. Most musical people can play more than one instrument. In choosing a “starting instrument” for a particular child, the selection process will take into account the following factors (not in order):

- the student’s preferences and enthusiasm
- the student’s physical aptitudes
- the student’s music test results and sense of discipline
- number of places on each instrument available for a balanced ensemble
- the parent’s ability to assist in the supervision of home practice
- the availability of a school instrument for loan
- the student’s personality traits.
- Student behavior

The Instrumental Music Teacher selects students for the instrument they are most suited to, to ensure they succeed on their instrument.

LESSONS

Once selected for the program, students are expected to participate with full commitment of two years until the conclusion of year 5. Students will then make another commitment until the end of year 7. Participation during years 8 to 12 is a one year commitment made every 12 months. A child who is selected for the instrumental music program will receive one half hour group lesson per week on their instrument. The lessons are conducted in small groups containing children of similar standard. The lesson is timetabled on a rotating basis during the school term to limit interruption to the child’s learning of particular subjects in class. Children and class teachers are provided with the relevant instrumental music timetables at the commencement of each term by the instrumental music teachers.

Children in the lesson group are responsible for excusing themselves from their normal classrooms 5 minutes prior to their lesson to avoid arriving late for their lessons at the designated practice venue. They are also responsible for making up the class work missed during their instrumental music lesson. If a student is unable to come to their lesson due to assessment, they must email their instrumental teacher to reschedule their lesson at least 48hrs before their lesson time. Children involved in instrumental music lessons must participate in one of the musical ensembles. In addition to this, a child may be involved in other groups according to their ability, interest and the policy of the school.

The initial commitment made by the child is for years 4 to 5 and changes to this can only be made by the instrumental music staff or by parents after consultation with the Director of Instrumental Music or College Deputy Principals. All changes require a written request from parents.

REHEARSALS

Parents and students are notified of rehearsal times at the beginning of the school year by the instrumental music teacher. Ensembles rehearse on both campuses either before or after school. Each ensemble will have one rehearsal every week. Additional rehearsals may be required due to performance commitments throughout the school year. Before school rehearsals are held from 7.20am-8.30am. After school rehearsals are held from 3.00pm-4.30pm for senior ensembles. Parents of children who are already involved in regular early morning training programs (e.g. athletics, swimming, tennis, etc.) need to consider carefully whether a commitment to a demanding music program is recommended. Please note all Stage Band, Big Band, Drumline, and Percussion Ensemble members must be a member of the Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, or Brass Band.

2025 ENSEMBLES

Gowan Ensembles

Gowan Beginner Strings
Gowan Junior Strings
Gowan Senior Strings
Gowan Chamber Strings (selected students)
Year 4 Concert Band
Year 5 Concert Band
Year 6 Concert Band
Junior Jazz Ensemble

Illaweena Ensembles – select Gowan students can be invited to participate depending on their advancement

Illaweena String Ensemble
Illaweena String Orchestra
Wind Ensemble
Concert Band
Symphonic Band (Selected Students)
Stage Band
Big Band (Selected Students)
Percussion Ensemble
Drumline

INSTRUMENT LOANS

In year 4, the following instruments will be available to hire for 12 months for selected beginning students: cello, flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet and trombone. After this period, it is expected that students purchase their own instrument for the following year. Larger, more expensive instruments including bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, French horn, euphonium, tuba, and double bass are available for loan each year. Due to the lower cost of percussion, no percussion equipment is available for loan. Percussion students are expected to purchase the required equipment for year 4. Percussion students will have access to the band percussion instruments during rehearsals. Students may not take home a school instrument without returning a hire form (EQ11) to their instrumental teacher.

ATTENDANCE

Students must attend all lessons and rehearsals. Punctuality is vital and lateness will be noted. Please be aware that lessons are provided free of charge. If your child is absent from school on a rehearsal or lesson day, a parent is required to contact their instrumental teacher as well as the school administration. If students are unable to attend a rehearsal, due to duty of care, parents must contact the conductor of that ensemble informing them of the absence.

PRACTICE

Students will be required to prepare for the next lesson by practicing the set work. They will also be expected to prepare their music for ensembles. It is recommended the practice be regular, concentrated and in short intervals. More can be achieved in twenty minutes each day than sixty minutes once per week. Practice should gradually lengthen in duration over time and be supported and encouraged by parents. Year 4 and 5 students are expected to practice 15-20 minutes x 5 days per week, Year 6-12 students are expected to practice 30-45 minutes x 5 days per week (see pages 18 - 21).

COMMUNICATION

Progress Sheet

Regular communication will take place via the Progress Sheet to be brought to each lesson and signed weekly by parents and Instrumental Music Teacher. This sheet is given to students at the beginning of each term by the teacher.

Email

Teachers are available to respond to emails during regular work hours, and are not expected to reply outside these hours, on weekends, or during school holidays. They will endeavor to respond within a timely manner. To respect teachers' personal time and well-being, we ask that communication remain within work hours.

Reports

Students and parents will receive a report twice per year, at the end of each semester on their *OneSchool* Reports. Parents will also be notified should a student not be performing to an acceptable standard of if there is a lack of practice, irregular attendance, poor punctuality or attitude.

If the identified problem is not rectified in a short period of time, the student may be excluded from the program. Notice of exclusion will be issued to the parents. Parents are invited to be involved by communicating with the instrumental music staff regarding the progress of their child. Interviews can be arranged by telephoning the school's office for an appointment. If a student withdraws from the program, but has been assessed for the semester, that mark and effort grade at the time will be used for their report card.

MUSIC FUND

It is expected that those participating in the instrumental program contribute to our Music Fund which is used for servicing and progressively upgrading school instruments, providing music and other equipment.

\$80.00	Music Fee	All students
\$15.00	Stretton Music Folder	All students, to be purchased from the Uniform Shop
\$130.00	Instrument Hire Fee	If using a school instrument
\$40.00	Percussion Fee	All percussionists only

These fees are required to be paid at the commencement of the school year through the school office. Notices will be provided to each student outlining the amounts owing and the due date for payment. For budgeting purposes, no refund will be given if a student withdraws from the program during a school year.

STUDENT AND PARENT COMMITMENTS

This is a skilled based program. To achieve a satisfactory level at any skill, a great deal of effort is required. The student must:

- practice regularly (every second day)
- participate in relevant ensembles and performances as required
- attend lessons and rehearsals as required
- take care of the instrument.

To support the student's efforts, the parents must be prepared to:

- supervise regular practice
- ensure regular attendance at lessons and rehearsals
- oversee the care of the instrument
- regularly replace items as necessary e.g. reeds, cork grease, valve oil, rosin, strings, sheet music, tutor books.

MUSIC PERFORMANCE UNIFORM

The music performance uniform is compulsory for all ensemble performances and can be purchased through the school uniform shop. Students not in full performance uniform will not perform. Orders can be made online at: www.flexischools.com.au

Girls

- Music performance shirt
- Girls Stretton music slacks
- Long black socks
- Formal, all black, leather shoes
- Stretton music maroon scrunchie
- Stretton music maroon clips (optional)

Boys

- Music performance shirt
- Boys Stretton music trousers
- Long black socks
- Formal, all black, leather shoes

** Long hair must be tied neatly up with Stretton music scrunchie



BORROWED BLACK SOCKS

If a student has forgotten their black socks for the performance, they will be provided with a spare pair for the performance. The student's name will be written down in a borrowed uniform register, and the socks will need to be replaced with a brand-new pair (not washed).

PERFORMANCES

The major focus of the music program will be on developing interest and encouraging achievement. This will be accomplished through public performances and competitions. Opportunities will be provided for performances both within the school and at external community venues. The school's staff will identify suitable competitions for the various groups to enter. Attendance at all performances is mandatory for all ensemble members and families are encouraged to support the student at each of these events.

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIMELINE

Students and parents will receive a Yearly Planner of concerts in term one and will be notified by letter of all performances. Below is a brief summary of some of the performances throughout a typical year. *Each ensemble will perform on assembly during the year as required.*

	Performance	Date	Campus
Term 1	Beginner Blitz – Year 4 Students	28 February	Gowan
	Leadership Induction Ceremony – Symphonic Band	18 February	Illaweena
	IM Camp	31 March – 2 April	Illaweena
Term 2	Gala Concerts	TBC	Both
	Fanfare (every even year)	2026	Both
	ANZAC Ceremony	24 April	Illaweena
Term 3	Workshops	TBC	Gowan
	Ekka Performances	TBC	Illaweena
	Recruitment Concert	18 August	Gowan
	Arts Week	TBC	Both
	Musical	28 Aug – 30 Aug	Gowan even years Illaweena odd years
	Symphony of Stars awards night	11 September	Both
	Tour (every 2 nd year)	2026	Illaweena
Term 4	MusicFest	TBC	Both
	Night of Stars	14 October	Both
	Gowan Showcase	12 November	Gowan
	Jacaranda Festival	25 October	Both

BEGINNER INSTRUMENTAL STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE

- Pencil
- Collapsible music stand
- School music folder (to be purchased from the Illaweena uniform shop)
- Method book – to be advised by the teacher
- Metronome and tuner app for iPad
- A bag to store items in

STRINGS

Violin and Viola

- Purchase of a three-quarter violin/viola. Please check with music store staff before purchasing. Check the instrument comes with a case, bow and rosin.
- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Violin or Viola)
- Rosin (if not already included with violin) – Hidersine or Otto brand recommended
- Full set of spare strings. Please ensure they correlate with the size of violin.
- Exercise book for notes

Cello

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Cello)
- Rosin – Hidersine or Otto brand recommended
- please purchase an “A” string and if possible a “D” string. These strings are more expensive than violin strings and not as likely to snap.
- Rock Stop (this is used to keep the instrument secure so that it can be played as it rests on the floor).
- Exercise book for notes

Double Bass

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Double Bass)
- Rosin – Hidersine or Otto brand recommended
- Exercise book for notes

WOODWIND

Flute

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Flute)
- Silver polishing cloth
- Gauze cloth (cleaning inside of instrument)
- Cleaning rod

Clarinet

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Bb Clarinet)
- 4 x size 2 Rico Royal Clarinet reeds
- Reed guard (holds 4 reeds)
- Clarinet cleaning pull through
- Cork grease (preferably in 'chap stick' type container)
- Black rubber thumb rest
- Mouthpiece pad saver

Bass Clarinet

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Bb Bass Clarinet)
- 4 x size 2 Rico Royal Bass Clarinet reeds
- Reed guard (holds 4 reeds)
- Bass Clarinet body cleaning pull through
- Bass Clarinet neck cleaning pull through
- Cork grease (preferably in 'chap stick' type container)
- Mouthpiece pad saver

Alto Saxophone

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Eb Alto Saxophone)
- 4 x size 2 Rico Royal Alto Saxophone reeds
- Reed guard (holds 4 reeds)
- Alto Saxophone body cleaning pull through
- Alto Saxophone neck cleaning pull through
- Cork grease (preferably in 'chap stick' type container)
- Mouthpiece pad saver
- Padded saxophone neck strap or harness (preferably Neotech brand with swivel hook)

Tenor Saxophone

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Bb Tenor Saxophone)
- 4 x size 2 Rico Royal Tenor Saxophone reeds
- Reed guard (holds 4 reeds)
- Tenor Saxophone body cleaning pull through
- Tenor Saxophone neck cleaning pull through
- Cork grease (preferably in 'chap stick' type container)
- Mouthpiece pad saver
- Padded saxophone neck strap or harness (preferably Neotech brand with swivel hook)

BRASS

Trumpet

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Trumpet)
- Valve Oil (Al Cass preferred brand)
- Tuning Slide grease (Superslick preferred brand)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Cleaning snake
- Lacquer Polishing Cloth

French Horn

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (French Horn)
- Rotary Valve Oil (Holton preferred brand)
- Tuning Slide Grease (Superslick preferred brand)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Lacquer Polishing Cloth

Trombone

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Trombone)
- Trombone slide oil (Yamaha is preferred)
- Small water spray bottle
- Tuning Slide Oil (Yamaha is preferred)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Vinyl Coated Cleaning Bore Brush (Superslick preferred brand)
- Lacquer Polishing Cloth

Baritone/Euphonium

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Baritone B.C.)
- Valve Oil (Al Cass preferred brand)
- Tuning Slide Grease (Superslick preferred brand)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Vinyl Coated Cleaning Bore Brush (Yamaha preferred brand)
- Lacquer Polishing Cloth

Tuba

- Method Book: Essential Elements Book 1 (Tuba)
- Valve Oil (Al Cass preferred brand)
- Tuning Slide Grease (Superslick preferred brand)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Vinyl Coated Cleaning Bore Brush (Yamaha preferred brand)
- Lacquer Polishing Cloth

PERCUSSION

Percussion

- Method Book: Tradition of Excellence Book 1 (Drums and Mallets)
- Drumsticks Size 5A (wooden tip- Vic Firth)
- Tuneable Practice pad and stand
- 32 bar Glockenspiel with carry bag
- Percussion Stick Bag
- Mike Balter Mallet Pack (medium marimba mallets, med hard timpani mallets, medium rubber xylophone mallets, medium glock mallet, hard brass glock mallet)

Where To Purchase Your Child's Instrument and Accessories

This list is a guide only

<p>Vivace Music: Underwood</p> <p>Address: 36 Compton Rd, Underwood</p> <p>Phone: (07) 3090 4268</p>	<p>Brass Music Specialists</p> <p>Address: 90 Appel St, Graceville</p> <p>Phone: (07) 3278 1311</p>
<p>Vivace Music: Sunnybank Hills</p> <p>Address: 62 Pinelands Rd, Sunnybank Hills</p> <p>Phone: (07) 3344 1880</p>	<p>Other Music – Online orders only</p> <p>Website: othermusic.com.au</p> <p>Phone: 0488 668 742</p>
<p>The Music Spot</p> <p>Address: 129 Browns Plains Rd, Browns Plains</p> <p>Phone: (07) 3800 5229</p>	<p>OZ Winds Gold Coast Brass and Woodwinds</p> <p>Address: 2/25 Alicia Street, Southport</p> <p>Phone: (07) 5561 1773</p>
<p>Animato Strings</p> <p>Address: 5/789 Kingsford Smith Dr, Eagle Farm.</p> <p>Phone: (07) 3876 3877</p>	<p>Simply for Strings</p> <p>Address: 78 Enoggera Terrace, Red Hill</p> <p>Phone: 1300 739 293</p>
<p>Just Percussion</p> <p>Address: 34 Campbell St, Bowen Hills</p> <p>Phone: 1300 576 874</p>	

N.B. We advise you shop around for the best price for both new and second hand instruments. Many stores have various payment plans on all instruments.

RECOMMENDED BRANDS

Flute

Yamaha
Jupiter
Pearl
Trevor James

Clarinet

Buffet
Jupiter
Yamaha

Alto Saxophone

Yamaha
Jupiter
Selmer
Conn

Trumpet

Yamaha
King
Conn
Bach
Schargel

Trombone

Yamaha
King
Conn
Bach
Schargel

Cello, Violin & Viola

Gliga, Hildersine, Vivante,
Arioso, Vivo, Arco, Otto
Handmade, Otto High
Quality, Reggetti RV-2, RV-5,
Kreisler.

*(Please avoid Enrico, Stentor, Axiom, Artist,
Steinhoff brands.)*

While the instrument brands recommended above may, in some cases be a little more expensive initially, all these instruments have stood the test of time; rarely going out of adjustment and wearing well. These brands also tend to have very good resale value. The first brand listed for each instrument is preferable.

For purchasing Violins and Violas, students can be properly sized at a String Store by the shop staff.

NB. If you have access to another brand instrument, please consult your Instrumental Music Teacher **before** you buy.

Care should be taken when considering the purchase of a second hand instrument. It is always best to have your Instrumental Music Teacher or a professional repairer look over the instrument **before** you purchase.

DO NOT, under any circumstances, purchase an instrument at a store you where can also purchase HARDWARE or GROCERIES (eg. ALDI or BUNNINGS), also NO BRIGHTLY COLOURED instruments please!

Only purchase at an Instrument specialty store.

What to look for in a secondhand instrument:

Flute

- Check there are not too many small dints or any large dints
- Check the plating to ensure it is not too worn
- Check the cork/felt bumpers
- Check the pads, under the keys. They should not be split or torn. Press pad lightly with finger nail to see that they are reasonably soft.
- Flute overhauls cost approximately \$200
- Flute service cost approximately \$150

Clarinet/ Saxophone

- Check there are not too many small dints or any large dints
- Check the plating to ensure it is not too worn
- Check the cork/felt bumpers
- Check the pad, under the keys. (Clarinets have felt covered with rice paper, Saxophones leather) They should not be split or torn. Press pad lightly with fingernail to see that they are reasonable soft
- Check that all corks; tenon (clarinet) and goose neck (saxophones), have no 'chunks' out of them
- Check the mouthpiece has no chips out of the tip
- Clarinet overhauls cost approx. \$200
- Saxophone overhauls cost anywhere from \$200-\$400
- Clarinet or Saxophone service cost approximately \$150

Trumpet

- Check for wearing on valves
- Check for dints in valve casing
- Check for large dints on the instrument that may affect tuning
- Check for pitting in the valves
- Check for dents in the shank of the mouthpiece
- Check that all tuning slides are operational
- Check that spring works on water keys
- Trumpet service cost approximately \$150

Trombone

- Check for pitting in the slide
- Check for dints in the outer slide
- Check that the tuning slide is operational
- Check for dints in the bend of the slide
- Check that spring works on water key
- Check for dents in the shank of the mouthpiece
- Trombone service cost approximately \$150

WHY Learn an Instrument?

15 Benefits of Playing a Musical Instrument

by Michael Matthews

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1. Increases the capacity of your memory.

According to an article from The Telegraph online magazine, "New research suggests that regularly playing an instrument changes the shape and power of the brain and may be used in therapy to improve cognitive skills." There is continually more evidence that musicians have organisationally and functionally different brains compared to non-musicians, especially in the areas of the brain used in processing and playing music. If you learn how to play an instrument, the parts of your brain that control motor skills (ex: using your hands, running, swimming, balancing, etc.), hearing, storing audio information, and memory actually grow and become more active. Other results show that playing an instrument can help your IQ increase by seven points.

2. Refines your time management and organisational skills.

Learning how to play an instrument requires you to really learn how to be organised and to manage your time wisely. A good musician knows that the quality of practice time is more valuable than the quantity. In order for a musician to progress quicker, he/she will learn how to organise his/her practice time and plan different challenges to work on, making efficient use of time.

3. Boosts your team skills.

Team skills are a very important aspect of being successful in life. Playing an instrument requires you to work with others to make music. In band and orchestra settings you must learn how to cooperate with the people around you. Also, in order for a group to make beautiful music, each player and section must learn how to listen to each other and play together.

4. Teaches you perseverance.

Learning to play an instrument takes time and effort, which really teaches you patience and perseverance. Most people can't play every piece of music perfectly the first time. In fact, the majority of musicians have to work difficult sections of music multiple times in a row before they can play it correctly.

5. Enhances your coordination.

The art of playing an instrument requires a lot of hand-eye coordination. By reading musical notes on a page, your brain subconsciously must convert that note into specific motor patterns while also adding breathing and rhythm to the mix.

6. Better your mathematical ability.

Reading music requires counting notes and rhythms and can help your math skills. Also, learning music theory includes many mathematical aspects. Studies have shown that students who play instruments or study the arts are often better in math and achieve higher grades in school than students who don't.

7. Improves your reading and comprehension skills.

According to a study published in the journal *Psychology of Music*, "Children exposed to a multi-year program of music tuition involving training in increasingly complex rhythmic, tonal, and practical skills display superior cognitive performance in reading skills compared with their non-musically trained peers." It's not surprising to hear results like that because music involves constant reading and comprehension. When you see black and white notes on a page, you have to recognize what the note name is and translate it to a finger/slide position. At the same time, you also have to read what rhythms the notes are arranged in and force your tongue to produce the correct pattern.

8. Increases your responsibility.

Playing an instrument comes with its responsibilities. Maintenance and care are very important in keeping an instrument in working condition. Each instrument has different procedures to keep in functioning properly, but most instruments need cleaning and some form of oiling/greasing. In addition to maintenance responsibilities, there are other aspects such as remembering music events (like rehearsals and performances) and making time to practice.

9. Exposes you to cultural history.

Oftentimes music reflects the environment and times of its creation. Therefore, you learn a variety of music types such as classical traditions, folk music, medieval, and other genres. Music itself is history, and each piece usually has its own background and storyline that can further your appreciation of other cultures.

10. Sharpens your concentration.

Playing music by yourself requires you to concentrate on things like pitch, rhythm, tempo, note duration, and quality of sound. Playing music in a group involves even more concentration because you must learn to not only hear yourself, but you must listen to all the other sections and play in harmony with the rest of the group.

11. Fosters your self-expression and relieves stress.

It's your instrument, so you can play whatever you want on it! The more advanced you become on an instrument, the greater you'll be able to play what you want and how you want. Music is an art-- just like an artist can paint his/her emotions onto a canvas, so can a musician play a piece with emotion. This has proven to relieve stress and can be a great form of therapy. In fact, music therapy has been useful in treating children and teens with autism, depression, and other disorders.

12. Creates a sense of achievement.

Overcoming musical challenges that you thought you'd never quite master can give you a great sense of pride about yourself. When you first start learning how to play an instrument, it seems like just holding out a note for a couple beats or hitting a high pitch is an amazing accomplishment. As you practice and become a more experienced musician, making beautiful sounding music pleasing not only to your ear, but others as well is a very rewarding experience.

13. Promotes your social skills.

Playing an instrument can be a great way to enhance your social skills. Some of the best people join bands and orchestras, and many times the friends you make here become like family. It's very common for people to gain lifelong friendships through musical activities like these.

14. Boosts your listening skills.

Although it's pretty obvious, playing an instrument requires you to listen very carefully to things. You have to learn how to hear when you're playing a wrong note in order to correct yourself. Tuning your instrument means hearing if the pitch you're playing is high (sharp) or low (flat). When playing in an ensemble, you have to listen for the melody and play softer if you're the supporting part (accompaniment). There are too many examples to list every possibility here, but by playing an instrument you are guaranteed to improve your listening skills.

15. Teaches you discipline.

As previously mentioned, playing an instrument can be very challenging. One of the qualities that musicians learn is discipline. Practising often and working on the hard parts of music and not just the easy and fun stuff requires discipline. The best musicians in the world are masters of discipline which is why they are so successful on their instrument.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

1. *A student that does not show aptitude for learning a musical instrument will be identified by the end of Term 1. Parents will be notified to discuss the student's difficulties. Students will be withdrawn from the program by the end of Semester 1 if progress is insufficient to warrant further withdrawal from general class lessons.*
2. *A student that does show aptitude, but is not making sufficient progress –*
 - Will be identified by the instrumental teacher with a discussion with the student and a note in the homework diary.
 - The Director of Instrumental Music and parents will be notified of lack of progress.
 - Parents asked to attend an interview with instrumental music teacher and Director of Instrumental Music.
 - Additional support will be provided by the instrumental music teacher possibly including extra lessons and practice strategies to assist student progress.
3. *The student wanting to be withdrawn from the program:*
 - Students are committed to a minimum 2 year commitment (year 4 – 5).
After this time students may only withdraw from the program at the conclusion of the school year by:
 - Parents to inform the Instrumental teacher and the Director of Instrumental Music in writing.
 - An interview with the parents and Director of Instrumental Music and/or Deputy Principal
 - If accepted, parents' letter kept on file and loan agreement cancelled (if applicable). Instrument returned to the instrumental music teacher.
4. *Student's Progress Report*
 - The Instrumental Teacher will comment on the Semester 1 Report. If progress has been limited, the parents will be asked to reconsider the continued involvement of their child.
5. Should a student withdraw from the program for any reason, there is no refund of levies due to budgeting.

PRACTISING YOUR INSTRUMENT

Thoughts for students

What You Will Need

1. Instrument
2. Music
3. Music stand
4. Chair with straight back (standing is best for wind players)
5. Pencil and eraser
6. Eraser
7. CD player / Computer (sometimes)

Where to Practice

A quiet enclosed room – turn off the TV and radio. It is best to practice where there are no other people, or unknowingly you will perform rather than practice.

How Often to Practice

Daily – regular short and focused practice achieves more progress than long, irregular practice.

When to Practice

Try to avoid late evening practice when body and mind are tired.

How Long to Practice

Year 4 - 5 20 minutes per day x 5 days a week
Year 6 - 12 30 minutes per day x 5 days a week

Pacing the session is important. Play and rest in regular intervals.

What to Practice

For some students you can go as far as allocating specific time intervals to certain segments of the sessions – but it should include warm ups, scales, flexibility exercises, technical work from Method Book, specific pieces of music (solo or ensemble) and anything else required. Students are required to use the Home Practice Sheet.

Practice the music stopping to correct mistakes WHERE THEY OCCUR. Zero in on the problems. Don't keep going back to the beginning – you only spend time on what you already know. Don't brush past the problem areas hoping 'to go back later'. You will never get around to it. Start with the problem.

Why Practice

- To be able to play your instrument better
- To solve problems
- To improve skills on what is already known
- To learn new things
- For enjoyment.

Prepare the Session

- Set goals to be accomplished
- Develop a warm up routine
- If preparing for exams review technical work, and review scales in the keys of the music to be practiced
- Before playing a new piece of music:
 - check key signature, time signature, tempo and dynamic markings
 - check all other markings, use a dictionary if necessary
 - 'scan' the music then read it again more carefully
 - with your pencil mark unusual fingerings, accidentals, and rhythms that may be troublesome
 - check and go over measures with difficult or unusual rhythms.
- If you have some problems try to:
 - write out the counting
 - count out loud (use a metronome)
 - count and clap the rhythm (use rhythm names)
 - play the rhythm on the one pitch
 - play as written – slowly and accurately at first then increase speed.

Evaluation

Don't be afraid to ask for help if you don't think you are getting anywhere. The best players in the world do this. Listen carefully to what you are producing and try to recognize problem areas. Be critical of yourself. You are now your own teacher.

Music is a Disciplined Art

Without self-discipline and persistence there can be no progress or success. There are no short cuts and there is no magic wand. The recipe for success is 90% hard work, 10% talent and a dash of interest.

YOUR CHILD AS A MEMBER OF THE MUSIC PROGRAM

Thoughts for parents

Your child's progress will depend a great deal on what is achieved during daily practice sessions at home. Learning takes place in school, but proficiency is gained at home. You can use the following guidelines to help your child at home.

Time Schedule (see previous page)

Establish with your child a weekly practice schedule. This time can be split into two or three shorter sessions. Practising at the same time every day is good, but flexibility should be built into the schedule. Kids need time for fun and relaxation. If the situation merits, re-schedule the practice session to an earlier or later time.

Practice Goals

While a sufficient amount of time per day is important, it is also important to have definite goals in mind for each session. These goals might include the improvement of tone on one note or the ability to play a lengthy tune or exercise without a mistake. As your child gains experience on the instrument, a typical practice session might be broken down as follows:

No. of Minutes	Material Practiced	Goal
3 - 5	Long tones; easy drills at slow tempo	Warm up of embouchure, breath and instrument; concentrating on producing good tone.
5	Scales learned	Finger co-ordination.
10	New material	Development of new notes, increased range, new rhythms and articulations, new key signatures.
10	Exercises and tunes already learned	Improvement of finger movement, rhythm and overall fluency and musicianship.

Climate

Practising should be done in an area that is free from distractions – away from the TV, radio, stereo and family traffic. Good lighting, a straight backed chair, a mirror and a music stand are definite assets. Clarinet and saxophone players should have at least two or three good reeds available.

Encouraging Your Child

Spend some time listening to your child practising. Offer constructive criticisms, but choose your words carefully e.g. “That sounds better today.” Try to play the instrument yourself and let your child teach you what he/she has learned.

Is Your Child Progressing?

The field of instrumental music is new for your child. He/she is learning to use facial muscles in a different way, and breathing apparatus for a different purpose. There is a new language of intangible symbols (notes) that require the use of mind and body to translate into musical sounds. All this takes time. Even parents who have had band experience have probably forgotten the struggle of producing those first few tones. So the question arises: “Is he/she progressing as well as he/she should be?”

Parents can evaluate practice sessions by asking themselves:

- Am I hearing attempts at new material (such as higher notes, lower notes, new rhythms and new articulations), or am I hearing the same old tune day after day?
- Is the tone quality becoming more characteristic of the instrument, or is the tone harsh, unmusical and unpleasant?
- Does the familiar tune or exercise move along steadily in a fluent rhythmic manner, or is it halting and jerky?

If you reach a point when your evaluation consistently comes up negative, please give your child’s Instrumental Music teacher a call. The student may be doing fine by beginning standards; he/she may be having difficulty in grasping the basic concept that could bring progress to a halt. This last problem may take a joint parent-teacher effort to overcome.

How Parents Can Encourage Successful Practice

Everyone goes through phases of boredom or rebellion about practising, some more frequently than others. It is easy to lose sight of the goals.

Remember that music making is one of the most gregarious pursuits, and also one of the most satisfying and time consuming. Playing an instrument is a form of relaxation cultivated by many of the world's greatest under-achievers. The ability to play a musical instrument well is one of the most highly prized skills in the adult world. It is often the plodders who achieve these things rather than the most talented, who throw it all away in the heat of the moment.

Here are a few hints to help you with your budding instrumentalist:

1. Practice is best done at a regular time in a regular place preferably early in the morning
2. 10 minutes a day practice is better than 70 minutes at the end of the week
3. Good posture is less tiring than bad posture
4. Students should develop the ability to watch their playing in a mirror
5. Reading music should be placed on a music stand at the correct height – just below eye level
6. Your child requires help and encouragement during practice sessions. Use the practice session as a positive time with your child – do the ironing, etc.
7. Organise some home incentive scheme for completing practice
8. Each piece, exercise, scale should be played through at least 4 times each practice session. Start each piece at a very steady pace. If the same mistake happens twice, the student should stop and correct that bar or phrase, playing it many times before proceeding with the whole piece. At the next practice session, time will be saved if this passage is repeated several times before attempting to put it in the context of the whole piece.
9. If the piece sounds odd to you or definitely out of tune, there are several possibilities: one the instrument needs tuning; two, the student is learning a harmony part, not the tune; three, he/she is not listening to him/herself and is playing out of tune or out of time. Ask, "Can you sing it first?" or "are your fingers in the correct place?" or "Is there a note you can check with?"
10. Getting on and learning a contentious piece is the quickest way to the next interesting phase. Ask him/her to play you something known really well, however simple. Then remind him/her that once he/she couldn't play that at all. Then decide upon two bars of the contentious piece to learn today.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING COMMITMENT TO THE LEARNING OF A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

Parent Commitments

1. Provide your child with a suitable instrument.
2. Show an interest in music study with your child.
3. Find a quiet place for your child to practice without interruption.
4. Arrange a regular time for practice.
5. Help your child with practice as much as possible – instructions in booklet, etc.
6. Never make fun of the strange sounds your child may make.
7. Help your child maintain a practice record.
8. Give your child a safe place to keep/store the instrument.
9. Keep instrument in good repair with reeds and strings, etc.
10. Teach your child to be on time for rehearsals and lessons.
11. Encourage your child to play for others whenever possible.

Student Commitments

Every student must agree to:

1. Practice regularly.
2. Become a member of the school concert band or orchestra or other groups as designated by the instructor.
3. Take part as required in all concerts and camps.
4. Attend lessons, rehearsals and other classes regularly as required.

If difficulties are being experienced in practising, waning interest levels, instrument function or attendance, please ring and make an appointment with the students instrumental music teacher.
