



WILSTON STATE SCHOOL

**INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
PROGRAM
PARENT HANDBOOK**

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WELCOME TO THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

Congratulations! You have been chosen to participate in Wilston State School's Instrumental Music Program. This privilege carries with it certain responsibilities, which must be met if you are to succeed in instrumental study. Lessons must be attended regularly and daily practice, as directed by your instrumental music teacher, must be undertaken, with an adult supervisor where possible.

Your instrument, whether school or personally owned, must be well cared for.

The learning of an instrument and the training at school will lay the foundations for a lifetime of rewarding musical endeavors.

It is with pleasure that I welcome you to the program, and wish you all the best in your musical pursuits.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

At Wilston State School we are obliged to follow the instructions laid down by the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment. Before beginning our program you should be aware of them.

1. Students who are not willing to participate in school ensembles are not eligible for inclusion in the instrumental program. (Administrative Instructions 930.2.4.3)
2. If a conflict of engagement and rehearsals arises between a local group and the school program, the student must be reminded that the school program takes priority. The school program should also take priority over any other school activity except by special arrangement with the school principal concerned. (Administrative Instruction 932.2.9.4)
3. Students who are unwilling to participate in the school band / orchestra are ineligible for inclusion in the instrumental program. (Administrative Instruction 932.2.9.3)

RESEARCH FINDING:

OUR BRAINS WORK FASTER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY



THE MORE WE LEARN AND PLAY
MUSIC

STUDENT GUIDELINES

The following rules are designed to benefit all students and staff. Please read them carefully and remember them at all times. Failure to follow these directions may result in exclusion from the Instrumental Program.

LESSONS AND ENSEMBLES

Lessons are for small groups of students and take place in school time. Groups for instruction are formed according to the level of student ability and the range of instruments available. Each music teacher will create a timetable for his/her groups and display it on a notice board in each child's classroom. It is the student's responsibility to present himself / herself for lessons at the appropriate time.

Failure to attend lessons without a satisfactory explanation is most serious and will, in most occasions, result in firm action being taken. Students (and parents) are required to notify their class teacher of their absence due to instrumental lessons. **Students who miss or forget their instrument for 3 lessons in a term without reason will be excluded from the program.**

Parents, carers and students are asked to commit on a yearly basis with the hope that each child continues until the end of year 6. When a child has attained the necessary skills, their teacher will require them to participate in the appropriate ensemble and a note or email will be sent home accordingly. Ensemble rehearsals can take place before or after school, or in break time.

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR & COMMITMENT

1. Commitment to learning music needs to be very strong. If students maintain a determined commitment to their performing group, their teacher and their own progress, they will find the program rewarding and of life-long value.
2. Each student playing in an ensemble is part of a team, and any absence weakens the performance of the whole team. Absence from three consecutive rehearsals without satisfactory explanation will lead to that student's replacement.
3. Rehearsals are important learning occasions. Normal classroom behaviour is expected – the same rules will apply.
4. All string students in years 4-6 are required to play in a school ensemble as soon as they are technically ready. Exactly when the student joins an ensemble will be after consultation with the student and teacher.
5. The school instrumental program is a school subject. Children are NOT allowed to withdraw from the school program as they would not be allowed to withdraw from any other subject in the school curriculum. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the Instrumental Music Program, a meeting must be arranged with the Principal, Music Coordinator and the Instrumental Teacher to discuss the problems in the hope that they may be resolved.
6. Once an instrument is chosen, the child will remain on this instrument throughout their time in the School's Music Program.

KICK START PROGRAM

The Instrumental Music Teacher may choose to hold a Kick Start Program in week 1 or 2. This program is designed so that the children start “playing” their instrument sooner. More information about the kick start program will be given to parents at the start of the school year.

INSTRUMENTS

If children are allocated a small school instrument, e.g. violin, clarinet, trumpet; this loan will be only on the basis of a one year term. The terms of this loan are outlined in the section on Instrumental Hire & Contribution Fee. Children are expected to purchase their own instrument for the following year (except in exceptional circumstances) so as to make school instruments available to students new to the program. Children who play a larger instrument will be able to hire the instrument from the school for longer, depending on instrument availability.

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CARE OF INSTRUMENTS AND FACILITIES

- Students must only use their instrument or the instrument allocated to them
- All school equipment must be handled with care and respect
- Each student will be given a brown music folder to borrow for the year. These must be returned in good condition at the end of each year.
- Students are expected to promptly purchase tutor books, strings, reeds, and rosin as required
- Students must borrow all sheet music through their teacher and return complete at year end.
- If any damage is caused to the instrument through accident or negligence, the student loaning the instrument is required to pay for any repairs. If the instrument is damaged beyond repair, the student loaning the instrument is required to pay for the replacement of the instrument.

INSTRUMENT HIRE AND CONTRIBUTION FEE

If your child uses a **school instrument**, you will be asked to pay a hire fee of \$100.00 per year. These contributions go towards the up-keep and purchase of school instruments. **This money is payable at the start of term 2. Non payment of this fee may result in exclusion from the program.**

All students will also need to pay a contribution fee of \$50.00 per year. This also applies to **students with their own instrument**. This will assist with the purchase of new music and other items for the Instrumental Music Program.

After the first year, students are expected to buy their own instrument. Some of the larger instruments are loaned for longer with the hire fee payable each year such as cello and euphonium.

CLUSTER WORKSHOPS

There are 2 Cluster Music Workshops which include students from all the schools in this area. These workshops are to enhance the learning process for all students as well as a great social opportunity for the students to meet other musicians from the other schools as well as working with different Music Instructors. These workshops are:

- Honours Music Workshop – An auditioned workshop for those students who are exceeding in their Instrumental learning. (September)
- Junior Music Workshop - for all year 4 band students and string students. (June)

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PURPOSE OF PERFORMING

The purpose of the performances is to showcase students' learning. Students thrive on the opportunity to perform live in front of family and community members. To enter a competition and win or gain a place is a bonus. The main objective of each performance is to give the children a means to put all their hard work into practice. Students also tend to improve and polish their ability to play an instrument when a performance is imminent.

PERFORMANCES

1. Students will have the opportunity to perform with their ensemble each year. Much teacher time and organisation goes into these events for you. For this reason your full co-operation and support is essential if the performances are to continue. Unless the students are available for all performances, then they are ineligible for inclusion in the program.
2. Full school formal uniform must be worn at official public performances as needed.
3. Adequate notice will be given for performances. Students are expected to attend and play for the school.
4. Teachers are always keen to provide opportunities for students to perform in public. Appropriate behaviour and presentation must be observed at all times as the school is judged by the actions of its students.

UNIFORM

Full Band/Ensemble uniforms must be worn at performances. The uniform consists of:

Girls – Brown, check formal school dress or check formal shirt and brown shorts/skorts, black shoes, white socks

Boys – Brown, check formal shirt, brown dress shorts, black shoes and white socks.

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STUDENTS – HOW TO PRACTICE

What you need

- Instrument
- Music
- Music stand
- Chair with a straight back (standing is best for violin and viola players)
- Pencil and eraser

Where to practice

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

How often to practice

- Minimum of 4 sessions a week – regular practice achieves more progress than irregular.

When to practice

- Early morning is best. Try to avoid late evening practice when the body and mind are tired.

How long to practice

- At least 10 minutes per day – minimum of 4 days – increasing the time to 30mins as endurance increases. 'Pacing' the session is important. Play and rest in regular intervals.

What to practice

- You can go as far as allocating specific time intervals to certain segments of the sessions – but it should include warm-ups, flexibility exercises, technical work, specific pieces of music (solo or ensemble) and anything else required.

Why practice

- To solve problems
- To improve skills on what is already known
- To learn new things
- For enjoyment

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Prepare the session

- Set goals to be accomplished

- Develop a warm up routine
- Review technical work, and review scales in the keys of the music to be practiced
- Before playing a new piece of music:
 - * Check signature, time signature, tempo, and dynamic markings
 - * 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 sections with difficult or unusual rhythms

If you have some problems try to:

- Write out the counting
- Count out loud
- Count and clap the rhythm
- Play the rhythm on one note
- Play as written – slowly and accurately at first, then increase speed

How to play

- After preparing (as above), practice the music, stopping to correct mistakes where they occur.
- “Zero in” on the problem. 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.

Evaluation

Don’t be afraid to ask for help if you feel you are not getting anywhere. The best players in the world do this. Listen carefully to what you are playing 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 no magic wand. The recipe for success is 90% work, 10% talent and a dash of interest.

When your child is a member of the instrumental music program, his /her 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

Start with 10-15 minutes practices and increase steadily to a half hour as the student's ability increases. Establish with your child a weekly practice schedule. This time can be split into two or three shorter sessions. Practicing at the same time every day is good, but some flexibility should be built in to the schedule. Don't bring the world to a halt every morning at 6.30am because it is time for practice. Children need time for fun and relaxation just as adults do. If the situation merits, re-schedule the practice 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 exercise without a mistake. As a student gains experience on their instrument, a typical half hour session might be broken down as follows : (e.g. is for band student – clarinet)

Number of Minutes	Material Practised	Goal
3-5	Long notes, easy drills at a slow tempo	Warm up of embouchure (facial muscles, lips & mouth), 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.

The field of Instrumental Music is new for your child. They are learning to use their facial muscles in a different way, and their breathing apparatus is being used for a different purpose. String hands are also asked to do things in seemingly awkward positions. There is a new language of intangible symbols (notes) that require the use of their mind and body to translate into musical sounds. All this takes time. Even parents who have had previous string and band experience have probably forgotten the struggle of producing the first few notes. So the question arises: "Is he/she progressing as well as he/she should be?" Parents can evaluate practice sessions by asking themselves:

1. 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?
2. Is the tone quality becoming characteristic of the instrument or is the tone harsh, unmusical and unpleasant?
3. 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 contact the instrumental teacher. The student may be doing fine by beginning standards, they may have hit a temporary plateau, or they may be having difficulty in grasping a basic concept that could bring progress to a halt. This last problem may take a joint parent-teacher effort to overcome.

WHEN IT ALL SEEMS TOO MUCH

When you read this, you will probably be wondering why you thought it would be a good idea for your child to learn an instrument. Everyone goes through phases of boredom or rebellion about practicing, some more frequently than others. It is easy to lose sight of the goals.

Remember that music making is one of the most rewarding 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 achievers. It can also be a lifeline to self-esteem to the underachiever. The ability to play a musical instrument well is one of the most highly prized skills in the adult world. Music opens many social doors. It is often the dedicated who achieve these things rather than the most talented, who throw it all away in the heat of the moment.

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STRING INSTRUMENT REQUIREMENTS

The following items must be purchased and brought to each lesson
(music stand stays at home for practice).

Violin

“Essential Elements” Book 1 for violin
Shoulder Rest
Rosin
Music Stand
2B pencil and eraser
A cleaning cloth

Viola

“Essential Elements” Book 1 for viola
Shoulder Rest
Rosin
Music Stand
2B pencil and eraser
A cleaning cloth

Cello

“Essential Elements” Book 1 for cello
A rock stop
Rosin
Music Stand
2B pencil and eraser
A cleaning cloth

Double Bass

“Essential Elements” Book 1 for double bass
A rock stop
Rosin
Music Stand
2B pencil and eraser
A cleaning cloth

The following items must be purchased and brought to each lesson
(music stand stays at home for practice).

All students need the following:

1. Tutor book – “*Essential Elements*” *Book 1* for their instrument.

Baritone/Euphonium must purchase “*Essential Elements*” *Book 1*

Baritone/Euphonium Bass Clef.

2. Music Stand.

Individual instrument needs:

Flute

1 thin soft cloth to wrap around the cleaning rod and clean the inside of the flute.
1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Clarinet

4 x Size two B flat Clarinet reeds.
1 x Tube/Tub of cork grease.
1 x Reed guard.
1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Alto and Tenor Saxophone

4 x Size two Alto Saxophone or Tenor Saxophone reeds.
1 x Tube/Tub of cork grease.
1 x Reed guard.
1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Trumpet

1 bottle of valve oil.
1 Tube/Tub of tuning slide grease.
1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Trombone

- 1 Tube/Tub of trombone playing slide cream.
- 1 Tube/Tub of tuning slide grease.
- 1 very small water spray bottle.
- 1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Baritone horn/Mini tuba

- 1 bottle of valve oil.
- 1 Tube/Tub of tuning slide grease.
- 1 polishing cloth. (A soft cloth is fine, no need for special silver cloths)

Percussion: a kit bag that would contain the following.

- 1 x Pair of 5B drum sticks.
 - 1 x Rebound practice pad.
 - 1 x Two and a half octave chromatic glockenspiel.
 - 1 x Pair of glockenspiel mallets (probably come with glockenspiel).
 - 1 x Stand that supports both practice pad and glockenspiel.
- This is for home practice only and is not required for lessons.

Bass Guitar

- 1 x jack to jack guitar lead.
- 1 x $\frac{3}{4}$ size (or full size if ok) bass guitar, carry bag/case and home practice amp.