



# Grand Avenue State School Instrumental Music Information



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*"The characteristics of a good musician are  
a well-trained ear,  
a well-trained mind,  
a well-trained heart, and  
a well-trained hand.  
All four parts must develop together  
in constant equilibrium."  
Zoltan Kodaly*

*Please note that any changes during the year to policy/procedure contained within, will be notified through any combination of newsletters, emails, notes and webpage updates or any other available communication method.*

## Welcome

Your child has been offered a place in the Education Queensland Instrumental Music Program at Grand Avenue State School. This is a fantastic opportunity for your child to explore and extend their talents beyond the classroom in their formative years.

Students are selected to join our program on the following basis:

- general music aptitude test,
- responsibility, organisation and academic ability as assessed by the class teachers,
- physical suitability for particular instruments,
- that they participate, knowing what is required, and with the expectation of ongoing parental support,
- instrument availability, and
- the need to form a 'balanced' group of instruments for the school ensembles.

Students have made instrument choices based on:

- seeing and hearing the instruments played,
- knowing the type of music the instrument plays, and
- information provided around the challenges of each instrument.

All Year 2 (string) and Year 3 (band) students have an equal opportunity during the recruitment process.

## A Family Commitment

You should only accept this placement offer after reading and discussing this handbook with your child and family members. Involvement in music affects the daily lifestyle of the whole family.

The instrumental student requires a place suitable for 15 minutes or more of quality practising every school day as a minimum.

Support and encouragement in the early days, before sounds become recognisable tunes, is very important. The first year, when all the foundation skills are developed, is the most important, and as such this is when the most support is needed.



## About the Program

Instrumental lessons (band and strings) are provided in small groups to all instrumental students, free of tuition charges.

Students come out of their normal class to attend a 30 minute group lesson with 3-5 other students. They are expected to catch up on work missed, in their own time. These group lessons work hand in hand with the Concert Band and String Ensembles. These Ensembles perform at community events, competitions, school assemblies and at musical Evenings of Excellence.

Most Education Queensland State High Schools also have Concert Band and String Ensemble programs that continue the work done in primary schools. Our local school, Forest Lake State High School, has a well-established program with a fine reputation.

### Band Program

The band program at Grand Avenue State School starts in Year 4. In order to have a 'balanced band' of instruments, it involves approximately the following number of instrument places:



6	Flute	2	French horn	3	Trombone
10	Clarinet	1	Euphonium	4	Percussion
3	Alto sax	4	Trumpet		
1	Tenor Sax	1	Tuba		

### String Program

The string program at Grand Avenue State School starts in Year 3. Students participating in the string program may play one of the following instruments:

- Double Bass
- Cello
- Violin
- Viola

### Concert Band & String Ensemble

When students have learned basic skills (usually after 2nd term), every band and String student must begin participating in an Ensemble, putting their musical skills into action. Ensemble rehearsals take place one morning per week from 7.30am.

In their second year in the program, students then begin rehearsals in the Concert Band or String Ensemble in Week 2 or 3 of Term 1 continuing until the end of Primary School.

For selected students who display very good skills and commitment, participation in a Chamber String or Wind Ensemble gives them the opportunity to perform more complex pieces of music in a smaller group. Participation in either the Chamber String or Wind Ensemble is in addition to the requirement for these students to participate in the Senior String Ensemble or Concert Band.



### **Participation Commitment**

Students are initially expected to give a commitment to the program for a **minimum of one year**. Enrolment in the program is reviewed on a yearly basis with the expectation that students continue in the program until the end of primary school. Many continue on to secondary school programs.

In circumstances where continuation in the program is considered not be in the student's best interests or they are not showing commitment to the program, the opportunity to participate can be withdrawn after careful consideration and consultation with the Deputy Principal.

**NB: There are no full or pro-rata refunds for the annual program levy or the instrument hire levy for students who withdraw from the program.**

### **The Commitment**

To ensure success in the program, commitment is required from both the student and parent/s. The first year of learning an instrument is by far the most difficult as the foundation skills are being learnt. It is during this time that students need the support and guidance from their parents to see the benefits of persisting with learning the basic skills.



Students who become 'bored' with playing their instrument often are not practising regularly enough to progress to the point where they are able to play more difficult, recognisable (and therefore enjoyable) pieces.

Both parents and students will be asked to sign an Instrumental Music Contract each year to confirm their commitment to the program and outline the agreed home practice schedule. Due dates are set for the return of these agreements along with the payment of levies. Failure to adhere to these deadlines will see your child's offer made to a student on the waiting list.

### **Time Commitment**

As parents, we want to give our child the best opportunities to realise their potential. Please consider and discuss with your child, how much time there is left for music on top of school-work and commitments to other sports, clubs and activities. While always difficult to predict your child's future interests in extra-curricular activities and interests outside of school, the expectation remains for ongoing commitment and continuation of program until the end of Year 6.

Between 15 and 30 minutes of home practice is required, 5 days a week as a minimum. Add to this an hour for ensemble rehearsal and extra time to catch up on class work missed due to attending instrumental lessons.

## Parent Commitment

As a parent or guardian you will be committing to:

- ✓ supply your child with a suitable instrument (school or outside hire for the first year) text, reeds, strings, cleaning and maintenance items, music stand and school Ensemble folder
- ✓ show an interest in the music study of your child,
- ✓ find a quiet place for your child to practise without interruption,
- ✓ arrange a regular time for practice,
- ✓ help your child maintain a record of practice,
- ✓ assist your child in keeping the instrument in good condition (by supplying reeds, oil, etc and providing a place to store it safely)
- ✓ ensure your child is on time for all rehearsals and performances.
- ✓ ensure your child has the appropriate uniform for performances,
- ✓ pay the annual music levies and hire fees, and
- ✓ to encourage your child to play for others whenever possible.

## Student commitment

As a student you commit to:

- ✓ attend lessons and rehearsals on time each week,
- ✓ bring your instrument, music, practice sheet and pencil to each lesson,
- ✓ practise each day (5 days per week minimum) for the length of time recommended by their teacher,
- ✓ fill in your practice sheet daily, and ask a parent for their signature,
- ✓ behave in a considerate manner to the teacher and other members of class, and follow the school rules while involved in music events and lessons,
- ✓ participate in the relevant Grand Avenue State School Ensemble rehearsals (band or string),
- ✓ attend all performances and competitions required,
- ✓ care for and look after your instrument, and
- ✓ keep playing for one whole year at a time with a view to continuing until Year 6.

## Financial Commitment

### The Music Levy

A **levy** of **\$75.00** applies to **all** students participating in Instrumental Music. This is a contribution to the cost of purchasing music, photocopying, equipment, music stands, band folders and competition fees. *These costs are budgeted for and are committed at the beginning of each year explaining why withdrawal refunds are not possible.*

## Instrument Hire Fee and Responsibilities

Instruments are available for all students in the first year of participation in Instrumental Music. In most cases, students will need to have their own instrument after their first year. Larger instruments (Double Bass, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba) are available for hire each year.

A **hire fee** of **\$75.00 per year** applies for the use of a school instruments. The fee is payable before the instrument is issued. The Instrument Loan Agreement must be signed by parents before the instrument can be issued. The fee goes towards annual maintenance and eventual replacement of instruments.

Any damage caused to the instrument beyond general wear and tear is the responsibility of parents. It is advisable that you have your school instrument itemised on your Household Contents Insurance policy to ensure you are covered in case of accidental loss, damage or theft. Other details are contained on the hire agreement form.



## Indicative Costs of Instruments

Instrument	Maximum Hire Time	Approx. Cost Second Hand	Approx. Cost New
Flute	1 years	\$ 400	\$700-900
Clarinet	1 years	\$ 400	\$700-900
Alto Saxophone	1 years	\$900	\$1500
Tenor Saxophone	3 years	\$1400	\$2500
Trumpet	1 years	\$400	\$700-900
Euphonium	3 years	\$2000	\$3000
Trombone	1 years	\$500	\$700-900
Oboe	1 years	\$2000	\$5000
French Horn	3 years	\$3000	\$6000
Viola	1 year		\$270
Violin	1 year		\$270
Cello	1 year		\$700
Double Bass	5 years		\$1500

### Buying an Instrument

Instruments are made available by the school for students to experience the instrument before parents invest in their own. Parents are strongly advised to make use of the hire scheme and NOT to purchase an instrument in the initial stages.

Students continuing after the first year are required to purchase an instrument (excluding French Horn, Double Bass, Euphonium, Tuba, Bass Clarinet and Tenor Saxophone which can be hired until the end of Year 6).

Second hand instruments should be purchased through a Music store as these will have been checked to ensure they are in working order. In keeping with the school's high expectations in appearance, please avoid purchasing brightly coloured instruments. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Instrumental Music Teacher.

### Considerations when purchasing an instrument

Student models in the following brands are well-built and retain their value over time. Generally all of these brands will be suitable until your child reaches high school. Second hand instruments in these brands area also recommended. Many other brands are available and may be a safe option. However, we do not recommend buying instruments from toy stores, EBAY, Gumtree, or other non-specialised music stores.

#### Flute

Yamaha  
Trevor James  
Jupiter

#### Trombone

Yamaha  
Bac  
Getzen

#### Trumpet

Bach  
Holton  
Getzen  
Yamaha

#### Saxophone

Yamaha  
Trevor James

#### Clarinet

Yamaha  
Buffet  
Jupiter

### Percussion

Packs are available from most music shops that include a glockenspiel and practice pad that fit into a soft backpack-like case.

## **Strings**

It is strongly recommended that instruments are purchased through a string specialist rather than a generic music shop. It is a must that each string instrument, new or second hand, is set up correctly. This involves making sure the bridge and the strings are going to produce the best sound for your student and that the shoulder rest is appropriate to the size of the instrument. String specialists can be found in the yellow pages.

## **Equipment and Texts**

Different instruments require different maintenance and text items. Saxophones and clarinets require reeds, which is an additional annual cost. A comprehensive list will be given to those accepting their position offer; however a short list is as follows:

### **All Instruments**

- Band - Standard of Excellence Book 1 for your instrument
- Strings – Essential Elements 2000 plus for your instrument
- Grand Avenue Ensemble folder (\$12 – available at the Uniform Shop)
- a music stand (for home use)
- two 2B pencils and an eraser

**in addition to the above:**

### **Clarinets and Saxophones**

- Box of 10 reeds (Rico Royal size 1 or 1 1/2 )
- a cotton pull-through cleaning cloth
- a comfortable neck strap (saxophones only)
- a 4 reed Reed-Guard
- cork grease in a 'lip gloss' type tube

### **Trumpet, Euphonium and French Horn**

- valve oil
- slide grease (not Vaseline)
- cleaning cloth
- mouthpiece brush, valve brush (optional)

### **Trombone**

- Conn brand Superslick slide cream
- trombone water spray bottle
- slide brush
- mouthpiece brush (optional)

## Percussion

- drum sticks (standard weight)  
preferably wood tip 5A



## String

- cleaning cloth
- Rosin
- Set of spare strings
- Violins and Violas – shoulder rest (Everest, Kun, Wolf)
- Cello and Double Bass – ‘doughnut’ or ‘black hole’

## **Caring for your Instrument**

At their first lesson, your child will be shown how to assemble, disassemble, clean and care for their instrument. Please ask them to show you this. In general, the following guidelines will help you care for your instrument:

- if anything breaks or gets stuck – don’t try to fix it,
- keep your instrument in its case when not in use,
- never leave your instrument in a hot car,
- do not allow your instrument to get wet, and
- do not try to tune String instruments – they are very fragile.

## **Practice Guidance**

Generally, 15 minutes, 5 days a week is enough for beginner players. Brass and woodwind players **MUST** practise consistently as they are developing specific facial muscles. A one hour long session on the weekend can do more damage than good.

Holidays from practice should not be taken during school holidays. As a beginner, for every two days of no practice, one day of learning and muscle tone is lost; this makes coming back to lessons quite frustrating. As ensemble music becomes more demanding, 5-10 extra minutes of practice time should be set aside.

It is the **QUALITY** of the practice that produces results, not the **QUANTITY**.



## **Communication**

If quality practice is the first key to success, timely and clear communication is the second. If there are any circumstances that affect your child's participation and progress in the program, please let music staff know. We in turn are committed to the timely communication of potential problems and difficulties. The instrumental instructor will notify parents of lesson absence when two or more in a row are missed, and query lateness to band rehearsals, unsigned practice sheets, poor progress or a decline in attitude towards the program.

Each beginner student will have a daily practice record sheet and should complete it daily. It aims to assist in the development of good organisational skills, and should be signed weekly by parents. Parents are encouraged to contact the music teacher if they have any queries or concerns.

## **Performance Uniform**

All students must wear the Music Performance Uniform, which is available to purchase from the school uniform shop, for concerts, competitions and performances. It consists of:

- Black trousers (cotton, not jeans or tights)
- Long sleeved, collared, white business shirt with buttons
- Black socks
- Black shoes

New and second-hand uniforms are available from the school uniform shop. Students will be able to borrow a Grand Avenue State School Music Vest to go with their uniform for performances.

## **Music Supporters Group**

The Music Supporters Group consists of interested parents who fulfil a crucial role in maintaining the success of our Music Program through fundraising and providing support personnel at concerts and other music events.

Fundraising for music at the school helps provide instruments, performance vests and other equipment for the program.

Parents can offer support through helping with activities including ticket sales, fundraising BBQs and backstage support and uniforms for students.

Should you wish to become involved in the Music Supporters Group, please contact the co-ordinator or your child's instrumental music teacher.

## Useful Contact Information

Main School Office: 3372 0555

[www.grandavenuess.eq.edu.au](http://www.grandavenuess.eq.edu.au)

[enquiries@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au)

### Instrumental Music Teachers

Ms Della Martin	<a href="mailto:dmart125@eq.edu.au">dmart125@eq.edu.au</a>	Woodwind
Mrs Karen Gordon	<a href="mailto:klgor1@eq.edu.au">klgor1@eq.edu.au</a>	Brass & Percussion; Classroom Music Specialist
Mr Richard Thompson	<a href="mailto:rthom425@eq.edu.au">rthom425@eq.edu.au</a>	String

*Please note if early morning rehearsals are cancelled at short notice (due to illness or other unexpected circumstances) alerts will be sent via "Push" notifications through the "QSchools" application and every effort will be made to update the school electronic sign to reflect this. Any students at school at this time will be supervised by school office staff until school commences.*



*Parents need to follow the instructions under "Quicklinks" on the school website [home page](#) to link to the QSchools Ap.*

*(Direct texting to parents is currently being investigated as an option by the school.)*

