

2023

# Instrumental Music Program



Handbook



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## OVERVIEW

The Department of Education provides an instrumental music program at Grand Avenue State School. This program provides tuition during school hours in strings, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. Ensemble experience is provided through participation in our school's string ensembles and concert bands outside of school hours or during lunch breaks. Attendance at these groups is compulsory and an integral part of the instrumental music program. Classes take place on a small group basis with three to ten students of similar ability level learning together.

## OBJECTIVES

The aims of this program are:

- To provide opportunities for motivated musical students to develop instrumental skills via weekly group tuition and daily personal practice;
- To provide opportunities for such students to experience playing music in large and small groups (e.g. orchestra, concert band, stage band, ensembles, duets, etc.); and
- To provide an enriching dimension to the school's co-curricular music program.

## STAFF ALLOCATIONS

Our school's instrumental music staff are specialist teachers who are allocated to Grand Avenue State School by the Department of Education. These teachers are itinerant and only visit the school on particular days as part of a weekly circuit of schools. The amount of teaching time the Department of Education allocates to our school is dependent on the number of students participating in the instrumental music program, so it is vital that students attend all lessons. Additionally, due to funding constraints at the regional level, not all students who might wish to participate in this program can be accommodated.

Our current staff are:

|                    |                                |                      |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Miss Alisen McLeod | Instrumental Music Coordinator |                      |
| Mr Cason MacKenzie | Band Teacher                   | Monday and Wednesday |
| Miss Hyewon Chang  | Strings Teacher                | Tuesday and Friday   |

## SELECTION OF STUDENTS

Students are selected on criteria of:

- Music aptitude;
- Physical appropriateness;
- Academic strength; and
- Emotional and social development.

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 ensures balance to the various groups.

Selection of new participants occurs in Semester 2. All current Year 2 students may apply for the strings program, and all current Year 3 students may apply for the band program. To maintain a progression, new student groups are rarely started at other times during the year or at other year levels except in particular circumstances. Students enter the instrumental music program in Year 3 for strings, and in Year 4 for woodwind, brass and percussion.

## INSTRUMENTAL ALLOTMENT

Students apply for inclusion in the instrumental music program, not for a particular instrument. This ensures all ensembles are balanced for sound.

Most musical people can play more than one instrument and sing also. In choosing a “starting instrument” for a particular child, the music staff will consider the following factors:

- The student’s preferences and enthusiasm;
- The student’s physical aptitudes;
- The student’s music test results and sense of discipline;
- The schools’ needs in terms of ensemble balance;
- The parent’s ability to assist in the supervision of home practice;
- The availability of a school instrument for loan; and
- The student’s personality traits.

The instrumental music staff select students for the instrument they are most suited for, to ensure they succeed on their instrument.

## TUITION

Once selected for the program, students are expected to participate with full commitment until the conclusion of primary school (i.e. the end of Year 6). The lessons are timetabled during the normal school day and students are withdrawn from classes to attend their lessons. Students will receive one half hour 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 instrumental lesson timetable at the commencement of each term by the instrumental music staff.

Timetables for lessons and ensemble rehearsals are displayed on the noticeboard outside the instrumental music teaching room. It is the student’s responsibility to check the noticeboard and attend lessons and rehearsals when required. Timetables will be emailed to parents at the start of each term.

Students are expected to arrive at lessons punctually, appropriately prepared and with all the required equipment. Students are also responsible for making up the work they miss when attending their instrumental music lesson. Students are also required to participate in one of the musical ensembles.

The commitment made by the child is for all of primary school and changes to this can only be made by the instrumental music staff or by parents after consultation with the instrumental music staff. All changes require a written request from parents.

## REHEARSALS

Grand Avenue State School offers four core ensembles to enrich the instrumental music lessons. The ensembles are:

- Senior Concert Band (Years 5 and 6);
- Junior Concert Band (Year 4);
- Senior String Ensemble (Years 4 to 6);
- Junior String Ensemble (Year 3).

All students participating in instrumental music lessons must be a member of one of these core ensembles. Attendance at rehearsals is compulsory. Our senior ensembles (Senior Concert Band and Senior String Ensemble) begin rehearsals at the start of the year in Term 1. Our junior ensembles (Junior Concert Band and Junior String Ensemble) begin rehearsals at the start of Term 2, after students have been taught how to use their instrument. Small band and string groups may be formed throughout the year to perform at special events. On occasion, ensembles will combine and perform as a symphony orchestra.

Students should check their rehearsal times at the beginning of the year to avoid clashes with other activities when planning their participation in various school activities. Further rehearsal times may be required due to performance commitments throughout the school year. Parents of children who are already involved in regular early morning training programs (e.g. athletics, etc.) need to negotiate attendance with their teachers and may need to consider carefully whether a commitment to a demanding music program is recommended.

The Department of Education policy mandates that membership in an ensemble is dependent both on attendance at lessons and also rehearsals. If either of these requirements is not met, a student may be withdrawn from the instrumental music program.

Placement of students in ensembles is at the discretion of the conductors of the various ensembles and is subject to a minimum performance standard. A variety of criteria is used to determine a student's ensemble placement. These may include auditions and results of students in intra-school examinations. The school's history of attendance and commitment will also be considered.

Once all ensembles have finished their final performances near the end of the school year, they will be disbanded and new ensembles formed for our younger musicians.

## PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

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. Regular communication will take place via the Practice Sheet to be brought to each lesson and signed weekly by parents and instrumental music staff.

The minimum amount of practice is 20 minutes per day, 5 days a week (100 minutes total). More advanced students and extremely keen students should consider more practice to further develop their music abilities.

## ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Students in the instrumental music program progress through the Department of Education's Instrumental Music Curriculum. It is structured in ten levels, each of which includes eleven areas of learning and skill development. Instrumental music staff plan their teaching programs and assessment around the Instrumental Music Curriculum.

Students will be assessed on their instrument throughout the year in lesson time. The assessment items which the student must perform as assigned by their respective instrumental music teacher will be recorded and may be considered for submission for moderation.

All students will receive a written report each semester along with their general classroom reports. Grades and remarks on the reports will reflect the student's performance throughout the semester in both their class and ensemble environments.

Students will be reported on in two categories:

### Achievement: A-E

This result reflects how well the student performs the set assessment on their instrument. Instrumental music staff will be looking for correct rhythms, key signatures, dynamics and musicality at their level. Students will also receive comments relating to the curriculum areas for Literacy, Technique and Performance.

### Effort: A-E

This is a combination of attendance record, in class work and a correctly filled out practice record. Every student has the ability to achieve an "A" rating in this area.

If parents wish to discuss the contents of reports, they may contact their respective instrumental music teacher through the normal processes.

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC FEES

The instrumental music fees are:

- Participation Fee \$80.00
- Instrument Hire Fee \$80.00
- Grand Avenue State School Instrumental Music Folder \$15.00

All students participating in the instrumental music program are expected to pay the annual participation fee. This fee is used to provide resources and equipment for use in lessons and ensembles.

Students who use a school instrument are required to pay the instrument hire fee per annum. This fee is used for the maintenance and replacement of the school instruments.

These payments are required to be paid by the due date as outlined on the invoice. Parents may make alternative arrangements with payment plans through the school office. Students with unpaid instrumental music fees shall be withdrawn from the instrumental music program and will be required to return all school equipment to the music department.

The instrumental music folders are available to purchase at school through the uniform shop. It is strongly recommended that students purchase a folder to store music safely.

## INSTRUMENT HIRE AND STORAGE

There is a full set of band and string instruments for students to hire in their first year of tuition. If your child has benefited from a one-year hire program, then parents are required to purchase an instrument in the second year of the program, in order to make the instrument available for another student to begin tuition. There are some larger, expensive instruments that are available for extended hire, including Baritone Horn, Euphonium, Tuba and Double Bass. The percussion instruments used at school in rehearsals and lessons are not able to be taken home by students.

Any student using a school instrument must complete and return a loan agreement form to instrumental music staff before the instrument can leave the school. Students will be given a hard copy of this form at the start of the year.

There is a storeroom available next to the instrumental music teaching room for students to store their instruments, however students leave their instruments there at their own risk. Theft or damage to instruments in the storeroom is historically extremely low, however the school recommends that parents and students insure their instrument privately. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to individualise and clearly name their instrument case to assist with identification in a crowded storeroom. This individualisation will also minimise the chances of the case being mistakenly collected by another student.

## UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise advised, students will be required to be dressed in the music performance uniform for all school related performances, both inside and outside of the school.

The music performance uniform consists of the following:

- White dress shirt;
- Black tailored pants full-length;
- Black long socks (no ankle socks allowed);
- Black closed-in leather shoes (must be a dress shoe); and
- Long hair to be tied back with blue hair accessories.

The uniform shop sells the shirts and pants. Second-hand items may also be available for purchase.

## STUDENT AND PARENT COMMITMENTS

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

- Practice regularly on a daily basis;
- Participate in ensembles and performances as required;
- Attend lessons and rehearsals as required; and
- Take care of their 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; and
- Regularly replace items as necessary (e.g. reeds, cork grease, valve oil, sheet music, tutor books, and strings). Most of these consumable items are not supplied or stocked by the school and families must purchase these items from local music stores.

## CONCERT PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

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 competition for the various groups to enter. Unless otherwise advised, the students will be required to be dressed in the music performance uniform when performing outside the school. Attendance at all performances is mandatory for all instrumental music members and families are encouraged to support the student at each of these events.

Students may have the opportunity throughout their time in the instrumental music program to participate in a number of cluster music camps/workshops which happen each year. First year string students have the opportunity to participate in the Beginner Strings Workshop, a one-day event that runs in Semester 1. Students combine with other neighbouring schools and work through music with a number of instrumental music staff, which culminates with what is usually their first ever performance since commencing in the instrumental music program. Advanced band and string students have the opportunity to try out for the prestigious WestCent Music Camp, which runs for an entire week and involves 18 schools in the western and central suburbs of Brisbane. As this event is of a very high standard, only students who meet the minimum requirements for the event will receive a nomination for and complete an audition.

A typical timeline of instrumental music instruction and performance events are outlined below:

| Month                        | Junior Concert Band & Junior String Ensemble                                                                                                                                    | Senior Concert Band & Senior String Ensemble                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February<br>(Term 1, Week 2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive loaned instruments (only if loan agreement form has been returned)</li> <li>Lessons commence as outlined on timetable</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive loaned instruments (only if loan agreement form has been returned)</li> <li>Lessons and rehearsals commence as outlined on timetable</li> </ul> |
| March                        |                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WestCent Music Camp auditions</li> </ul>                                                                                                                |
| April<br>(Term 2, Week 1)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehearsals commence as outlined on timetable</li> </ul>                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anzac Day Ceremony</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| May                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginner Strings Workshop (for Year 3 string students)</li> <li>Band Day (for Year 4-6 band students)</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fanfare</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |
| June                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress Reports</li> <li>Semester 1 Concert for parents</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress Reports</li> <li>Semester 1 Concert for parents</li> </ul>                                                                                     |
| July/August                  |                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WestCent Music Camp (for successful applicants)</li> </ul>                                                                                              |
| September/October            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music Competitions</li> </ul>                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music Competitions</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| November                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semester 2 Concert for parents</li> <li>Instruments on loan returned to music department</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semester 2 Concert for parents</li> <li>Instruments on loan returned to music department</li> </ul>                                                     |
| December                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress Reports</li> </ul>                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress Reports</li> </ul>                                                                                                                             |

Please note that other concerts may be scheduled throughout the year.



## PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There is an active sub-committee of the P&C dedicated to co-curricular music. This group organises catering, raffles and admission for in-school concerts.

The P&C is committed to enhancing the opportunities and equipment for instrumental music and choral students and supporting the work of the music staff. In the past, the group has purchased big ticket musical instruments and coordinated fundraising for musical events.

For further information, please contact: [pandc@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au](mailto:pandc@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au).

## COMMUNICATION

Parents can raise concerns with any member of our staff. Where possible, speak directly to the person with whom you have the concern. To make an appointment to see a staff member, please contact the school office by email [admin@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au), or by phone (07) 3372 0555.

Email addresses of all staff in the music department are outlined below:

Miss Alisen McLeod                      Classroom Music Teacher/Instrumental Music Coordinator  
[Amcle71@eq.edu.au](mailto:Amcle71@eq.edu.au)

Mr Cason MacKenzie                      Instrumental Music Band Teacher  
[Cmack265@eq.edu.au](mailto:Cmack265@eq.edu.au)

Miss Hyewon Chang                      Instrumental Music Strings Teacher  
[Hxcha9@eq.edu.au](mailto:Hxcha9@eq.edu.au)

We look forward to your child participating in the instrumental music program this year.



<https://grandavenuess.eq.edu.au/>

**Grand Avenue State School**

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