



Performance Music Parent Handbook 2021



Norman Park State School

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1. Instrumental Program

The Department of Education offers an Instrumental Program in our school. Tuition is provided in Strings, Brass, Woodwind and Percussion Instruments.

Aim of the Program

The aims of the program are:

- To provide the opportunity for students to learn a musical instrument;
- To provide the opportunity for students to develop their musical abilities whilst learning consideration, discipline, social skills (and sometimes leadership) and responsibility as members of a band or orchestra; and
- To provide an enriching dimension to enhance the existing classroom curriculum.

Instruments

Tuition is provided for the following instruments:

- Strings: Violin, Viola, Cello and Double Bass
- Woodwind Flute, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone (including Baritone Saxophone for experienced students)
- Brass Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Baritone, French Horn, Euphonium
- Percussion: Glockenspiel, Snare Drums, Tom Tom Drums, Cymbals, Triangles and Tambourines.

A limited number of school instruments are available for loan to beginner students for one year. After this time, each child is required to purchase his/her own instrument.

This procedure does not apply for the larger, more expensive instruments listed below:

- Double Bass, Tenor Saxophone, French Horn, Baritone, Euphonium or Tuba, Baritone Saxophone or Bass Clarinet

A **hire charge of \$60** per year is charged for the loan of a school instrument. This fee helps cover the cost of maintenance and repairs and contributes to the cost of musical scores, sheet music and supply of other equipment. There is also a contribution fee of **\$80 per year for all students** involved in the program. However, in addition to this students are also expected to purchase their own “accessories” such as replacement strings, reeds, cork and valve grease, rosin, etc.

A Musical Instrument Loan Agreement is to be completed and signed by Parent / Caregivers when an instrument is loaned to a student by the school. (see Appendix A)



Instrument Repairs

Any school instrument that needs repairs should be returned to the classroom Music Teacher or one of the Instrumental Music Instructors, who will organise for the instrument to be repaired. **However, if a school instrument is damaged through the negligence or carelessness of the student, repair costs will then become the responsibility of the student/family and not the school.**

Tuition

According to the Department of Education's policy, students may commence tuition on a string instrument in Year 3 and tuition on a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument in Year 4. Wind instruments require the coordination and dexterity of a more physically mature child.

Lessons are provided by Education Queensland at no cost to the parents.

Children are accepted into the program and lessons are timetabled so that students of a similar standard are grouped together.

Tuition is provided within school time. It is therefore the responsibility of the children to bring their instruments on the day of the lesson and excuse themselves from class in time to avoid arriving late for their instrumental lessons. **They are also responsible for making up the class work missed.**

Termination of Enrolment

An Instrumental Music Contract is signed at the commencement of the program by the student and parents (see Appendix B). Enrolment may be discontinued by the Principal if attendance, practice, progress or aptitude is inadequate.

In the first year of tuition, first term is considered a trial period. At the end of this first term, the student may leave the program if agreed to by the parents, music teacher and Principal. However, once the decision is made to continue after this first term 'trial period', it is expected that the student will continue until the end of Year 6. In the event that a student wishes to leave the program trial, the parents and students must attend an interview with the Instrumental Teacher and Principal.

Camps

The Department of Education organises annual Beginner and Advanced Music Camps (non-residential). Students from various schools meet for up to one week and benefit from specialist group tuition, concert band or string orchestra rehearsals and choir rehearsals. All beginner students are required to attend. The cost of camps varies and is paid for by the parents/carers.

Ensembles

Norman Park State School provides many ensembles to cater for children at the various stages of their musical development.

These include:

- **Senior String Orchestra** – for students who have received two or more years tuition on a stringed instrument;
- **Beginner String Orchestra** – to commence in Term 4
- **Senior Concert Band** – for students who have received at least one year of tuition on a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument;
- **Junior Concert Band** – This usually commences at the end of Term 1 in the first year for students receiving their first year of tuition on a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument;



Students may progress to a more senior ensemble if the need arises to balance numbers, provided the student is deemed capable.

Ensemble Commitments

Every child who is a member of the Instrumental Program must be a member of at least one ensemble.

The commitment made by the student is for the duration of his/her involvement in the instrumental program.

Every ensemble rehearses for at least one hour per week. These rehearsals are either before or after school or during the lunch hour.

It should be recognised that each child in an ensemble is a member of a TEAM, and as such is expected to give priority to the attendance of all performances by their ensemble.

Children must accept responsibility for attendance, practice and punctuality. A note explaining the reason for absence from rehearsals or lessons must be provided by parents.

Any change to a child's commitment can be made only by the Principal, music staff or by parents after consultation with music staff.

Performances

The major focus of the instrumental program is to develop interest and encourage achievement. It is felt that this is best accomplished by striking a balance between 'performance' and 'competition' – thus providing children with the opportunity to experience both. Opportunities are provided for performances both within the school and at external venues. The Music Specialist/Instrumental Coordinator and Instrumental Teachers are responsible for identifying suitable competitions for the various groups to enter. Often these competitions occur outside of school hours.

Children are expected to participate in all the required performances. If a child is unable to attend a performance, then a written explanation must be provided by his/her parents.

Performance Uniform

All students are expected to obtain a music performance uniform and to wear this to all performances. These uniforms are purchased through Hosikozi Clothing Company, 349 Riding Road, Balmoral. The uniform consists of:

- A white tailored shirt with music logo purchased through Hosikozi.
- **Black trousers** – no jeans or leggings.
- Black socks and black closed in shoes – not joggers/sports shoes.
- Long hair tied in white or black bow.



Process for Selection of 2021 Instrumental Students

Unfortunately, due to the high demand on the limited resources available to the school, not all students who may wish to participate in this program can be accommodated.

Based on the size of the school, The Department of Education has allocated Instrumental Instructors as follows:

- Strings 1 Day per week
- Woodwind, Brass & Percussion 1 Day per week

The selection procedure aims to ensure balance in the various ensembles. Selection of new instrumental music program participants occurs in Term 4 of Years 2 and 3. To maintain a cohesive group, children are not generally started at other times during the year or at any other year levels, except under special circumstances.

All students in Year 2 and Year 3 are assessed in Term 4.

This assessment by the Music Specialist/Instrumental Teachers involves:

- Completion of music aptitude tests;
- Discussion with class teachers and the Principal;
- The first round of offers is compiled and letters sent to parents. (Under The Department of Education's policy, children who have already successfully gained a place in the string program commencing in Year 3 can not be offered a place in the first round of offers for the concert band program – the brass, woodwind and percussion/instrumental program.) Therefore should a child be particularly keen to play a concert band instrument (from Year 4) but has been offered a place in the string program (from Year 3) there may be merit in making the choice to forego entry into the string program.
- Parents of students who are successful in the first round offer will receive a letter advising them of this selection. On occasion, positions may be offered in a later round if a vacancy occurs.
- All first round families are invited to an Instrumental Program Orientation/Information Evening and also to Music Performance Evenings.
- Parents and children accept or decline the offer of participation in the Instrumental Program.
- Assessment by Instrumental Instructors of a child's physical capability for his/her desired instrument.
- The second round of offers is compiled and parents contacted.
- Final offers issued and a contract of commitment is signed by students and parents.



2. Your child as a member of the 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 to 15 minutes and increase steadily to half an hour as the student's ability increases. Establish 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 some flexibility should be built into this schedule. Don't bring the world to a halt at 6.30pm every evening because it is time to practice. Children need time for fun and relaxation just as adults do. If the situation merits, reschedule 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.

Climate

Practising should be in an area that is free from distractions – away from the TV, mobile devices, phone and family traffic. Good lighting, a straight back 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

You are extremely important motivators for your children. They need your support. Spend some time listening to your child practice. Being an appreciative audience can be a great boost for your child. Offer positive encouragement. You will have your own list of things to say, however these are helpful examples for starters:

- *"It's great to hear you practising!"*
- *"You are able to practise much longer now, aren't you?"*
- *"Those notes are really clear/strong/confident sounding."*
- *"I know that tune!"*

Try the instrument yourself. Let the student teach you what he or she has learned.

Is your Child Progressing?

The field of Instrumental Music is new for your child. He or she is learning to use facial muscles in a different way and his or her breathing apparatus for a different purpose. This is a new language of intangible symbols (notes) that require the use of his or her 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 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 the Music Specialist/Instrumental Coordinator a call. It may be helpful to arrange an interview with the students Instrumental Instructor. The student may be doing fine by beginner standards; he/she may have hit a temporary plateau; or 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

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 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 may throw it all away in the heat of the moment.

Nothing breeds success like success. Here are a few hints to help you with your budding instrumentalist.

- Practice is best done at a regular time, in a regular place. In this climate, the best time is usually first thing in the morning. However, it is better to snatch any available ten minutes than to miss a day completely. Ten minutes a day is much more valuable than 70 minutes once a week.
- Good posture is less tiring than bad posture. Students develop the ability to watch their playing in a mirror. Encourage this early. When reading music it should be on a music stand at the correct height – just below eye level.
- Your child requires help, or at least encouragement, during practise sessions. Use practice times as a positive “together” time with your child, even if you don't play an instrument yourself or even read music. Do the ironing or peel the potatoes. If necessary, organise some home incentive scheme for practice. Tick off the days completed on a calendar. Have a special treat at the end of the week/month. Insist on no TV or mobile devices until after practice is done.
- Each piece, exercise, scale should be played through **at least** four times each practice session. To begin with, it would be taken 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.
- If the piece sounds very 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?”, “Are your fingers in the correct place?”, “Is there a note you can check with?”
- Getting on and learning a contentious piece is the quickest way to the next interesting phase. Ask him/her to play you something 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.

Happy practising!



3. Helpful notes for Students

Practising at home

What you will need:

- Instrument
- Music
- Music Stand
- Chair – with straight back
- Pencil & Eraser
- A music dictionary can be helpful

Where to Practice

A quiet enclosed room. Turn off the TV and mobile devices. It is best to practise where there are no other people, or unknowingly you will “perform” rather than practice.

How often to Practise

Daily. Regular practice achieves more progress than irregular.

When to Practise

Early in the morning is best. Try to avoid late evening practice when the body and mind may be tired.

How long to Practise

At least 30 minutes per day – every day – increasing the time as endurance increases. “Pacing” the session is important. Play and rest at regular intervals. Children in Year 3 may begin by practising for 10 to 15 minutes per day.

What to Practise

Some students may allocate 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 Practise

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



Preparing for 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 practised.

Before Playing a New Piece of Music

- Check the 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 usual fingerings, accidentals and rhythms that may be troublesome;
- Check and go over bars with difficult or unusual rhythms.

If you have some problems, try to:

- Write out the counting;
- Count out loud (use a metronome);
- Play the rhythm on one pitch;
- Play as written – slowly and accurately at first, and then increase speed.

When you practise

Practise 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.

Evaluation

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

Music is a Disciplined Art

It is not uncommon to feel overwhelmed when you begin in the program. To many the learning of music is very new. You may need to give yourself some time to adjust. Your first notes will not be perfect and some may find it takes a great deal of time to achieve the expected sound. However, with regular practice and persistence you will succeed. Music practice will become part of your day and the results will delight you.



4. Classroom Music Program

The School Music Program is provided under the curriculum guidelines of Education Queensland and features the opportunity to sing, develop aural skills and understand basic music theory. Children in Years Prep to Year 6 are exposed to a variety of musical instruments eg ukulele, keyboard, percussion, recorder and guitar. Each class receives 30 minute specialist music instruction each week. Incidental musical experiences will be enjoyed by all children in normal classroom activities.

By the end of Year 6, students at Norman Park State School will have developed knowledge and skills in the areas of beat, rhythm and melody. Students will experience many facets of performing arts, encouraging them to develop an appreciation of music as a whole. From the start of Prep, there is a natural progression of topics covered and the development of knowledge and skills.

By the end of Year 3 - The students experience success in singing, movement, playing melodic and non-melodic percussion. The repertoire consists of mostly doh pentatonic scales.

By the end of Year 5 - The students experience success in singing, movement, playing melodic and non-melodic percussion, as well as the recorder and ukulele. The repertoire consists of doh and some la pentatonic scales.

By the end of Year 6 - Students experience success in singing, movement, playing melodic and non-melodic percussion, recorder, ukulele and acoustic guitar. Repertoire consists of songs in major and minor keys.



5. Choral Program

Choral singing at Norman Park State School is a long standing tradition that will continue into 2019. Being part of a choir teaches the students musical skills at an extended level, aids in vocal development and social skills and teaches the value of achieving goals through performance.

At Norman Park State School our shared strategic direction for our choral program is based on the following:

Vision

To foster a love of choral presentations for 2021 and beyond, with an aim to extend our choir students' capabilities whilst still maintaining the overall enjoyment factor at our practices.

Eisteddfods

Ultimately, we would like to enter students in local community eisteddfods and competitions. We believe our choral program is capable of vocal extension and this opportunity will be further explored during 2021.

School Proposals and Requests

We would like to welcome your child to become a member of the Norman Park State School Junior Choir (Years 2/3) or Senior Choir (Years 4/5/6) for 2021.

NPSS choir members are expected to **participate for the entire year and consistently attend rehearsals and performances**. A record of weekly attendance is kept. Any absences may be emailed or written to the choir teacher. This level of commitment is essential if our choirs are to perform at the highest level for which they are renowned and be viewed as a polished team. It is also expected that choir members conduct themselves as **exceptional representatives of our school at all times**

Choir Uniforms

Choir members, like all ensembles at our school, must perform in the Performance Uniform. This uniform consists of **long black pants, black socks and shoes and a treble clef logo shirt**. The shirt is available from HosiKozi Clothing Company (349 Riding Road, Balmoral, Ph: 3899 3000) or second-hand from the Music Support Group.





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Appendix A

Musical Instrument Loan Agreement

Description of Instrument

Type: _____ Brand: _____

Serial No.: _____ Asset No.: _____

Accessories: _____

Student Particulars

Name: _____ Class: _____ Year of Loan: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

I acknowledge that the above instrument at all times remains the property of the Department of Education and is issued on loan to the student subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The instrument should be used only by the student to whom it is lent and by no other person.
- (b) Every care and attention should be given to the instrument during the period of the loan.
- (c) The instrument is returnable upon demand at any time for inspection, repair, and adjustment or for any other cause.
- (d) Loss or damage of any instrument on loan should be immediately reported to the school.
- (e) If, in the opinion of the teacher of the instrument, a student is not carrying out reasonable practice or shows little ability with the instrument, the loan may be terminated.
- (f) If a student does not observe school policy on attendance at ensemble rehearsals, the loan may be terminated.
- (g) Instruments should be returned by the last Friday in November by all students.

I authorise the student to accept the loan of the instrument described above and I agree to undertake reasonable supervision of its use. I further agree to the conditions of the loan as stated above.

Name of Parent/Caregiver: _____

Signature of Parent/Caregiver: _____ Date: _____



Appendix B

Instrumental Music Program

Instrumental Music Contract – Band

Student Details

Name: _____ Class: _____

Instrument: _____

Student Commitment

I agree to:

- (a) attend all lessons, ensemble rehearsals and performances on time;
- (b) practice regularly;
- (c) care and maintain my instrument and replace accessories. (reeds, grease, oil);
- (d) bring tutor book, pencil, folder and instrument to all lessons, ensemble rehearsals and performances;
- (e) assist with the setting up and packing up of ensemble equipment.

Parent/Caregiver Commitment

I agree to:

- (a) support my child in his/her home practice;
- (b) support my child in honouring this agreement;
- (c) support the school by paying the hire and contribution fees as applicable;
- (d) advise the Instrumental Teacher of child absences prior to lessons, rehearsals and performances.

We agree to follow all the guidelines listed above.

Name of Parent/Caregiver: _____

Signature of Parent/Caregiver: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____



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Appendix C

Instrumental Music Program

Instrumental Music Contract - Strings

Student Details

Name: _____ Class: _____

Instrument: _____

Student Commitment

I agree to:

- (f) attend all lessons, ensemble rehearsals and performances on time;
- (g) practice regularly;
- (h) care and maintain my instrument and replace accessories. (strings, shoulder rest, rosin);
- (i) bring tutor book, pencil, folder and instrument to all lessons, ensemble rehearsals and performances;
- (j) assist with the setting up and packing up of ensemble equipment.

Parent/Caregiver Commitment

I agree to:

- (e) support my child in his/her home practice;
- (f) support my child in honouring this agreement;
- (g) support the school by paying the hire and contribution fees as applicable;
- (h) advise the Instrumental Teacher of child absences prior to lessons, rehearsals and performances.

We agree to follow all the guidelines listed above.

Name of Parent/Caregiver: _____

Signature of Parent/Caregiver: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____