Annandale State Primary School

Instrumental Music Handbook

A Guide for Students and Parents
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Annandale State Primary School
Instrumental Music Handbook
A Guide for Students and Parents

Instrumental Music Philosophy:

The primary function of the Instrumental Music Program at Annandale Primary school is to contribute to the overall education and development of students and allow them to achieve through the learning of a musical instrument.

Students will be encouraged to participate in musical ensembles so as to experience the joys of music and encourage further interest in music. All students will be encouraged to aim for high standards in their musical performances.

Supplementary to its educational focus, Instrumental Music should provide opportunities for students to work together with the common purpose of making music. It should also provide opportunities to serve the school and community through performances of program’s students and ensemble groups.

Introduction:

Annandale State Primary School conducts an Instrumental Music Program for interested students. The Queensland Department of Education provides Instrumental Music teachers to undertake free tuition in the areas of string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments.

Ensemble experience is provided through the school concert brand (for brass and woodwind students) and a string orchestra.
The program becomes an integral part of the student’s music education.
Instruction takes place on a weekly basis, with usually 3-10 students learning together in small groups.

This Handbook has been developed to provide students and parents involved in the Instrumental Music Program at Annandale State School with information on the Program’s features and outline the commitments that are expected of them by being part of the program.
Some thoughts on the Instrumental Music Program

- Students receive the equivalent of over $1000 free tuition per year (based on private tuition rates). Given that students can be in the program from approximately Year 4 to Year 12 it represents a great opportunity for a child. Instruments are expensive, but with free tuition over so many years, the cost of the initial outlay for the instrument is negated.

- The most musically gifted child will not necessarily be the one to achieve the high standards in Instrumental Music. The child who is prepared to practice hard will achieve well if they stick to their task.

- Children who learn an instrument have the chance to learn self-discipline and learn more about themselves. They invariably develop an appreciation for a range of instruments and musical styles and at times can develop new outlooks on life. It can have very positive social effects for them.

- Providing positive reinforcement for young musicians to practice at home, works much more successfully than threats for not doing so. The child has a much greater chance of sticking with the program, if the desire comes from within them, rather than imposed from an outside source.

- Pulling out of the Instrumental Program has detrimental effects on ensemble groups, as well as having prevented another child from learning an instrument that year.
Specific Aims of the Instrumental Music Program:

- To provide the opportunity for musical development of students through instrumental instruction on a group basis.
- To provide ensemble experience for those students so that they can develop ensemble performances skills as an integral part of their music education.
- To provide an extra dimension to the school’s music program.

WHAT ARE THE COMMITMENTS OF STUDENTS & PARENTS IF THEY JOIN THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM?

Every student must agree to:-
1. Practice regularly – a short period every day. (20 minutes)
2. Become a member of the school concert band or orchestra.
3. Take part as required in all concerts and performances.
4. Attend lessons, rehearsals and other classes regularly and on time as required.

Every parent must agree to:-
1. Encourage child to practice everyday.
2. Be supportive of their child’s practice.

Instruments taught at Annandale Primary School
Classes are conducted for the following instruments at Annandale Primary School:-

**Woodwind**
- flute
- clarinet
- alto saxophone
- tenor saxophone

**Brass**
- trumpet
- trombone
- french horn
- euphonium
- tuba

**Strings**
- violin
- viola
- cello

**Percussion**
- drums
- auxiliary percussion
The Recruitment Process

Students in Year 4 and 5 are considered for admission into the Brass/Woodwind section of the Program, while Year 3 students are considered for the String section.

The number of students recruited each year into the Program is dictated by factors such as:-

1. Instructor’s time allocation for the various instrument families. This is allocated to Annandale State School by the Education Department. This time cannot be exceeded.

2. The current mix of instruments already in the program. A balanced ensemble needs to be maintained.

The following process is used in recruiting students for the Program:-

- Towards the end of the school year, ensemble groups perform for the students in target year levels to familiarise students with Instrumental Program and the look and sound of the various instruments.

- The Instrumental teachers will undertake some skills testing with interested students to gauge their suitability.

- Instrumental teachers and the school Music Teacher will meet with class teachers to discuss individual student’s levels of independence and application. This provides an indication of commitment and willingness to learn when they join the program.

- Applicants who appear to meet the criteria will be notified in the last week of the school year whether their application has been successful.
Selection of Students into the Instrumental Program:

Students are selected for the program according to various criteria:

- student’s enthusiasm to learn
- musical aptitude – Both physical and academic testing is done.
- physical characteristics pertinent to a particular instrument
- behaviour and attitude in normal classroom and music lessons
- commitment of both student and parent to daily practice
- regular attendance at both lessons and rehearsal

It is important that students are carefully selected in order to avoid frustration or sense of failure on the part of the student.

Initial enrolment in the class is for a minimum of period of one year. Students are to have own instrument if they are to continue in program, after the initial 12 months loan period.

PLEASE NOTE: Where parents are considering the purchase of an instrument for their child, they are requested to consult the Instrumental Music Teachers BEFORE arranging any purchase.

Loan Instruments:

The school has a limited number of instruments for loan. These instruments have come from 2 main sources:-

1. They have been purchased by the P & C Association over a number of years.
2. Grant applications.
3. School budget contributions

The availability of these can be discussed with the Instrumental Music Teachers.

The criteria for loan are:

1. Suitability of the student to the instrument.
2. Availability at a particular time.
3. Musical aptitude testing.

The loan of larger, more expensive instruments is subject to the student’s progress and application and through negotiation with the Instrumental Instructors. Arrangements can be made with the instructors for the continued loan of a larger, more expensive instrument.
Instrumental Lessons at School

Students are given one lesson per week in school time and are taught in small groups. Lessons are usually arranged on one specific day of the week when the Instructor visits the school. Timetables for all lessons are displayed on the noticeboard in the Music block. Classroom teachers are also given up to date copies of timetables for both programs. There are to be no unexplained absences from these lessons. If a student cannot attend for any reason (except absence from school due to illness) then the student should see the instructor prior to the lesson time. Lesson times can be changed to accommodate situations which arise, and they may alter due to organisational constraints and special school events.

Ensemble Practice at School

All students learning instruments are obliged to participate in ensemble practices. Membership of an ensemble group is a serious commitment for the whole year and for the duration of the student’s involvement in the Instrumental Music Program.

Regular and prompt attendance at ensemble practices and concerts performed by the groups is compulsory and is the responsibility of the student and parent. Parents will be notified if students are regularly missing ensemble practices and their assistance sought in remedying the situation.

Parental Support

As the Instrumental Music Program is an extra-curricular activity, it needs the co-operation of all involved to make it a success. This applies to parents as well as the students and staff. Parents can assist by:-

- insisting that students fulfil their rehearsal attendance obligations (usually before school on the day the Instructor visits the school) by being present, ready to perform at the beginning of rehearsal time – 8.00am.
- by assisting the child in attending concerts if the student is performing.
- by ensuring the student’s daily home practice is done.
- by providing a quiet room for practice.
- by providing the musical instrument (if one cannot be loaned).
- by showing a real interest in their child’s musical studies.
- being aware of policies and all information in handbook.
- being prepared to provide a musical instrument at the end of the 12 month loan period.
- by keeping in touch with the Instructor about any perceived concerns
- Even little things such as purchasing a recording of a world famous artist playing your child’s instrument can be of great assistance.
Reporting

The children’s course work is based on sequential, set Levels of Development for their chosen instrument. All beginners commence work on Level One activities and when a sufficient level of achievement and competence has been reached, they progress onto the next level of coursework. Age or grade level at school is unrelated to these Levels of Development. There is no set time for a student to work through a particular level, as students progress at their own rate.

A formal Report Card will be completed for each child at the end of Semester 1 and 2 each year. This Report Card will provide a summation of progress for each student.

Items to be purchased by Parents

General items:
- Specifically important will be the purchase of Tutor Books for the students for their chosen instrument. Your instructor will inform you of the titles required early in the school year.
- Display Folders to hold sheet music.
- Music stand (highly recommended for home practice)
- Cleaning kits for instruments.

Other items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strings</th>
<th>Brass</th>
<th>Woodwind</th>
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<td>replacement strings</td>
<td>valve oil</td>
<td>reeds</td>
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<td>rosin for bows</td>
<td>trombone slide cream (trombone only)</td>
<td>pull throughs</td>
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<td>Vaseline for slides</td>
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Instrumental Music Levy

To assist the school maintain a quality program, sheet music and other supplies need to be purchased. A levy of $40 per year is required for each child in the program. This can be paid in a one off payment or as instalments throughout the year. Reminder notes will be sent home at the beginning of each year.

An additional fee of $40.00 will be charged for hiring a school instrument. This fee is to meet the rising cost of maintaining and keeping such a vast number of instruments available for children to hire.
Termination of Lessons

The Instrumental Instructor will advise the Music Teacher and the Principal if he/she believes a student’s place within the program should be terminated. Reasons for terminating a student’s membership of the Instrumental program would be if the student:-

- is not carrying out a reasonable level of practice requirements.
- shows little ability for the instrument.
- is inconsistent lesson attendance without reasonable excuse.
- is inconsistent ensemble attendance without reasonable excuse.

If a parent feels it necessary to withdraw a child from the Instrumental Program, it is necessary that the parent write a letter to the Instrumental Music teacher which is then passed on to the principal. We ask that parents give much thought to the withdrawing of students from the program late into the year (particularly if a loan instrument is involved) as the instrument lays idle for the remainder of the year as a new student is unable to be started late in the year. **We prefer that when students enrol into the program, the commitment is for the full 12 months and that if the student is a successful member of the Instrumental Music Program, the parents are prepared to provide an instrument for the student. It is requested that parents honour the 12 month commitment period as stated on the loan agreement form.**

Uniforms

The school music uniform is to be worn on designated occasions by members of the ensemble groups. The music teacher will distribute the uniform to the children prior to their performances and collect these after. Apart from the provided shirt, vest and trousers, the children should wear **black shoes and black socks.**

Concerts and Performances

Each year the ensembles play at a range of activities and venues. These differ from year to year, though the list includes:-

- Anzac Day
- Music Highlights Concert (late in the year)
- School events
- Community performances
- School Assemblies
- Eisteddfod
- Fanfare

Parents will always be notified by letter in regard to the students attending concerts or other activities outside the school. Permission is sought to allow children to attend.
End of Year Instrumental Awards

At the annual Highlights Concert Evening conducted in Term 4 each year, the best instrumentalist for Concert Band and Strings will be presented with an award (trophy) for excellence. The awards are open to all students in Years 3-6 who are participating in the Instrumental Music Program.

The students chosen for each award will exhibit high qualities in the following criteria:

- techniques
- playing ability (having successfully completed the level attempted)
- conscientiousness (in practice and attendance for lessons and ensemble)
- participation (in ensemble work)

The Instrumental Music teachers, school music teacher and a member of the school Administration Team will be responsible for making the final decision on the successful musicians.

Hygiene and Instruments

Students must never allow any other person to use their instruments. This is particularly important when it comes to brass and woodwind instruments. Apart from the risk of damage to the instrument caused by unskilled hands, there is a very real possibility of spreading disease.

Students must thoroughly clean instruments (mouthpieces particularly) on a regular basis (at least once a week) to assist with hygiene. Brass instruments only should be flushed with warm soapy water (dishwashing detergent). Do encourage your child to make this a regular happening during the week.

Instrumental music teachers (on rare occasions) will need to play child’s instrument to check for faults or for tuning purposes. They take great care in doing so, to ensure that the instrument is cleaned before returning it to the child.
Hints on How to Practice for Students and Parents

What you will need:
- instrument
- music
- music stand
- chair with straight back (standing is best for wind players)
- pencil and eraser

Where to practice:
A quite enclosed room – turn off the TV and the radio. It’s best to practise where there are no other people, or unknowingly you will perform rather than practise.

How often to practice:
“You don’t have to practise on the days you don’t eat!” These words express the view of Shinichi Suzuki, founder of the Suzuki violin method and illustrate the importance of practise. Daily – regular practice achieves more progress than irregular.

When to practice:
The Instructors recommend each afternoon straight after school and before playtime. The afternoon of their lesson day is particularly important so learnt information from that day can be practised whilst fresh in the young musicians mind.

How long to practice:
Eventually 30 minutes per day – everyday- increasing the time as endurance increases. Pacing the session is important. Play and rest at regular intervals. The teachers recommend the following for beginners into the program:-
Strings – 10 minutes per day Brass/Woodwind – 20 minutes per day

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, flexibility exercises, technical work, specific pieces of music (solo or ensemble) and anything else required.

Why practise:
- to reinforce the aesthetics of playing an instrument
- 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 practised
- 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 more carefully
- with your pencil, mark unusual 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)
- 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

How to practise:
- after preparing (as above) practise the music in phrases (musical sentences), stopping to correct mistakes where they occur
- zero in on problems. Then practise problem within the whole phrase then the whole phrase within the whole piece.
- don’t brush past problem areas hoping to go back later – you will never get around to it. Start with the problem. If you learn it right the first time, you only need to learn it once.

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 recognise problem areas
- be critical of yourself. You are now your own teacher.

Music is a discipline 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.
Annandale State Primary School
Instrumental Music Program

Daily Practice Record

Please bring this sheet to your lesson.

Students Name: ________________  Year Level: ________________

To make good progress on your instrument, regular practice is ESSENTIAL.

**PARENTS:** Please enter the number of minutes you child has practised and initial daily. If no practice has been done enter none and state the reason.

If two practice sessions are on one day, please enter both.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
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<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Teachers Comments</th>
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- Number of minutes per day
- Parents Initial

Teachers Comments:  
- E – Excellent
- S – Satisfactory
- N – Needs Improvement
APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT
IN
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

STUDENT NAME: ____________________________
CLASS: _________
ADDRESS: ____________________________________________
PARENT NAME: ______________________________________
PHONE (daytime):___________________
Email address: ________________________________

PREFERRED INSTRUMENT: Please number three preferences. No.1 being the most preferred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strings</th>
<th>Violin</th>
<th>Viola</th>
<th>Cello</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodwind</td>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>French horn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percussion</td>
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STARTING INSTRUMENT:
Please select one of the following:

a. I already own a __________, or will be able to provide a starting instrument.
b. If not selected for a school instrument, I am prepared to buy/rent a starting instrument.
c. I would like my child to be considered for a school instrument, and will provide an instrument after the first year of study.

Comments:___________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

Parent's signature       Student's signature       Date
___________              _____________             _____________

Please return to Mrs Hancock via Music room. Thank you.