

THE BAND PROGRAM



WHY JOIN THE BAND?

Research continues to reveal the benefits of learning an instrument:

- Learning music improves concentration, memory, self-expression and social interaction
- Working and co-operating as a team is an important skill in life
- As the team achieves, so does the self-esteem of every band member
- Skills learned in band will increase music appreciation that will last a lifetime
- It is fun to learn and perform music with friends and peers!

YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM

The success of the band program is largely due to *commitment, motivation and support*. Parents and children should be aware of their responsibilities.

Band members are required for *two band rehearsals* every week. Regular and punctual attendance is paramount.

In addition, a *weekly private tutorial* is required. An updated list of tutors that teach either at the school or in the area will be available from the band committee when the new list is updated at the end of each year. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange the private tutorial in time for the beginning of term 1 each year.

Home practice is essential for progress. We recommend a minimum of four practices each week in addition to the full band rehearsals.

Unexpected departure from the band can upset budgeting of the program. We ask for *commitment* until the end of the year or at least the end of term, with one term's written notification to the relevant band parent representative and band director is required. Seek advice from the band director if your child's enthusiasm is decreasing, as there are often ways it can be restored.

PROCEDURE FOR JOINING THE BAND

Each year, in November, children from year 2 (and new students to the school) are invited to attend to the Band Information Night with their parents. A short performance by the Concert Band will highlight the wonderful standard these children can reach in such a short time. Each instrument will be demonstrated to help your child choose a preference list of instruments.

No previous musical experience is needed to audition for the band. The audition consists of a multiple-choice aural quiz and blow testing, where children can try blowing some of the instruments on their preference list. We will then match up the child with the instrument best suited to them physically and musically.

The school owns the larger and more expensive instruments which will be available for hire, but all other instruments will need to be purchased or hired outside of school by the parents.

ANNUAL BAND ASSESSMENTS

Each band child in years 3-5 will do a short performance assessment for their band director at the end of term 4 to determine which band they will play in the following year. This is not designed to cause grief or anxiety and a little bit of preparation and tutor input goes a long way.

JUNIOR BAND WORKSHOP

There is a workshop held on the first or second Sunday in May for Junior Band members. A combination of full band and group tutorials with professional tutors concludes with a performance for family and friends. There is no cost for the Junior Band workshop.

BAND CAMP – Intermediate, Senior and Concert Bands

Attendance at band camp is essential. There is no additional cost for band camp. The students cover months of material on these days, leading into the Band Festival season. Band camp is a mixture of full band rehearsals, small group tutorials, meals and social 'bonding'.

PERFORMANCES

Attendance at each performance is crucial to the balance and success of the ensemble. If your child is unable to attend a performance, please notify the Band Director and band parent representative as soon as possible and *at least 1 week* prior so the performance program can be altered if need be.

FEES

Because of the size of our ensembles we are able to keep band fees at Harbord PS very low compared with other schools at \$225 per semester for all bands apart from Jazz Band which is \$110 per semester. Fees are billed by semester with semester 1 fees due by the end of term 1 and semester 2 fees by the end of term 3. Alternatively, you can pay for the full year. There are no additional costs for entry in band festivals or band camp.

Please note: Private tuition fees are paid directly to your tutor each term. The amount will vary depending on the experience and qualifications of the tutor.

TO HIRE OR BUY AN INSTRUMENT?

Buying an instrument is more economical in the long run, and it can always be resold or traded in later. There are many 'good deals' around and on the internet, but try to buy a good quality instrument that will be easier to play and last longer between services and repairs. It is best to avoid cheap copies as they do not last long and most repairers will not repair them. If you question your child's commitment, you can rent an instrument from most music shops (eg Mall Music at Warringah Mall and Mona Vale Music). Either way, each child will need an instrument ready for the beginning of term 1.

SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS

A small number of instruments are owned by the school and leased out for a fee. These include some of the more expensive and larger instruments such as the French horn and baritone.

The school also owns and maintains the drum kit, timpani drums, auxiliary percussion, mallet percussion, keyboard and amplifiers. Students using these instruments during rehearsals will be charged a minimal fee to assist with continued maintenance and long-term replacement.

INSURANCE OF INSTRUMENTS

Check with your insurance policy. This is a grey area! Some home and contents policies include musical instruments.

STORAGE OF BAND INSTRUMENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Children are welcome to leave their instrument in the band storeroom at the back of the hall during school hours IF IT IS CLEARLY LABELLED WITH THEIR NAME. Some children with smaller instruments prefer to keep them in their classroom with their school bag. We *do not* recommend leaving instruments at school overnight.