



Benowa State School

Empowering Lifelong Learners

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INSTRUMENTAL AND CHORAL MUSIC PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2023



There is now a significant body of research demonstrating the multiple benefit of an arts-rich education from an early age. Music helps us communicate, collaborate and develop our creativity. Music helps our brain make connections that support our learning in other areas, such as literacy and numeracy. Music helps us express and engage with our emotions. Music helps us make sense of the world around us, and is an ancient and universal language common to every single human culture.

Principal's Welcome

A growing body of studies presents compelling evidence connecting student learning in the arts to a wide spectrum of academic and social benefits. These studies document the habits of the mind, social competencies and personal dispositions inherent to arts learning. Additionally, research has shown that what students learn in the arts may help them to master other subjects, such as reading, math or social studies.

Students who participate in arts learning experiences often improve their achievement in other realms of learning and life. Moreover, the high arts-involved students watch fewer hours of TV, participate in more community service and report less boredom in school.

Benowa State School has been well known for its involvement in the arts and its high achievements. It is no wonder that this is also coupled with our high standards in academic achievement as well. Our arts program, championed through our many school choirs and our strings, brass and woodwind ensembles, have provisioned students with many broad community engagements, eisteddfods and achievements, while simultaneously working parts of brain development that enhance creativity and problem solving.

Our program attracts enrolments to our school from all over the Gold Coast. As a result, we establish very high expectations on our staff and students involved in the arts programs. Unfortunately, there are some students that we cannot accommodate and are placed on our waiting list. In saying this, participation in the program by our students requires a serious dedication and devotion to its purpose and program.

I am very pleased that you and your child have decided to join the program. It is a fantastic opportunity to develop an area of interest that can last a lifetime.

Warm Regards,
Mr Mike Josey
Principal

Instrumental Classes

Students from Years 3 to 6 are considered for inclusion in the program. Students may begin learning a stringed instrument from Year 3. Students may begin learning a band instrument from grade 4.

Instruments we offer include:

Strings: Violin, Viola, Cello and Double Bass.

Woodwind Flute, Clarinet and Alto Saxophone

Brass Trumpet, Trombone, and Euphonium

Percussion: Including all drums and mallet (glockenspiel) percussion

Choral Classes

Students from Years 3 to 6 are considered for inclusion in the program.

Junior Choir: Year 3

Intermediate Choir: Year 4

Senior Choir: Year 5 and 6

Benowa Voices: Year 5 and 6

Selection Criteria for the Instrumental/Choral Program

1. Identification of students who could succeed in Instrumental Music Program as a result of high performance and effort in the Classroom Music Program.
2. Active parental participation including participation at all information events and through the Expression of Interest form.
3. Survey completed and returned by deadline.
4. Instrument test and compatibility assessment to ensure the correct instrument allocation. It may be that your child's choice may not pass this assessment.
5. Regular progress report from the Classroom Teacher on the following areas:-
 - Ability to be organised and work independently
 - Student capacity to independently follow up and diligently complete missed work as a direct result of instrumental and choral lesson
 - Sound Musical Ability
 - Motor Skills
 - Respect for Property
 - Parental Support
6. Vocal audition for the Choral Program.
7. Consider numbers of potential students with available teaching time.
8. Availability of Instruments.
9. Please note that students already enrolled in the string program will NOT be allowed to quit strings to start a band instrument. String students MAY be allowed to start a second instrument in addition to a string instrument and this will be at the discretion of the string, classroom and band teacher.

Checklist for parents:

Please ensure you have the following before the commencement of tuition.
Your child's first instrumental lesson will be in the **second week** of the new school year.
Choir rehearsals will commence in **Week 3**.

- Read Handbook.
- Loan Agreement form is completed, signed and returned to the school office with full payment upon invoice of \$130.00 (applicable when hiring a school instrument).
- Music Resource Levy form is completed, signed and returned to school office with \$40.00 payment for Instrumental and \$40 payment for Choral Music.
- Commitment form is signed and returned to Instrumental and Choral Music Teacher
- Tutor book and accessories (including music stand) have been purchased.
- FULL Black shoes (not joggers), black socks, performance shirt, white singlet, black pants. Shirt and pants to be purchased from the uniform shop.

Benowa State School Music Policy:

Rationale

Music is one part of the total education of the child. The Instrumental/Choral Music Program at Benowa State School is an extension of the classroom music program and provides children with the opportunity to experience the expressive qualities of music through learning to play a band/orchestral instrument or develop their choral singing. Students also learn about commitment, responsibility and teamwork and how together as a team we can achieve quality outcomes. This philosophy is evident throughout all curriculum areas at Benowa State School. Through music education, the students are led to an awareness of music and an appreciation of the part music plays in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Aims

The aims of the Instrumental/Choral Music Program are:-

- To provide an opportunity for the musical development of students through instrumental instruction on a group basis
- To provide ensemble experience for these students so that they develop ensemble performance skills as an integral part of their music education
- To complement the school music program
- To develop the children's skills, to encourage the enjoyment of personal achievement as well as the benefits of participating in group performances, and to provide a solid foundation that will enable students to continue with their musical education as they progress to High School.
- To have fun and enjoy learning through a variety of mediums.

The program owes much of its success to the support it receives from the school staff, Parents' & Citizens' Association, students, parents and the school community. It is hoped the program will continue to flourish to enable as many students as possible to enjoy this worthy and rewarding activity.

Staff / Ensembles

Our Instrumental/Choral Teachers are:

Band: Mrs Sara Jameson - Wednesday and part Friday (Email: sjame31@eq.edu.au)

Strings: Mr Austin Berscheid - Monday, Tuesday and Thursday (Email: acber0@eq.edu.au)

Choirs: Mrs Lyndal Solomon - Monday - Friday (Email: Isolo1@eq.edu.au)

As well as weekly group lessons on their instruments, the students are required to participate in the school's ensembles. These commence in Week 3 of Term 1 and then every week except if noted below.

These comprise of:

Monday	7:45am – 8:45am	Benowa Voices
Monday	2:45pm - 3:30pm	Beginner String Ensemble (Term 2 onwards)
Tuesday	7:50am – 8:40am	Year 4 String Ensemble
Wednesday	7:40am – 8:40am	Concert Band
Thursday	7:50am – 8:40am	Intermediate String Ensemble
Thursday	3pm – 4pm	Senior String Ensemble
Friday	7:40am-8:40am	Beginner Band (Week 3 onwards)

All choir rehearsals (except Benowa Voices) are in the last session of school.

Student Commitment

As a student in the Benowa State School Instrumental/Choral Program you must continually demonstrate a high level of commitment to the program at all times. In order to run a successful program, a 100% commitment is required from all students and staff. The following are your responsibilities to the Instrumental/Choral Music Program.

- Students will demonstrate a high level of appropriate and responsible behaviour when attending practices and performances within and out of the school.
- Arrive promptly and prepared for all lessons. Instrumental lessons are taken in small groups, and the students are withdrawn from their normal class at a set rotating time each week for 30 minutes.
- Students must participate in ensemble activities. Extra rehearsals may be called in preparation for special performances, and students will be given ample notice in these cases.
- Students must regularly attend lessons and rehearsals. All absences must be explained. Notes must be presented to the office or emailed directly to Instrumental or Choral Music Teacher. Class and Ensemble rolls are kept and monitored. Consistent unexplained absences would result in students to show cause and may result in the termination of tuition. Parents will be involved in discussions at all levels of concern.
- Students **must** practise regularly. Parents should ensure a set routine of practice is established at the beginning of each year. Students should practise both ensemble and lesson material, including a warm-up, scales, technical work, studies and pieces. Beginners should start with 10-15 minutes practice 5 days a week, with the amount of time increasing to 30 minutes by the end of term one. String students must write their practises in the "Practice Record" in the front of their String Basics Book. Choristers can learn their words by reading through their words each night.

- Students are required to attend ALL performances, which in some cases will be scheduled in “out of school” hours (e.g. Gold Coast Eisteddfod, concert nights, school parades, and community performances). As much forward notice as possible is given prior to pending performances. School commitment must take priority over a commitment with an outside group. Failure to do so may result in being stood down from the group.
- Students will present in the Benowa Musical Arts uniform for performances except Junior Choir.

Parental Commitment

- Parents should show an interest in their child’s playing and singing, both during daily practice and at concerts, by being an encouraging and enthusiastic audience.
- We ask you to please sign the instrumental practice record sheet after your child’s practice located in the front of their String Basics Book.
- Ensure that your child has the accessories required for tuition (page 8) and a suitable venue to practise.
- Talk to other members of the family about the importance of positive comments – particularly in the initial stages of learning.
- Assist in transporting children to and from performances should the need arise.
- Communicate any issues with music staff as soon as they arise, either verbally or in writing.
- Ensure your child is on time to all rehearsals.
- When performing, demonstrate your commitment to your child’s program by attending performances on a regular basis.
- Model correct audience etiquette, by remaining until the end of the concert
- All parents are very welcome to attend lessons and rehearsals. The more you know, the more you can support your child at home!

Parental Encouragement and Support

The field of instrumental music is new for your child. Your child is learning to use facial muscles in a different way and breathing apparatus for a different purpose. There is a new language of intangible symbols that require the use of 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 notes and tunes. Your child requires encouragement during the practice sessions. Spend some time listening to your child practise. Offer constructive criticisms, but choose your words carefully.

Evaluate practice sessions by asking yourselves:

- 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 and unpleasant?
- Does the familiar exercise move along steadily in a fluent rhythmic manner, or is it halting and jerky?

- If the tune sounds odd to you, or definitely out of tune, the instrument may need adjusting, the child may be learning a harmony part, the child is not listening to what they are playing and is practising the piece out of time or playing the wrong notes.

If you reach a point when your evaluation consistently comes up negative, please do not hesitate to contact the Instrumental Teacher by calling the school or sending a note to school informing the teacher of your findings. Your child may be having difficulty grasping a basic concept that could bring the progress to a halt. This may require a joint teacher-parent effort to overcome.

Will your child's school work decline because of the extra commitment? No. The concentration and application to a new task enhances their academic ability. Research studies and surveys have consistently proved that involvement in instrumental music actually benefits the student's other academic studies.

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. In all, taking on an instrument is quite a commitment.

It has been found, however, that where there exists a genuine enthusiastic approach by the parents, so too does it exist with the child. Take an interest in listening to your child, and your child will want to play. If you have any concerns do not hesitate to contact your instrumental music teacher to discuss strategies.

Music Uniform

The school instrumental uniform is:

- Performance shirt (to be purchased from the Uniform Shop) with white singlet
- Black pants (to be purchased from the Uniform Shop)
- Girls - Green hair ribbon
- FULL black shoes (not joggers)
- Black mid-length Socks (Not ankle socks)

Or otherwise as advised by Instrumental/Choral Music Teacher.



Instrumental Lessons, Music and Accessories

Lessons are **compulsory**. Lessons are on a rotating timetable (except Year 3 strings) so that children do not miss the same subject in class each week. Students are given a timetable at the start of each term and classroom teachers are all emailed a copy too. A copy of the timetable is always available in the music room.

Students need to purchase all lesson materials. A music stand will be needed by ALL students for home practice to ensure proper posture (cost approximately \$22.00 at local music stores). Please do not buy cheaper reeds, they are not suitable for school use.

Band Students will need:

Flute:

- Small cleaning cloth for polishing
- Standard of Excellence Book 1 -Flute
- A4 Plastic Display Folder



Clarinet:

- 4 x Size 2.5 Vandoren reeds (these will need to be replaced regularly).
- Cork grease- La Tromba
- Standard of Excellence Book 1 - Clarinet
- A4 Plastic Display Folder



Saxophone:

- 4 x Size 2.5 Vandoren reeds. (these will need to be replaced regularly).
- Cork grease- La Tromba
- Standard of Excellence Book 1- Alto Saxophone
- A4 Plastic Display Folder



Trumpet/Trombone/Euphonium B.C:

- Cleaning cloth
- Valve oil (trumpets and Euphonium)
- Slide o Mix (trombones)
- Standard of Excellence Book 1 – (for your child's instrument)
- A4 Plastic Display Folder
- Small water spray bottle for trombones only. (avail Pharmacy or music store)



Bass Guitar

- Good quality guitar lead (min 3m)
- Tuner (clip on or plug in)
- Standard of Excellence Book 1- Electric Bass
- A4 Plastic Display Folder



Percussion:

- Set of 5A or 7A drumsticks. Preferably Vic Firth or Zildjian (DPX is ok)



- Rebound Drum Pad- preferably tuneable but rubber is ok. (school kits have a pad supplied)
- Standard of Excellence Book 1 – Drums/Mallet Percussion (2 books in one)
- A4 Plastic Display Folder



String Students will need:

- String Basics Book 1 (for their chosen instrument, purchased from a music shop)
- Shoulder rest for violin and viola students if purchasing your own instrument (make sure they correspond to the size of the instrument). *Students hiring a school instrument will be issued with a shoulder rest.*
- Rosin
- Pencil and eraser
- Soft dusting cloth
- An A4 Display folder to keep photocopied music in
- Spare set of strings for Violin and Viola students



Choral Students will need:

- An A4 display folder

Contract

All students and parents will be required to sign a contract of commitment. This contract outlines the level of commitment from parents, students and the school community.

When considering the Instrumental/Choral Music Program, be aware of the responsibilities outlined and that these responsibilities come with a commitment from you, of time, financial resources and attendance at school functions and performances.

Music Resource Scheme

Benowa State School conducts a Music Resource Scheme for the Instrumental/Choral Music Program. This consists of a levy parents pay each year.

The school also hires out instruments to beginning students which attracts a hire charge.

The Music Resource Scheme has been developed in conjunction with the Parents and Citizens Association and ratified by the School. The Music Resource Levy, currently at \$40 for **each** instrument/choral group, and instrument hire charge of \$130 covers the following:

- Purchasing much needed new instruments and repairs to current school instruments
- Maintaining the music library for your child
- Photocopying
- Music scores
- Competition entry fees and bus fares to local venues
- Upgrading accessories and equipment such as music stands and choir risers
- Accompanists

Instruments

A limited number of school instruments are available for hire through Benowa State School. Parents need to be aware of the cost and responsibilities involved when expressing an interest in the Instrumental Program.

The Loan Agreement must be completed and the first years hire payment received by the school office prior to the child receiving the instrument. If fees are NOT paid, the instrument will be returned to the Loan Scheme and made available for another student to access.

Parents are encouraged to purchase an instrument for their child towards the end of their first year in the program. This allows further new students to have the same opportunity to access the hire scheme and participate in the program, as your child did. Rental and time payment plans are available through various music retail outlets.

Second hand instruments should be checked by a qualified musician/repairer before purchase. Mrs Jameson/Mr Berscheid are more than happy to check over any second-hand band/string instruments before you purchase them if you bring them into school on a day the instrumental teachers are at school.

Maintenance

Students should ensure that they care for their instrument. Damage/Loss resulting from carelessness or neglect is the student's responsibility as stated in the Instrument Loan Scheme Agreement. Deliberate misuse will result in the loan being withdrawn and the student excluded from the Program. Consequences will include payment for repair and replacement. Please report any problems to the music staff immediately. An attempt at repairing the instrument at home may result in further damage, increasing your cost of repair.

Maintenance of student-owned instruments is their own responsibility. It is recommended that student instruments be serviced annually by a qualified instrument repairer.

During the school day, it is expected that instruments be stored in the music store room and NOT in classrooms where they may be damaged.

Loss or non-return of a school instrument will result in an invoice for the replacement cost of a new replacement instrument.

Report and Awards

- A report on the instrumental student's progress will be issued each semester. Special arrangements for a personal interview with the instrumental music teacher can be made if deemed necessary by either the teacher or parents.
 - Certificates are presented at performances for achievement in the program and participation in competitions.
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Termination of Tuition

It is expected that ALL students who enrol in the instrumental/choral program stay in the program for a minimum 12 months. Students are made aware of this before joining up.

Students and Parents who are not fulfilling their commitment to the program will be informed immediately of any difficulties and strategies will be implemented to improve the level of commitment. Continued lack of commitment after consultation with Music Teacher, Administration, Student and Parents may result in exclusion from the program. A formal letter will be sent out as confirmation of this action.

Points to Consider

1. Commitment is for the time while the child is at this school, but should carry on to the 6 years at High School.
2. Children in the Program are required to participate in the suitable ensemble/choir and attend all performances. Advance notice is given so that sporting or family arrangements can be made.
3. It is essential that the child and parents understand the commitment that is being made – a minimum 12 month period.
4. Please note – Education Queensland pays tuition. Private tuition costs are about \$30.00 per half hour. Therefore a large saving to you if your child is in this program.
5. The number of students involved in the Program is limited by the teaching time allocated to the school by Education Queensland.
6. Parents will be informed if it is considered that their child's participation/performance in this program has not met the school's expectations.
7. It is expected that parents will help students get into a regular home practice routine in the first few months



HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PRACTICE

What you will need

- Instrument
- Music
- Music stand
- Chair - with straight back (Standing is best for violin, viola and wind players)
- Stool for double bass players
- Pencil and eraser

Where to practise

- A quiet enclosed room (Turn off the TV/radio/phones/devices)
- It's best to practise where there are no other people, or unknowingly you will "perform" rather than practise.

What to practise?

Each session should include:

- A warm up
- Flexibility exercises
- Technical work
- Specific pieces (solo and ensemble)

How to practise

- Start with problem/difficult sections
- *Listen* carefully to the sound you are producing
- *Look* at rhythm and melody separately
- Sing sections before playing
- Be critical of yourself

If you have problems

- *Sing* the notes out loud
- *Write* out the counting
- *Count* out loud
- Count and clap the rhythm
- Use rhythm names
- Play the rhythm on one pitch/note
- Play as written - slowly and accurately then increase the tempo

Why Practise?

- To solve problems
- To improve skills
- To learn new things
- For enjoyment

How Often?

Daily. Better progress is achieved through regular practise.
Before school first thing in the morning is best.

How long do I practise?

- 30 minutes each day (Beginners start with 10 minutes and increase over time)
- Extend the time as endurance increases
- *Pacing* the session is important
- Alternate playing and resting

Prepare the session

- Set goals to be accomplished
- Develop a warm-up routine
- If preparing for exams review technical work
- Review scales in the keys of the music to be practised
- Before playing a new piece of music check: key signature, time signature, tempo, dynamics and all other markings (*use a dictionary if necessary*)
- “Scan” the music then read it again more carefully
- Mark unusual fingerings, accidentals and rhythms

Remember

- Don't be afraid to ask for help – your teachers are here to help you.
- Self-discipline leads to success.
- ***The recipe for success is 90% hard work, 10% talent and a dash of interest!***

