



ERSKINEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

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ERSKINEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL BAND INFORMATION HANDBOOK

The Band Program at Erskineville Public School provides an opportunity for all students in Years 3 to 6 to experience the world of making music as an ensemble. The program has developed into an exciting chance for children to participate in an enjoyable and rewarding musical experience.

Being part of a band can provide children with skills that will last a lifetime. In addition to the obvious musical benefits, children playing an instrument in a band benefit socially, physically, and often academically. Children learn valuable team skills, and above all, have fun!

Just a few of the benefits for children are:

- learning music improves concentration and memory,
- music provides an avenue for creativity and self-expression,
- children can meet new friends in different year levels,
- children learn self-discipline, organisation, and how to cooperate with others,
- working towards a common goal as a team, improving self-esteem and confidence.

This information booklet is designed to provide you with an overview of our Band Program. Before joining the school band, parents and children should be aware of the associated commitments, responsibilities and costs.

Understanding how the program works, the expectations of band membership and your role in the process, will help us to maintain our high standards and make participation in the band an enjoyable experience for all. Please refer to this booklet should you be unsure of any of the operational procedures of the band program.

Our Ensembles

Training Band

Training Band is our beginner band and involves mostly students in their first year of band. Anyone in Year 3 and above can join. Students traditionally undergo an Instrument Suitability Test during Term 4 prior to the year they wish to begin Training Band.

All Training Band students are beginners on their instruments and there is no prerequisite for musical training. It provides a great opportunity for the students to become competent on their instruments in an environment that is both supportive and fun. Students may remain in the Training Band for more than one year if they are unable to acquire the prerequisite skills of the Intermediate Band. Students successful in gaining entry to the Training Band are expected to maintain a regular practice regime, be prompt to rehearsals, and behave appropriately at all times.

Please note, students in year 2 are allowed into training band by application only, and are accepted after discussion between the band coordinator, school music teacher and the student's classroom teacher. Interested year 2 students must have previous music experience.

Intermediate Band

Intermediate Band is comprised of students with at least one year of experience on their band instrument. Students may spend anywhere between 1-3 years in this ensemble. Students successful in gaining entry to the Intermediate Band are expected to maintain a regular practice regime, be prompt to rehearsals, and behave appropriately at all times.

Concert Band

Concert Band is our flagship performing ensemble. It consists of students who are proficient on their instrument and committed to further improvement. Entry to the Concert Band is by audition in Term 4. Tutors will supply Intermediate Band students with advanced notice of what they must be able to do to pass this audition. Students successful in gaining entry to the Concert Band are expected to maintain a regular practice regime, be prompt to rehearsals, and behave appropriately at all times. Participants who are continually unable to meet these expectations may be moved to Intermediate Band.

Program Structure

The two elements of the Band Program are **private instrument lessons** and **rehearsals**. All students involved in the band program must undertake one private instrument lesson (approx 30 mins) and one whole band rehearsal each week (there are usually 10 weeks per school term).

Private Instrument Lessons

Students must partake in private instrument lessons with a tutor. Private instrument lessons will be offered each on-site before and after school (or via Zoom if necessary). Please note that these on-site lessons are subject to availability of classrooms and tutors, and morning lessons tend to fill up quickly. Alternatively, you may source your own tutor and organise your child's private instrument lessons at a time and location convenient to you.

Private instrument lessons allow one-on-one attention for your child to learn correct technique and provide individual-specific attention to learning, in addition to having greater accountability for maintaining a regular practise routine and having the ability to pursue individual interests beyond band repertoire.

On-site private lessons will take place in half hour blocks before school (7:50- 8:50am) and after school (3:10–5:40pm) throughout the week. All administrative queries, including fees and requesting changing lesson times will need to be done directly through the tutor. Lesson rooms and times will be advised at the beginning of term 1 2023.

If your child attends after school care on-site, please note that tutors **will** be able to sign students in and out while they are at after school care.

A list of onsite tutors for 2023 will be provided at the end of term 4 2022.

Rehearsals

Whole band rehearsals are where children will learn to play as part of a larger ensemble.

It is imperative that students arrive on time for rehearsals after school. Students who arrive late miss out on important warm-up activities that are fundamental to the mastery of their instrument. There is also an expectation that students behave in accordance with school rules during rehearsals.

All band members are part of a team and are expected to commit to attending all rehearsals and performances. If your child is unable to attend a rehearsal or performance, please advise the band coordinator or the school as soon as possible.

Full Band rehearsals take place straight after school from 3:10 - 4:10pm in the Lucy Woodcock Hall and are held on the following days:

Training Band - Tuesday 3:10 - 4:10pm
Intermediate Band - Wednesday 3:10 - 4:10pm
Concert Band - Thursday 3:10 - 4:10pm

Important Band dates are communicated via the Music Database and Enews. Please ensure you are subscribed to the Band Enews channel as we can not do this for you.

Fees

Rehearsal Fees

Rehearsal fees cost **\$400 annually**. This is to cover the cost of the conductors, administrative costs, band equipment and extra costs involved in having conductors attend performances and auditions.

Rehearsal fees are to be paid upfront each semester, ie. twice a year. Fees for Semester 1 are due by the end week 2, Term 1 and fees for Semester 2 are due by the end of the week 2, Term 3. Invoices will be issued by the Band Coordinator and fees will be paid directly to your tutor.

These fees are essential to the continuation and success of the program. Payment of fees is compulsory, and students may not attend rehearsals until fees are paid in full. If you are unable to pay band fees on time, please contact the band program coordinator to make alternative arrangements.

If a student no-longer wishes to continue in the band program for any reason they may only do so at the end of each semester. There will be no refunds for students/families who decide to leave mid-semester.

The Band program is externally managed and as such, parents and carers are able to use the NSW Creative Kids vouchers. For more information, please visit the Creative Kids website <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-creative-kids-voucher>

Band Starter Pack - one off payment at the commencement of Band (this includes Band bag, band tshirt, Band books and photocopying throughout Band) \$60

Private Lesson Fees

The school does not collect tutorial fees. Instead, fees for private lessons will be paid directly to your child's tutor at their set rate. A 30 minute lesson will usually cost around \$40-\$50, but please note that this is not a guaranteed cost. This will need to be discussed directly with your tutor.

Communication

SchoolEnews App is the primary communication channel for updates about the music program, notification of events, and communication regarding weekly rehearsals.

It is expected that band families subscribe to the Band channel of the School Enews App. This is not something the school can do for you. There is also a regular section in the school newsletter providing band news.

Registering your child in one of the bands or ensembles automatically gives the Band Committee permission to add your child's name, school year and class and your contact details to the MySchoolMusic database used by the Band Committee and the Band Parents to run the Program.

Instruments in Band

For more information regarding instruments in our Band program please view this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiDovR-unKc&feature=youtu.be>

Instrument Hire

All Band instruments will need to be sourced by families whether they are purchased, hired or borrowed. Instrument hire is not provided by the school or Band Program.

If you would like to hire an instrument, we recommend hiring through the Arts Unit, which is part of the Department of Education.

<https://www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/instrument-hire>

From the Arts Unit instrument hire policy:

A hire agreement must be signed, before items are collected from Arts Unit premises. The hirer is responsible for the collection and return of all equipment, being aware of the size, shape and weight of the items to be moved.

The hirer is responsible for care and maintenance of instruments whilst on loan.

Commitment & Expectations

Once children have committed to playing in the band, they must honour that commitment throughout the school year. The band is like any other team – it needs all its members to contribute for it function successfully.

Please ensure your child understands that in addition to attending an instrument lesson and rehearsal each week, there is an expectation that they will practise their instrument throughout the week to refine what they have learned in lessons. Practise schedules will be recommended by your child's tutor.

It is important that students arrive at rehearsals and instrument lessons on time. On-site instrument lessons are carefully planned and timed, so if you are late your lesson will be accordingly shorter.

Behaviour Contract

Students participating in the Band Program must uphold the school rules and values during instrument lessons, band rehearsals and when attending performances, and as such all Band students are required to sign and return a copy of the Band Behaviour Contract at the beginning of each year.

Disruptive behaviour detracts from the experience of all band members and can lead to bands progressing slower than desirable. Misbehaviour will not be tolerated and will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the school Band Behaviour Policy and Behaviour Contract. Conductors may also choose to issue time-outs to students who are disrupting rehearsals.

Students who continue to disrupt band tutorials and rehearsals may not be considered for promotion to Intermediate or Concert band, or may be asked to leave the program.

Performance Opportunities

Throughout the year there are a number of performance opportunities for our school bands. Traditionally, an afternoon concert is held at the end of term to showcase the progress of all three of our school bands, and at the very end of the school year our three bands also perform at the annual Cadenza evening performance night.

There are also band competitions that take place throughout the year. We are always looking for more opportunities for our students to perform!

We will communicate all performances via the MySchoolMusic database and Enews.

Students are required to wear their band t-shirt for performances. From 2020/21, this is included in the band pack, or can be purchased at the office for \$10.

Managing Covid Restrictions

Over the past two years the program has had to adapt to function online via Zoom and specialised music programs. If further lockdowns occur in the future, tutorials and rehearsals will take place on zoom as close to normal rehearsal time as possible. Other adaptations also take place, such as an online recital night and practice challenges - to keep the students engaged with their instrument and the program.

To register interest, please complete the following EOI form:

