



Buckley Park College

Instrumental Music Handbook



2026

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Principal	Harold Cheung
Music Coordinator	Mel Truman





Introduction

The Instrumental Music Program offers expert instruction across a wide selection of instruments, alongside exceptional opportunities to participate and perform in our extensive range of ensembles. Each student receives a weekly instrumental lesson and participates in at least one core

ensemble. This program is a vital part of the school curriculum and plays a key role in a student's educational growth.

This Handbook outlines what you can expect from the music program, and how to apply.

Music Staff

Role	Name	Days	Contact
Classroom teacher, Woodwind	Mel Truman	MTWTF	tm@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au
Classroom teacher, Guitar and Bass	Luke Jones	MTWTF	jn@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au
Classroom teacher, Drums/Percussion	Greg Rowan	MTWTF	rw@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au
Brass	Nic Ryan-Glenie	MTWTF	ry@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au
Voice	Beth Otenstein	MTWTF	ot@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au



Why learn an instrument at school?

Music helps the brain to develop. Different studies have proven that learning music can benefit a child's overall mental development. [Research shows](#) that students who study music are more successful on standardised tests and are also likely to achieve better grades in school.

Music teaches resilience. Learning to play music requires consistent effort and perseverance. Students learn to develop practice routines and cultivate strategies to overcome challenges. When students finally master that piece they've been dying to learn, they feel satisfied that their patience and discipline has enabled them to do it.

Music enhances creativity. Music is a form of self-expression through which students can exteriorise their emotions, compose their own songs, improvise, and develop their own interpretations of existing works.

Music can improve social skills and confidence. It can help students to connect with others, develop teamwork and work with others harmoniously.

Music is fun! The initial stages of learning an instrument can be challenging, but students are likely to really enjoy playing music. Every song they learn is a personal achievement, and it is a confidence boost to play something you've worked hard on.

Before enrolling your child, please consider the commitment needed to successfully undertake this study. It requires the establishment and maintenance of a regular home practice routine and considerable parental support. Regular communication with the music department, teachers, and attendance at performances is encouraged.



Why learn an instrument at BPC?

There are many benefits to learning an instrument at school. These include:

- A carefully selected and qualified teacher.
- Extra-curricular learning that is supported and integrated in curricular music studies. This is especially important for those in VCE music, as our music staff communicate with the VCE classroom teacher to best prepare students for their exams.
- Ensemble participation.
- Regular performance opportunities.
- Heavily subsidised lesson and hire fees.
- Participation in a community of like-minded musicians.

Which instrument should I learn?

Students are supported to find the right instrument at the Music Expo in Term 4.

Here, students have the opportunity to play every instrument that we offer and rank the instruments according to their preference. Music staff will also give students an aptitude score based on the ease of which they are able to produce a sound on the instrument.

Balance is always a consideration when running an Instrumental Music and Ensemble program. When students enrol, we need to ensure that the ensembles are balanced with the correct number and types of instruments to cover all parts. This helps our ensembles to sound their best and for students to have the most enjoyable experience.

For this reason, students are asked to choose 4 instruments they would like to play when enrolling. Every effort is made for students to learn their first choice of instrument; however, this cannot be guaranteed.



Instruments available

Instrument family	Instrument
Woodwind	Flute
	Clarinet
	Alto Saxophone
	Tenor Saxophone
Brass	Trumpet
	Trombone
Guitar and Bass	Acoustic Guitar
	Bass Guitar
Drums/Percussion	Drumkit
	Mallet Percussion
Voice	Contemporary voice
	Classical voice
Music Theory	Available to VCE students
Piano/Keyboard	Available by application, subject to eligibility

Music theory

Music theory lessons are available upon request to support students who:

- are studying VCE Music
- are preparing for AMEB or other music examinations

Piano/Keyboard

Piano and keyboard lessons are available upon request for students who meet one of the following criteria:

- **Elective Ensemble Pianists:** Students playing piano/keyboard in an Elective Ensemble (e.g. Production Band), subject to audition
- **VCE Music Students:** Students playing piano/keyboard as part of their VCE Music studies
- **Second Instrument Learners:** Students already enrolled in lessons for another instrument, who wish to learn piano as a second instrument — subject to approval by the Music Coordinator

Please note, piano and keyboard lessons have a higher annual fee. This is because we are unable to facilitate any group lessons on this instrument.



Enrolment

New students

Students enrolling in the music program for the first time should complete and return the New Enrolment form in early-December of the previous year, or within the first 2 weeks of Term 1. Late enrolments are permitted, depending on Teacher availability. Fees are then prorated based on the number of school weeks remaining in the year.

Instrument and voice lessons begin in Term 1, Week 2.

Continuing students

Continuing students should complete the Continuing Enrolment Form by no later than Week 8 of Term 4. This ensures that their place is prioritised in the music program for the coming year, and allows them to continue access to any instruments being hired during the Summer Holidays. The late return of forms can disrupt students' learning in the coming year.

To enroll, scan the QR code or click the link to the [Instrumental Music Hub](#).





Hire of instruments

A limited number of instruments are available for hire through the school for students enrolling in Instrumental Music. The cost for instrument hire is detailed in the [Fees section](#).

Instruments available for hire are:

- Flutes
- Clarinets
- Alto and Tenor Saxophones
- Trumpets
- Trombones
- Guitars*
- Bass Guitars*

*These instruments are relatively inexpensive to purchase. Hire is not recommended for this reason. If you require assistance purchasing a Guitar or Bass guitar, please contact the Music Department.

Security and care of instruments

Regardless of if it is your own instrument or the schools, instruments should be well cared for. Students should leave their instruments in the Music Department on days when they have their lesson or ensembles. Avoid leaving your instrument at school for long periods of time,

such as the holidays. Not only can't you practise, but the safest place for your instrument is with you.

Damage to hire instruments

Students are responsible for the care of their instrument. Any accidental damage, damage due to negligence or loss of the instrument is the responsibility of the student/parents/carers. Costs incurred will be invoiced to the parents.

Returning hire instruments

All instruments should be returned in Term 4, Week 8. Only students who have completed the Continuing Enrolment Form and Instrument Hire Form can access their hire instrument over the Summer Holidays.

When returning an instrument, please note:

- Instruments should be cleaned carefully.
- All accessories should be returned with the case.
- Instrument cases should be vacuumed.
- Instruments must be returned to the Music Coordinator and signed back into the school. Please do not just leave instruments in the music storeroom.



Ensembles

Attendance at an ensemble is compulsory for students enrolled in Instrumental Music.

Students may also audition to participate in an Elective Ensemble, in addition to their primary ensemble. Auditions will be held between Weeks 2-3 of Term 1. Students who wish to only attend an Elective Ensemble must get prior approval from the Ensemble Director and the Music Coordinator.

Ensemble list

Ensemble	Rehearsal time	Director(s)	Notes	
Junior Band	Mondays 3:15pm – 4:30pm	Nic Ryan-Glenie	Beginner Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, and Bass students	From Term 1, Week 6/7.
Symphonic Band	Thursdays 3:15pm – 4:30pm	Mel Truman	All Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, and Bass students	
Guitar Ensemble	Thursdays 1:07pm – 1:47pm	Luke Jones	All Guitar students	
Choir	Wednesdays 1:30pm – 2:25pm	Beth Otenstein	All Voice students	
Combo Band	Wednesdays 1:30pm – 2:25pm	Greg Rowan	Elective Ensemble By audition only	From Term 1, Week 5
Production Band	Tuesdays 3:15pm – 4:30pm	Mel Truman Beth Otenstein	Elective Ensemble By audition only	From Term 1, Week 5
Junior Contemporary Ensemble	Mondays 1:07pm – 1:47pm	Nic Ryan-Glenie Luke Jones	Elective Ensemble By audition only	From Term 1, Week 5
Senior Contemporary Ensemble	Tuesdays 1:07pm – 1:47pm	Luke Jones	Elective Ensemble By audition only	From Term 1, Week 5



Concerts and Performances

Throughout the year, students are able to access many performance opportunities, including:

- Year 7 Music Expo
- Solo, group and ensemble performances at General Assemblies
- The Mid-Year and End-of-Year Music Concerts, which showcase all students involved in Instrumental Music
- The annual School Production at the Clocktower Theatre

Performance Uniform

- Students are required to wear either a full school uniform or 'Concert Blacks', depending on the performance
- Concert Blacks are a staple of professional musicians. Concert Blacks options include:
 - Black trousers, skirts and dresses (over the knee or with black stockings)
 - Black shirts (with no visible logos)
 - Black shoes



Excursion to see Wicked! – The Musical, 2024.



Production Band Performance at General Assembly, 2024.



Royal Navy Band excursion to Keilor Downs Secondary College, 2025.



Music Camp, 2025.

Timetabling of instrumental lessons

Students receive one 40-minute individual/small group lesson per week, in addition to participating in an Ensemble. The 40-minute lesson takes place in either the first or second half of a regular class.

Lessons are scheduled on a **rotating timetable** during class time. Lessons are held in small groups of 2-3 students, with senior students prioritised for individual lessons. Depending on which days the teacher works, the lesson will rotate over the same or multiple days. Lessons rotate on a minimum-two week cycle to ensure students do not miss the same class in consecutive weeks. This system is accepted as a standard across Australia.

Students in Years 11 and 12 will have lessons scheduled outside of their timetabled classes.

Students can expect to receive 32 scheduled lessons throughout the school year. They are **required to attend all scheduled music lessons and ensemble rehearsals.**

An example timetable is provided below. Here, the student has a lesson in the second half of Period 2 on a Monday in Week 1, and in the second half of Period 1 on on Week 2.

Example timetable

Today	Jump to:	14/07/2024	Go
	Jul 14, 2024	Mon 15	
8am			
9am		8:50: 1 - 7ARTA - (7 Art) - D9 - FE	
10am			
11am		10:29: 2 - 7ENGA - (7 English) - A1 - HC	11:09: SAX_MZ - (Instrumental) - E1 - BY
12pm		11:48: 3 - 7JAPA - (7 Japanese) - A1 - AM	
1pm			
2pm		1:47: 4 - 7HUMA - (7 Humanities) - A1 - HS	
3pm			
4pm			

Today	Jump to:	21/07/2024	Go
	Jul 21, 2024	Mon 22	
8am			
9am		8:50: 1 - 7ARTA - (7 Art) - D9 - FE	9:30: SAX_MZ - (Instrumental) - E1 - BY
10am			
11am		10:29: 2 - 7ENGA - (7 English) - A1 - HC	
12pm		11:48: 3 - 7JAPA - (7 Japanese) - A1 - AM	
1pm			
2pm		1:47: 4 - 7HUMA - (7 Humanities) - A1 - HS	
3pm			3:15: JUNIOR_BAND - (Instrumental) - E1 - BY
4pm			



Absence from lessons and ensembles

Attending lessons

It is students' responsibility to check Compass and go to their scheduled lesson on time, with the correct materials. There are bells halfway through periods which can help students attending lessons in the second half. Classroom teachers can see when students have a music lesson so there is no need to go to the timetabled class first.

At the beginning of the year, teachers may collect students from their timetabled classes until a routine is set.

Rescheduling lessons

Advance notice must be given in order to **reschedule a lesson**. The student/parent should email the Instrumental Music teacher in advance to request this for an approved reason, such as a Common Learning Task or Excursion being held during the instrumental lesson. Staff will make every effort to reschedule lessons throughout the term. Lessons missed because the student forgot will not be rescheduled.

Absences

The **instrumental teacher must be notified** of any upcoming absence. This **includes Ensemble Rehearsals**. Unapproved absences will be followed up, and parents will receive an email from the school regarding the student's attendance.

Attendance at Ensemble Rehearsals is compulsory. If a student is unable to attend their allocated Ensemble Rehearsal, the Music Coordinator must be contacted. A suitable alternative will be sought.

Fees for tuition



Enrolment options	Annual Fee
Instrumental Music lessons and Ensemble rehearsals	\$800
Second instrument: Music lessons and Ensemble rehearsals	\$400 per instrument
Piano lessons	\$1000, or \$600 as a second instrument
Instrument hire	\$200
Ensemble only	\$200

Payment of Instrumental Music and Ensemble Music fees cover the cost of specialist teachers. These fees are heavily subsidised by the Department of Education and Training Victoria. The average comparative cost for private lessons is \$2240 for 32 lessons, excluding access to ensembles.

This is an annual fee paid in advance, not a per-lesson fee.

Fees will not be refunded for early termination.

Termination of lessons

If a student wishes to withdraw from the music program, they should first fully discuss this with Parents/Carers and their Instrumental Music Teacher. Parents must **email the Music Coordinator** regarding any cessation of study. Please note, enrolling in the Instrumental Music program is an annual commitment, and **fees are non-refundable**. This is due to the program needing to employ specialist staff on a time fraction for the entire year.



Music camp and excursions

As a part of the Instrumental Music Program, students get the opportunity to engage in a range of additional activities, with the aim of exposing them to a broad range of musical styles and careers within the music industry.

We aim to run a music camp annually, in which students engage in rehearsals, workshops, and attend performances around Melbourne. Additionally, throughout the year, the music department seeks opportunities for students to attend performances and events, such as VCE Top Acts, Orchestral performances, Musicals, and workshops. These events are optional and come at an additional cost.

VCE music

VCE Music students are strongly encouraged to enrol in either Instrumental Music at BPC or privately. The benefit of having lessons at BPC is that all of our music staff have a thorough understanding of the expectations and requirements of VCE Music and have a direct line of communication with the VCE classroom teacher; this is proven to enhance student outcomes.

At least three to four years experience in learning an instrument/s is recommended before commencing VCE Music.



Music Camp workshop with Jessie Lloyd, 2025.



Hot Potato Band incursion, 2023.



Into the Music Workshop at the Arts Centre, Music Camp 2025.



Symphonic Band performing at the Winter Music Concert, 2025.

ENROLL

Enroll now by completing
the forms online.

Scan the QR code or
[click the link here.](#)

- **New students** - complete the New Student Enrolment form
- **Continuing students** - complete the Continuing Student Enrolment form

In the Instrumental Music Program Hub, you will also find:

- The Piano Expression of Interest form
- Ensemble audition forms
- This Handbook

Questions?

Email Mel Truman (Music Coordinator)
tm@buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au



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Visit the Instrument Music Program
Hub for Handbooks and forms, event
information, upcoming events, and
other important updates.

