



MUSIC@ PETERSHAM

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Handbook - 2025

Welcome to all families (re)joining Music@Petersham!

Music@Petersham is a partnership between Petersham Public School and Petersham Public School P&C Association, with the valuable support and collaboration of school staff and parent/carer volunteers.

This handbook will should you an overview of everything you need to know about participating in Music@Petersham, so please take time to read each section.

Feel free to email us with any questions!

Aims of Music@Petersham

Our main goal is to provide every student with the opportunity to make music, regardless of their previous experience. Additionally, we seek to:

- Develop an appreciation of a range of musical styles
- Foster teamwork, camaraderie and leadership skills
- Encourage a sense of responsibility and commitment
- Provide a variety of opportunities to perform

Most importantly... We want students to have fun while they learn to love music!

Why music

The value of learning music has long been acknowledged. Developing musical abilities has wide-ranging benefits in neurodevelopment as well as positive effects on many aspects of a child's education. Being part of an ensemble helps a child to develop the cooperative social skills required to be a valued member of any team.

"The evidence of neuroscience overwhelmingly demonstrates that children studying music have a considerable educational advantage over those who don't. Because of the essentially aural nature of music, together with the requirements of intense listening and concentration, the child's brain responds powerfully to music education, enhancing all other learning."

- Richard Gill OAM

Ensembles and conductors

In 2025, our ensembles and conductors are:

Ensemble	Level	Conductor
Bands		
Training Band	New to music or instrument - Year 2/3+	Alex Lee
Concert Band	By audition: intermediate and experienced players	
Choirs		
Junior Choir	All singing levels (incl. new to music) - Year 3 & 4	Susan Sukkar
Senior Choir	All singing levels (incl. new to music) - Year 5 & 6	Jessica Clay
Recorders		
Recorder Starter	New to music or instrument - Year 1+	Susan Sukkar
Recorder Intermediate	Intermediate players	Alicia Crossley
Recorder Consort	By audition: experienced players	Susan Sukkar
Strings		
Stringlets	New to music or instrument - Year 1+	Bronte Ellis
Junior Strings	Intermediate players	
Senior Strings	By audition: experienced players	

An overview of our...

Bands

Our bands are made up of three families of instruments: woodwind, brass and percussion. Each year, bands at Petersham Public School may comprise flutes, clarinets, oboes, saxophones, trumpets, trombones, euphoniums, tubas, bass guitar and percussion.

- *How to get started:* Entry into the Training Band is available for students in Year 2/3+. Children who join the Training Band need no prior music experience. Students will learn about their instruments, how to be part of an ensemble, and create music together.
- *How to continue:* Students will typically spend 1-2 years in Training Band, before progressing to Concert Band via an audition.
- *Performance opportunities:* Our senior group, Concert Band, regularly performs at festivals and competitions - such as the Inner West Music Festival, Kegworth Autumn Fair and Taverners Hill Winter Fete.

Choirs

Our choirs are for students of all musical abilities - from first timers right through to experienced singers. Junior Choir is for students in Year 3 and Year 4, and Senior Choir is for students in Year 5 and 6. Both groups regularly perform at external events, such as the Primary Proms (Sydney Town Hall) and Festival of Choral Music (Sydney Opera House).

Recorders

Recorder is a great way to start your child's musical journey. They are great for small hands and easy to carry! Unlike the Bands and Strings, students are not required to have private lessons. Initially students start on the descant recorder, before being offered the option to progress to other recorders (i.e., treble, tenor or bass recorder) in Recorder Consort.

- *How to get started:* Recorder Starters is for students in Year 1+. Children who join Recorder Starters need no prior music experience. This is a great opportunity to learn how to play an instrument and read music - and is recommended for all students before learning a band instrument, as it will give them a very useful musical foundation.
- *How to continue:* Students will typically spend 1 year in Recorder Starters, before moving to Recorder Intermediate for 1-2 years. Experienced students will then be invited to audition for Recorder Consort.
- *Performance opportunities:* Students in our most senior recorder group, Recorder Consort, participate in the Festival of Instrumental Music (FOIM) each year at the Opera House. Senior students are also often selected to be in the State Recorder Ensemble.

Strings

Our string ensembles feature instruments from the string family: violin, viola, cello and double bass. These instruments are ideal for young beginners, as they are available scaled in smaller sizes (e.g., 1/16th, 1/8th).

- *How to get started:* Entry into Stringlets is available for students in Year 1+. Children who join Stringlets need no prior music experience. Students learn how to correctly hold their instruments, read music, play as an ensemble member and develop their listening skills.
- *How to continue:* Students will typically spend 1-2 years in Stringlets, before an (informal) audition for Junior Strings. Intermediate students will typically spend 1-2 years in Junior Strings. Experienced students will then be invited to audition for Senior Strings.
- *Performance opportunities:* Students in our most senior strings group, Senior Strings, participate in the Festival of Instrumental Music (FOIM) each year at the Opera House. Senior students are also frequently selected to be part of the State Recorder Ensemble.

Rehearsal schedule

In 2025, our rehearsal schedule is:

Ensemble	When	Where
Recorder Consort	Tue 7:40am - 8:40am	Hall
Recorder Intermediate	Tue 8:00am - 8:45am	1/2W
Recorder Starters	Tue 8:40am - 9:10am	Hall
Junior Choir	Wed 11:30am (lunchtime)	3/4T
Training Band	Wed 7:50am - 9:00am	Hall
Senior Choir	Wed 11:30am (lunchtime)	4/5CP
Senior Strings	Thu 7:30am - 8:40am	Hall
Stringlets	Thu 8:30am - 9:10am	Hall
Concert Band	Fri 7:50am - 9:00am	Hall
Junior Strings	Fri 7:50am - 9:00am	Library

Arrangements for students attending PACC

Students attending before or after school care at Petersham Activities Centre for Children (PACC) can arrange to have their child(ren) attend rehearsals and/or on-site private music tutoring. PACC staff will arrange to sign-out and take your child(ren) to the session, and/or collect and sign-in your child(ren) from the session.

Please notify PACC directly of your child(ren)'s Music@Petersham schedule, including any changes.

Auditions

Over the course of the year, students in Bands, Recorders and Strings may be invited to present an audition. After their audition, students may be invited to move up to a higher ensemble, or offered the chance to be a section leader. Auditions are also a great chance for conductors to hear how each individual is progressing, and give feedback to students.

Performance uniform

Students are expected to wear the full Music@Petersham uniform for external/public performances (not including school assemblies), which consists of:

- White music performance shirt - available to purchase new or second-hand from the P&C Uniform Shop
- Black pants or black leggings (no shorts or tracksuit pants please)
- Black socks
- Black shoes

Note: for some public performances, an alternate performance shirt may be provided by the event organiser.

Costs

Ensemble fees

Ensemble fees for 2025 are as follows:

Stream	Ensemble	Fee/semester	Instrument req'd	Private lessons req'd
Bands	Training Band	\$230	Hire available	✓
	Concert Band	\$230	Hire available	✓
Choirs	Junior Choir	TBC	N/A	
	Senior Choir	TBC	N/A	
Recorders	Recorder Starter	\$150	Free for new students	
	Junior Recorder	\$180	Hire available	
	Recorder Consort	\$230	Hire available	
Strings	Stringlets	\$150	Hire available	✓
	Junior Strings	\$230	Hire available	✓
	Senior Strings	\$230	Hire available	✓

Instrumental ensembles: multiple ensemble discount

If you are in two instrumental ensembles of the same stream (e.g., Training Band and Concert Band), you will not be charged for the second ensemble where participation is at the conductor's request.

If you are in two (or more) instrumental ensembles of different streams (e.g., Concert Band and Senior Strings), you will receive a 50% discount on the second (and subsequent) ensemble fee, applied to the lesser of the ensemble fees.

There is no multiple ensemble discount for participating in the choir.

Instrumental ensembles: instrument hire

Instrument hire arrangements fees for 2025 are as follows:

Stream	Instrument	Fee/semester	Description
Bands	Percussion	\$50 - levy	Levy lieu of instrument hire, to cover percussion instrument wear & tear / maintenance.
	Other band instruments	\$120 - hire	
Recorders	Descant	Free - to keep	Provided to students new to the program.
	Other recorders	\$20 - hire	
Strings	All strings instruments	\$120 - hire	

All hire instruments should be returned in good working condition. Where instruments are returned requiring servicing and/or replacement, this will be passed on at cost (see below).

Instrumental ensembles: additional fees

Additional fees for 2025 are as follows:

Stream	Description	Additional fee
Bands	Lost/damaged music book	\$30
	Instrument returned not cleaned/serviced	\$50 + parts passed on at cost
	Lost/damaged hire instrument	Repair/replacement passed on at cost
Recorders	Lost/damaged descant recorder	\$15
	Lost/damaged other hire recorder	Repair/replacement passed on at cost
Strings	Instrument returned not cleaned/serviced	\$50 + parts passed on at cost
	Lost/damaged hire instrument	Repair/replacement passed on at cost

Invoicing

Invoices for Music@Petersham are issued per semester. Prompt payment is appreciated.

Commitment

Students are expected to make a commitment for at least a semester, preferably the full year. If you withdraw mid-semester, you will generally not be issued a discount/refund.

Financial assistance

Families who would like to be part of Music@Petersham, who may not otherwise be able to afford to participate, are encouraged to apply for financial assistance from the P&C. You can make a request by contacting the conductors, the P&C or the School Principal. All applications will be treated confidentially and respectfully.

Applicants may be eligible for full or partial assistance with ensemble and instrument hire fees. Note: there is no financial assistance available for private lessons.

Hiring an instrument

Music@Petersham has a wide variety of instruments that can be hired from the program. Some instruments (e.g., bass guitar) may need to be either hired from other providers or purchased due to their popularity. Recommendations for places to hire or purchase instruments can be provided by the conductors.

Instruments available to hire include:

- **Bands** – flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, bass clarinet, bass guitar, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, french horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone horn/euphonium, tuba
- **Recorders** – soprano, descant, treble, tenor and bass recorders
- **Strings** – violin, viola, cello, double bass

Bands: percussion students

Students are able to play percussion instruments in the Bands, however these instruments will remain at School. Parents/carers will need to make arrangements to have access to their own percussion equipment. Recommendations on how to arrange this can be given.

Hire terms/tutor/privat

Instruments loaned out to students are either new or just serviced. It is the students and parents/carers responsibility to look after the instrument. Families hiring an instrument will sign a contract acknowledging their responsibility for care of the instrument, and liability for loss or damage to the instrument. If required, instruments need a service before they are returned at the end of the hire contract - we can provide a recommendation of businesses or technicians specialising in instrument servicing or repairs on request.

A full list of hire terms is included as an attachment to this handbook.

Bands and Strings students: private lessons

All students in Band and Strings ensembles must have weekly private lessons outside school hours. Private lessons are organised directly between parents/carers and the tutor. Private lessons usually occur on school premises both before or after school, and can be undertaken while students attend PACC. Some tutors also teach in studios near the school. The current costs are around \$45-\$50 for a half hour lesson. The cost of these lessons are not included in the ensemble fees, and are paid directly to your tutor.

A list of Bands and Strings tutors is maintained by the conductors, and available from the Music@Petersham page of the P&C website:

[List of Tutors at Petersham Public School - 2025](#)

Any tutor who is included on this list has a valid Working With Children Check, and has completed an annual school / child safety induction with the School Principal.

Students in Choir and Recorder ensembles are not required to have weekly private lessons.

Getting the most out of Music@Petersham

There is a level of commitment involved in being part of Music@Petersham. We encourage you to read the following points before applying for a place in the program.

Student duties

- Attend and actively participate in rehearsals every week.
- Arrive 5-10 minutes before the rehearsal starts to set up and be ready to start on time.
- Inform the conductor by email if you will miss a performance or rehearsal.
- Keep up to date by reading newsletters and emails from Music@Petersham. These include rehearsal and performance information, so are important!
- If you play an instrument:
 - Practise at home for 10-20 minutes, 3-4 times a week (junior students) and for 20-30 minutes, 4-5 times a week (senior students). Students who do regular practice at home experience the most success in ensembles.
 - Have weekly private lesson(s) on your chosen instrument(s)

Parent/carer duties

- Please ensure your child is punctual. Arriving 5-10 minutes before rehearsal starts will give your child enough time to set up and organise their music. Most of the key learning occurs in the first 10 minutes of the rehearsal, where new concepts are introduced. Students who are continually late will miss key learning.
- Please pay fees on time. Invoices will be sent home to be paid each semester.
- Communicate with conductors via email in advance if your child will be away for a rehearsal or performance.
- Read newsletters and emails sent from Music@Petersham.
- If your child/ren play an instrument:
 - Please ensure your child is practicing regularly at home. Sometimes children will find this hard, and you may wish to use extrinsic rewards for students who have difficulty maintaining regular practice. Parents/carers of very young students (Stage 1) should observe music lessons as well as home practice, and check in with their child's tutor, to ensure that they are on the right track with their learning.

Questions

If you have any questions, please email your conductor:

- P&C Music Coordinator (general enquiries): music@petershampandc.org.au
- Jessica Clay: jessica.clay1@det.nsw.edu.au
- Alicia Crossley: alicia.crossley4@det.nsw.edu.au
- Bronte Ellis: bronte.ellis@hotmail.com
- Alex Lee: alexanderlee168@gmail.com
- Susan Sukkar: susan.sukkar@det.nsw.edu.au

Attachment: Instrument hire agreement

The Petersham Public School P&C Association, through the Music@Petersham program, provides access to musical instruments for students who are playing in ensembles. Students who are part of an ensemble, or wish to join an ensemble, are able to hire an instrument.

Loans policy

1. A minimum loan period of 1 semester applies, at the agreed cost (currently \$120 per semester). You may request to hire an instrument at any time during the year.
2. Students can return an instrument at the end of the semester, or continue hiring for the following semester if they are continuing playing.
3. Instruments available to hire depend on current availability and condition of the instruments.

Music@Petersham resources

4. Music@Petersham owns and manages a library of instruments under the umbrella of the Petersham P&C. Music@Petersham also maintains a database of instruments on loan with each individual serial number and school assets register number.
5. Instruments will be issued with accessories essential to the operation of each instrument. These accessories must be returned at the end of the hire period. Where accessories are missing the hirer will be sent an account for their replacement and administration fee. These accessories include:
 - Bows and chin rests (strings instruments)
 - Mouthpiece, ligature (clarinets and saxophones)
 - Mouthpiece (all brass)
 - Neck strap or harness (saxophones, bass clarinets and bassoons)
 - A new cleaning cloth/pull-through
6. Parents/carers are responsible for the provision of consumable items such as reeds, cork grease, valve oil and strings.
7. If Students accept an instrument without essential accessories, conductors must be notified as soon as possible.

Parent/carer management of Music@Petersham resources

8. Resources on loan are the responsibility of both the parent/carer and the student.
9. Transfer of instruments between families and students is not permitted
10. Music@Petersham reserves the right to recall instruments if students are not demonstrating appropriate care or respect for the instrument.

Instrument storage - generally

11. Instruments should always be cleaned and stored in its case, and NEVER left in a car.
12. Avoid leaving the instrument in warm rooms, and avoid leaving instruments (even in cases) in direct sunlight.
13. Instruments should always be transported in their case, and not carried around outside the case.

Instrument storage - at school

14. Instruments are to be stored in students' classrooms; never outside the classroom. There is storage space outside the music office in F block for bulky instruments.
15. Instruments (including recorders) are not to be taken out into the playground unless there is a school performance.
16. Instruments are not to be played by other students.
17. Instruments are not to be left or played at PACC.
18. Instruments are not to be left in classrooms or PACC overnight.

Instrument storage - at home

19. Students are allowed (and encouraged!) to take instruments home to practice, including during the holidays.
20. Students should treat the instrument as if it were their own, and should protect them as they would their own valuable assets.
21. Instruments and cases should be kept away from pets as they can damage instruments.

Instrument care

22. Instruments should be cleaned after each playing - ask your teacher to show you how to clean it properly if you aren't sure.
23. Each student should have their instrument labelled or have an identifying feature to be able to identify their case.
24. Students should NEVER swap instrument cases or allow other students to play their instruments.
25. Parts must not be swapped between instruments under any circumstances
26. Broken cases (hinges, locks, zippers, wheels) need to be replaced or fixed immediately.

Instrument Servicing and Repairs

27. Parents/carers and students are responsible for the care and maintenance of the instrument(s) on loan.
28. If required, the instrument must be serviced before returning. (Your conductor will advise) If a service is required, please include a copy of the receipt in the case when returning.
29. The expectation of basic servicing includes, but is not limited to the instrument being:
 - Cleaned or polished, removal of any build up on or in the instrument.
 - Adjustment or realignment of screws, rods.
 - Replacement of any bent rods, ligatures, keys.
 - Lubrication of slides and valves.
 - Fixing any cosmetic damages, or dings to brass instruments.
 - Replacing old strings or re-hairing bows if needed.
30. The Instrument should come back in a working order. If for unseen circumstances, the instrument has been damaged beyond repair, the parent is responsible for the replacement of the instrument.

Missing, lost or stolen instruments

31. In all cases of theft or loss of instrument, parents/carers are responsible for the replacement costs of that instrument. It is then under the discretion of Music@Petersham if a replacement instrument will be issued.
32. Parents/carers are responsible for notifying Music@Petersham of all missing or lost instruments (including theft).

Resource replacement

33. All resources to be replaced will be purchased by the Music@Petersham program. Parents/carers are not to arrange replacement of resources.
34. Where Music@Petersham is required to purchase a replacement instrument, an invoice will be forwarded to the parent/carer at cost.