



Central Coast  
Conservatorium  
Of Music



# SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

PARENT GUIDE





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# ABOUT THE SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

The Central Coast Conservatorium of Music provides high quality music education to schools on the Central Coast, and your school has engaged the services of the Conservatorium to run all aspects of their School Band Program.

The Conservatorium provides highly qualified and experienced teachers and conductors to run weekly band rehearsals and lessons, as well as providing the necessary admin resources and support to manage the logistics of running such a program (including processing enrolments, the invoicing and collection of fees, parent communication and the scheduling of lessons, rehearsals and performances).

The school supports the Band Program by providing a space within the school to be used on a weekly basis for band rehearsals and lessons, as well as providing a drum kit and music stands for use by band students.

The school also provides performance opportunities for the band at school assemblies and events such as open days, presentation and assemblies. This guide outlines how the Band Program is run.

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School Band Program coordinator  
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## TRAINING AND CONCERT BAND

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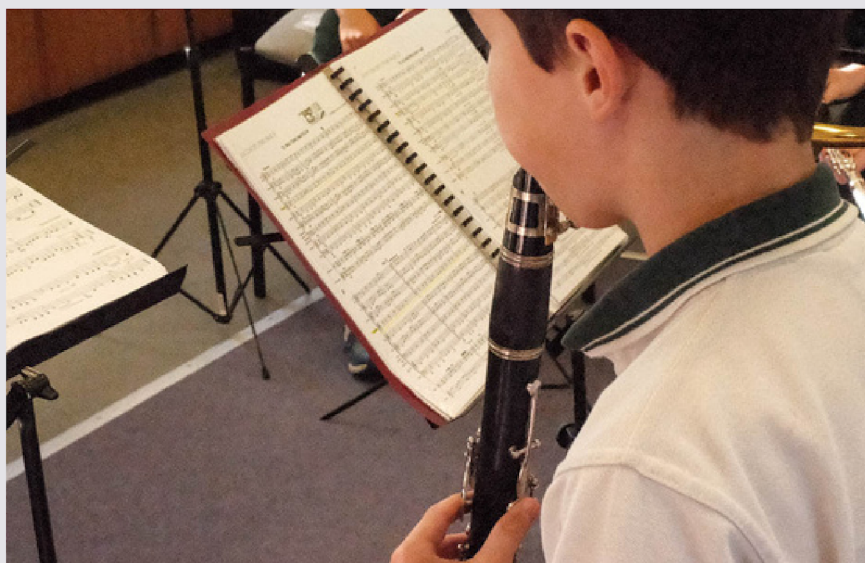
Each School Band Program consists of both a Training Band (beginner students) and a Concert Band (more advanced students). At the beginning of each school year, a new group of students (usually from Years 3 and 4) are taken into the Band Program on their choice of instrument and form the new Training Band for that year. They work together for a year in rehearsals and tutorials with our teachers, to learn the basics of playing their instrument and reading music. They also learn important ensemble skills which allow them to play together as a band and prepare them for

moving into the more advanced Concert Band the following year or once they have reached a certain standard of playing.

*"They learn important ensemble skills which allow them to play together as a band."*

Once students have reached a certain level of competency (usually after the first year), they then move into the Concert Band which is generally made up of students from Years 4, 5 and 6. The Concert Band students continue to work together in rehearsals and lessons with our teachers, but are extended past the beginner stage and onto more advanced music and performance pieces.





## **BAND REHEARSALS**

Band rehearsals are held once a week for each band and are usually held before school or occasionally during the lunch break, depending on the availability of rooms and our conductors. Rehearsals usually go for an hour, although this is dependent on there being sufficient numbers in the program and will be shorter where enrolments are low.

## **TUTORIALS AND 1-1 LESSONS**

As well as attending a weekly whole band rehearsal, students also attend a weekly small group or 1-1 lesson with a Conservatorium teacher who is a specialist on their chosen instrument.

Most students participate in group tutorials (max three per group) as this is what the standard band program fee covers, however there is the option to attend 1-1 lessons instead, for an extra cost.

Where a student ends up in a group lesson on their own (ie, they are the only student on that instrument), their lesson is either combined with another similar group of instruments or they are given a 20 min 1-1 lesson for the same price.

The group tutorials and 1-1 lessons are usually for 30 minutes, once a week, and students are required to come out of class for their lesson, or out of their recess/lunch break (where their lesson time overlaps with the break times).

Once their lesson is completed, students are expected to return promptly to class.

# PRACTICE

Learning an instrument takes time and patience and most importantly, regular practice at home in between lessons.

For students who choose to enrol in the band program, there is an expectation that they will commit to practicing regularly at home, not only for their own benefit but also for the benefit of the band, as it is a team effort to ensure the band sounds as good as it can.

As a guide, students are expected to be practicing as follows:

- Training Band (beginner) students – 3-5 times per week for 15 mins each time
- Concert Band Students – 3-5 times per week for 25-30 mins each time.

# SCHOOL BAND COORDINATOR

The Concert Band conductor for each school is usually assigned to be the “Band Coordinator” and will be responsible for overseeing that school’s band program and for communicating with parents regarding rehearsal and lesson times, performances, changes to the schedules etc.

The Band Coordinator can be contacted should you have any questions or concerns regarding the band program or your child’s lessons.

There is usually also a school staff member appointed as the “Band Liaison” between the Conservatorium and the school, and who assists the Conservatorium in sorting through the logistics of running the band program.





# FEES

2024 Fees are as follows

- \$227 per term for weekly band rehearsals and weekly small group lessons.
- \$608 per term for weekly band rehearsals and weekly 1-1 lessons where requested.
- \$88 per term for instrument hire (where needed)

Other costs:

- \$29.95 for the training band tutor book, Flying Start (one off cost for beginner students)
- Approx \$30 for a music stand (it is recommended all students have a music stand at home to encourage correct playing posture for practicing their instrument)
- Replacement reeds for clarinet and saxophone students (as needed) approx \$4/reed



# NOTICE OF DISCONTINUATION

If your child decides that they do not want to continue with the Band Program, the Conservatorium requires two weeks notice prior to ceasing payment for lessons, in order to give our teachers time to adjust their schedules and fill that spot with another student/lesson.

Notice needs to be given by the parent to the Conservatorium (not to the school) and needs to be given in writing via email, or

over the phone with the School Band Coordinator, the Schools Program Administrator or the Conservatorium admin staff.

Failure to give notice will result in fees still being liable, regardless of whether or not the student continued to attend the lessons, as lesson time will still be allocated to your child until such notice is given.

# PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Performance opportunities are an important aspect of the Band Program and schools are asked to provide these opportunities for their bands at school assemblies, open days and presentation days. The intention is the bands perform at least once a term during the year, depending on the progress of the students and how committed to regular practice they are as a group.

Twice a year the Conservatorium runs two external band events (Central Coast Big Band Bash and Central Coast Band Fest) which also provide students with performance opportunities.

## **BIG BAND BASH**

An annual event usually held towards the end of Term 2 Big Band Bash (formerly Big Day Out) brings students from all our School Band Programs together to form two large ensembles. Students participate in workshop-style lessons and rehearsals with Conservatorium teachers and work together to learn new pieces, culminating in a performance at the end of the day for parents.

As a large scale performance opportunity, as well as a major boost to their enthusiasm and motivation for band, students are strongly encouraged to attend if they can. Registration is usually around \$30 per student for the day.

## **BAND FEST**

The Conservatorium's second annual event, Band Fest is usually held early in Term 4 and is an opportunity for students to represent their school in a friendly-competition style event. Students perform as part of their school band and receive a gold, silver or bronze rating as well as constructive feedback on their band's performance from an external adjudicator. Band Fest is usually a weekend event and parents are required to transport their children to and from the event and are encouraged to stay and support the performances of their child's school as well as other school bands participating in their session.

Band Fest is a ticketed event and entry is usually around \$20/family for audience members. Students participating in Band Fest are free.





# HOW TO ENROL

The Conservatorium handles the enrolment process of students who wish to join the Band Program. While some schools like to also collect their own permission form from parents, enrolment still needs to be done through the Conservatorium in order for your child to be allocated to a lesson and a rehearsal.

Enrolment is done via an online form on the Conservatorium website. Parent and student details are collected by the Conservatorium and used for the sole purpose of allocating students to appropriate rehearsals and lessons, and for communicating with parents who have opted in to the Band Program.

## **PAYMENT**

An annual invoice will be issued at the beginning of the year and fees are to be paid either upfront or by the term, via direct deposit or credit card. There is also the option to set up a payment plan for direct debit payments to be made weekly, fortnightly or monthly to cover fees for the year.

## **MISSED LESSONS**

From time to time, events run by the school such as excursions, camps, NAPLAN etc, clash with the scheduled times for rehearsals and tutorials.

Where plenty of notice is given, the Conservatorium, where possible, will try to reschedule the lessons or organise make up lessons however this is dependant on the availability of the teacher and availability of rooms within the school, so unfortunately it isn't always possible.

Our fees however are structured in such a way as to take the occasional missed lesson or rehearsal into consideration, where this is due to an unavoidable clash with school events that are beyond our control.

We guarantee to deliver a minimum of 8 lessons per term, with any lessons over this considered a bonus and essentially free, and in most terms, students will receive 9-10 lessons.

Where late or no notice of an event is given, it is not possible for the lessons to be rescheduled or made up.

While the school is meant to notify us of any such events which will clash with rehearsals or lessons, it is helpful if parents can also notify us where possible.



# INSTRUMENT HIRE

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Training Band students are encouraged to hire an instrument before purchasing one, to ensure that they are happy with their instrument choice and are enjoying the program before committing to the investment of buying a good quality instrument.

The Conservatorium has instruments available for hire and are usually able to meet the demand for instruments. Where demand exceeds what we have available, parents are directed to hire privately.

The only instruments that are not available for hire are drums and bass guitar. Students opting to learn these instruments will need to purchase their own instrument prior to starting.

Some schools have their own supply of band instruments available for use by their band students and where this is the case, parents are encouraged to hire from the school first before applying to hire an instrument from the Conservatorium as this is usually a means of financially supporting their school band program.

Hire fees from the Conservatorium are payable until the instrument is returned. Once a student has their own instrument or has chosen not to continue, parents are encouraged to return their child's instrument as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary hire fee being charged.

Conservatorium hired instruments need to be returned to your child's band teacher or directly to the Conservatorium, and are not to be returned to the school office or school classroom teacher.



# OUR SCHOOLS & TEACHERS

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- Central Coast Adventist School
- Coast Christian School
- Empire Bay Public School
- Erina Heights Public School
- Gosford East Public School
- Gosford Public School
- Holgate Public School
- Kincumber Public School (Guitar Program)
- Lakes Grammar
- Lisarow Public School
- Narara Public School
- Pretty Beach Public School (Recorder Program)
- Our Lady Star of the Sea
- Point Clare Public School
- St Edwards Catholic College
- Rudolf Steiner School (Strings Program)
- St Aloysius College, Sydney
- St John Fisher (Guitar Program)
- St John the Baptist Catholic School
- St Joseph's Catholic College
- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
- St Philip's Christian College
- Umina Beach Public School
- Valley View Public School

## SCHOOLS PROGRAM TEACHERS

- Vicki Harris (Program Administrator)
- Joanne Arnott
- Naomi Blanch
- Rosalie Bourne
- Amanda Elkington
- Derek Galloway
- Karina Hollands
- E-Yang Liu
- Phillip Rutherford
- Steve Smilie
- Kevin Smith
- Sean Steele
- Nicole Wyatt
- Betty Young

*\*Current list of Schools Program schools  
2023*

# MORE INFORMATION



[www.centralcoastconservatorium.com.au/schoolsprogram](http://www.centralcoastconservatorium.com.au/schoolsprogram)



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