

# THE GAP STATE SCHOOL



## INSTRUMENTAL AND CHORAL MUSIC PROGRAM

## INFORMATION BOOKLET



*Proud of our past, realising our potential, ready for the future*

## PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME



Children from The Gap State School have produced choral and instrumental music of an exceptional standard for many years. There are a number of reasons for the success of our music program.

The first is the high-quality teaching from our instrumental music teachers and choral conductors. The teachers set high standards, to which the children rise. They teach the importance of commitment and discipline, which are essential elements for success in music, as in any endeavour. The teachers are fine musicians in their own right, with the skills and knowledge to develop high standards of musicianship in the children.

Secondly, we have a classroom music program, delivered by a specialist music teacher. Students in Prep - Year 3 have one hour of classroom music lessons per week and students in Years 4 - 6 receive 30 minutes of classroom music lessons per week. These lessons establish a sound musical knowledge in the children which is the basis for and complements the instrumental and choral programs.

Thirdly, our children are dedicated to music and music performance and respond to the high standards and expectations set by their teachers.

Finally, our wonderful parent body are passionate about music and the benefits which derive for their children from involvement in our music program. These benefits include commitment, discipline, teamwork and of course the great joy of music making, which has the power to move us, to unite us and to build community, which is such an important element of our school.

Parental support is vital to the success of the program. Parents reinforce the values and aims of the program with their children and provide transport to rehearsals and performances.

The Music Supporters' Group is made up of parents who are committed to the program. The program would certainly not exist in its current form without their assistance and support.

You are now a part of the proud tradition of music at The Gap State School. Your child's participation in the program will require time, dedication and commitment but the rewards to be reaped are rich indeed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joanne Nicholls'.

Joanne Nicholls  
Principal

# An Overview of the Instrumental and Choral Music Programs

Music is an integral part of life at The Gap State School, involving students, staff and parents. The aim of the music program is to develop the creativity which is present in varying degrees in all children. Music programs focus on students making music and developing the ability to think and express themselves in sound.

Learning is activity based and through a variety of such activities the children are taught the basic skills of music - beat, rhythm, pitch, singing, movement, listening, musical literacy, creating and playing. Great emphasis is placed on the "enjoyment" aspect. Practice sheets encourage students to achieve great progress.

## Instruments and choral positions on offer to students

Selection for the instrumental program occurs in Year 2. Children selected in Year 2 are offered a string instrument (violin, viola or cello). Selection for a band instrument (woodwind, brass or percussion) occurs in Year 3. Once chosen children are expected to commit to the program until the end of Year 6. Department funding provides selected children with one small group lesson per week and access to our loan instruments for a year.

Offers to students of instruments need to be considered carefully. Parents should discuss any concerns over instrument offers with the classroom teacher and appropriate instrumental teacher. We are extremely lucky as a school and community to have a high calibre of staff in all the instrumental programs; they consistently go beyond the call and transfer their passion to all involved. A big bouquet to all of them!

Participation in the band or strings program does not exclude a student from participation in the choral program if offered a place. Junior Choir, Senior Choir, Boys' Choir (Years 3-6) and the preparatory choir (Sopraninos) are open to all students who are able to make the required commitment. Auditions are held for Girls' Choir. The following could occur:

Year level	Choirs		Strings		Bands
Years 1 & 2	Sopranino Choir		-		-
Year 3	Junior Choir	&/or	Year 3 Strings		
Year 4	Junior Choir	&/or	Junior Strings	or	Junior Band
Year 5	Senior Choir	&/or	Senior Strings	or	Senior Band
Year 6	Senior Choir	&/or	Senior Strings	or	Senior Band

## Music fees

All students participating in the Choral and Instrumental programs are required to pay an annual contribution. Costs listed below are indicative and rise slightly from year to year to meet the cost of this enhancement program.

### Music fees (for indicative purposes only)

Maintenance contribution for use of school instrument (school)	\$125
<b>MSG Contributions</b>	
Contribution for all students in the instrumental program (includes trouser hire)	\$135
Contribution for all students in Junior or Senior Choir (includes trouser hire)	\$165
<b>Or</b>	
Contribution for students participating in both instrumental & choral programs (includes trouser hire)	\$205
Contribution for students in Sopranino Choir (Year 2 [Year 1 if places are available])	\$30
Contribution for students in Girls' Choir (Year 5 – 6 max 30 students) <i>Semester 1 only</i>	\$45
Contribution for students in Boys' Choir (Year 3 – 6) <i>Semester 2 only</i>	\$45

Payment plans are available for all school costs.

### Strings:

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass

### Band:

Woodwind: Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone

Brass: Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, French horn, Euphonium/Baritone

Percussion (all percussion students play a variety of tuned and untuned instruments)

### Choirs:

Sopranino Choir

Junior Choir

Senior Choir

Girls' Choir

Boys' Choir

All groups participate in competitive as well as non-competitive events during the year. Sometimes, there are extension opportunities provided, and specialist groups can also be formed at the conductor's availability and discretion. Students participating in advanced groups must still be a part of their Year level appropriate group.

It is well-known that children who participate in music programs demonstrate a significant improvement in their scholastic endeavours. With this offer your child is being presented with a great opportunity - musically, socially, and scholastically; however, they are also being asked to make a commitment to the program and this needs to be considered before accepting an offer.

Students and parents/caregivers commit to:

1. participate fully (including all rehearsals, private practice and attendance at all performances, camps and events);
2. purchase the full performance uniform requirements (except for Sopranino choir);
3. purchase the full instrument as required when loan period ends (for most instruments, one year);
4. commit with the aim of participating fully until the end of Year 6.

It needs to be understood that the commitment is both a time (practice, travel and participation) and financial commitment. Costs include the instruments (most are hired from the school for the first year and then students are asked to provide their own), performance uniform, consumables (reeds, strings etc.), music camps, and music books and/or CDs. You may also wish to insure the instrument through your private insurer, which will add to your costs.

## MUSIC SUPPORTERS' GROUP

### Overview

The Music Supporters' Group (a sub-committee of the P&C Association) provides essential support to music programs in the school. It provides support to the teachers, information to parents, financial support through fundraising, and supervision at events. It provides resources for both the Choral and Instrumental Programs. Without this support the programs could not exist in the current form and the number of students involved would be greatly reduced.

Regular annual fundraising includes a chocolate drive (facilitated in partnership with the P&C's Music Supporters Group) and occasional functions.

Funds raised and parent fees are used for:

1. employment of Choral Conductor and accompanist, tutors and admin staff;
2. purchase and maintenance of musical instruments;
3. transport, bus hire;
4. uniform assistance (black trousers);
5. sheet music/scores;
6. entry fees to competitions;
7. photocopying;
8. miscellaneous equipment (music stands etc.)
9. awards

The Music Supporters' Group works because you, the parents and caregivers, participate, so please get involved. There is an extensive range of tasks that volunteer help can assist with on a regular or random basis to suit all types of busy parent timetables. You may like to consider becoming involved in one or more of the following ways:

- o attending & contributing to the Music Supporters' Group meetings;
- o taking a position on the sub committee: Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary;
- o running the shoe bank (borrowing scheme for black shoes used in performances);
- o transporting equipment;
- o setting up and packing up;
- o manning the door at concerts;
- o assisting with catering at concerts, camps etc;
- o being a parent manager of one of the ensembles/choirs;
- o helping with the cataloguing of music;
- o distributing and collecting music;
- o assisting with day to day administrative tasks;
- o helping with the chocolate drive or other fundraising;
- o taking photos and/or recordings.

### Music Supporters' Group Meetings

The Music Supporters' Group meets in the evening, twice each term or as required. Membership is open to any member of the P&C Association, and all parents/caregivers are welcome to attend. The meetings are usually short and run to a publicised agenda under the guidance of the P&C Music Supporters' Group Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. It is a great opportunity to get an overview of the whole music program and to make new friends. Meeting dates are publicised through the Gazette.

# INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM – Bands and Strings

## Selection

A selection process is used to determine student's suitability for inclusion in the program.

## Selection Process

### Rationale

1. As many children as possible are to be given the opportunity to participate in the Instrumental Music Program.
2. All children are to have an equal chance of being involved, allowing for prior experience or lack of instrumental music knowledge
3. With limited school instruments and instruction time, the process to ascertain the overall rank order and suitability of students to be offered school instruments and/or positions is to be thorough.
4. String instruments commence in Year 3. Brass, Woodwind and Percussion (Band) instruments commence in Year 4.
5. If a vacancy occurs, the child next in the rank order may be offered an instrument and/or position in a class.

### Personnel involved in Selection

Specialist music teachers, classroom teachers, school administrators.

### Process

The following information is used to help us determine which students will be offered a place in our Instrumental Music Program. This is an on-balance collaborative judgement made by the school teaching staff. All offers are approved by the principal. **Unfortunately, we are always oversubscribed and are unable to accept all who apply.** This means that not all students who apply can be offered a place in the program. Consideration is given to a student's suitability to the learning structure of the school's Instrumental Music Program and the students most suited will be given preference for a place in the program.

This is an extension program, and as such, the students will be ranked according to the following information:

- Aural Aptitude Test
- Academic results, including Music, behaviour and effort achievement standards
- Assessment of suitability by Instrumental Teachers
- ***Student applicants are shortlisted using the first two criteria. Invited students will then proceed to the assessment phase of suitability by the instrumental teachers.*** Whilst instrument preferences submitted by families are considered, teachers will offer instruments based on assessed suitability and to create a balanced ensemble program.

## Lessons

Lesson times are announced at the start of each term. These will be at a specific time each week. Children are asked to inform their conductor/instructor when they know in advance if they are unable to attend lessons.

## Band/Ensemble Rehearsals

1. Involvement in the appropriate band/ensemble is compulsory.
2. Rehearsals are generally held once per week. As rehearsals start before school time, children are asked to wait quietly outside until the scheduled time for the rehearsal to begin.
3. Children are asked to inform their conductor when they know in advance if they are unable to attend rehearsals.
4. Attendance records are kept and failure to attend (without reasonable reason having been communicated) may result in follow up communication to ensure students remain supported within and committed to program success.
5. Absentee notice is to be emailed to the conductor and to the classroom music teacher.

## Instrument Loans

School instruments may be borrowed for one year. In subsequent years, parents are asked to provide their child's instrument. Exceptions are made in the following cases:

- Cello – two-year loan
- Euphonium/Baritone, French horn, Tuba, Double Bass – loan for duration of primary schooling

Parents will need to sign a Loan Agreement before the loan can be finalised.

## Program Participation Review

For students to remain program participants they will need to:

- regularly attend rehearsals (attendance records are kept)
- attend performances and competitions (attendance records are kept)
- show respect to conductors during rehearsals
- respect other performers
- practise regularly (as per practise sheet)
- care for musical instruments
- wear correct uniform to performances

## Behaviour

There is a high expectation of student behaviour at lessons, rehearsals and performances. Students are asked to sign a Commitment Contract annually, which outlines expectations clearly. If the instructor judges the student's behaviour to be unsatisfactory, the following procedure will be followed:

- Discussions between the student and teacher
- Discussions between parent/s and teacher/s of the need to improve
- Student referred to the Principal/Deputy Principal and parents notified
- Student suspended from the program
- Student excluded from the program.

**Note:** If the behaviour is extreme, exclusion may be made immediately in consultation with Administration.

## Practice Suggestions

It is better to do consistent regular practice than one rushed large or make up session. Students can use the Music Practice Sheet to record their practising. If the instrumental music teacher uses this sheet, it needs to be signed each week by parents/caregivers.

## Progress Reviews

During the first term a student commences in the instrumental music program, a progress review will be undertaken by the teaching team. Parents may also contact their child's teacher should they have any concerns. At this time, it may be mutually agreed that it is no longer in the best interests of the child to continue.

An annual Term Four progress review of all students will also occur in consultation with parents as required for students no longer meeting the expectations of the program. From this process it may be determined that the student withdraws from the program.

## Annual Commitment Contract and Payment of Fees

Continuing students will be asked to sign their Commitment Contract for the next year, with their parent's endorsement, during Term Four. Payment of participation fees in this enhancement program are required in full by the Term Four due date for students to continue in the program. Payment plan options are available through the school office.

## Performances

Children are expected to attend all performances in performance uniform. Parents will be given details of performances as soon as they become available. As changes can be made with a moment's notice it is important to be flexible and keep informed, e.g. changes made due to unexpected absence.

## Performance Uniform

- Red music polo shirt (available from the uniform shop)
- Black trousers supplied as a part of the Music Program annual fee. Damaged trousers need to be repaired or replaced by the borrower at their cost.
- Black 'leather-look' lace-up shoes (college style)
- Black socks
- Black hair ties - long hair needs to be tied back neatly, secured with a hair tie and thin black ribbon, (available at the uniform shop)

No jewellery or shiny hair clips/watches should be worn during a performance.

The Music Supporters' Group run a shoe bank (with a limited number available) for those needing to borrow black shoes. Speak to the committee members or your respective Parent Supervisor, ahead of time, if you need shoe or uniform assistance. Please allow sufficient time to organise your child's uniform needs.

## Performance Calendar

There is a wide variety of performance opportunities each year, including:

- competitions;
- performance evenings;
- invitational events;
- Community concerts e.g. aged care facilities;
- special events;
- school events;
- school assembly;
- camps;
- GRIPPS (The Gap Regional Instrumental Primary Performers School).

## Captains

Two student captains will be appointed to each Band and Junior, Senior choirs and Senior Strings. The Captain's role is to represent the ensemble at all public performances and receive any awards, lead by example, and assist the conductor when required.

# CHORAL PROGRAM

## Overview

The choral program at The Gap State School has developed a reputation for excellence. The choral program offers the children a variety of exciting learning and performance opportunities and memories which they will cherish for a lifetime.

## Aims of the Choral Program

1. To promote the enjoyment of singing by developing the following choral skills:
  - intonation - in tune singing;
  - voice production and tone;
  - musicianship - dynamics, phrasing, blend, harmonies;
  - music literacy.
2. To develop an appreciation of the "Art of Music" by exposing students to a variety of musical styles.
3. To share positive musical experiences with each other (in the rehearsal room) and with audience members at performances.
4. To develop vocal confidence.

## Selection

The Sopranino Choir is open to all Year 1 and Year 2 students who are able to make the required commitment. All students from Years 3 – 4 who can commit to regular rehearsals are invited to join Junior Choir. Senior Choir is formed from Year 5 and 6 students.

Girls' Choir members are chosen through an audition process and students who are members of the school choirs in Years 5 and 6 are eligible to apply for membership. Girls' Choir members must also be members of the Senior Choir. Boys' Choir is open to all boys from Years 3-6.

## Rehearsals

Each student is expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals and all "extra" rehearsals for specific occasions (these are kept to a minimum). Attendance rolls are kept. As rehearsals start before school time, children are asked to wait quietly outside the rehearsal room until the scheduled time for the rehearsal to begin.

Unsatisfactory attendance and behaviour may result in the students' place in the program being reviewed in consultation with parents and administration.

At times, the conductor arranges individual small group tuition and students will be informed of the specific day and time.

## Performances

Each student is expected to attend all performances. The choir will participate in competitive and non-competitive events throughout the year. The aim of a performance is to do one's best, to share musical experiences and not to fiercely promote competitive attitudes or conduct.

A certain amount of flexibility is allowed in programming so that invitations to special occasions can be considered as they occur during the year.

It is expected that the choirs would perform at least once per term and appropriate forward notice regarding such performances would be given.

## Performance Uniform (Junior and Senior Choir)

- Red music polo shirt (available from the uniform shop)
- Black trousers supplied as a part of the Music Program annual fee. Damaged trousers need to be repaired or replaced by the borrower at their cost.
- Black 'leather-look' lace-up shoes (college style)
- Black socks, black hair ties (long hair needs to be tied back neatly)

*NB. The **Sopranino Choir** performs in school uniform (**not** performance uniform)*

No jewellery or shiny hair clips/watches should be worn during a performance.

The Music Supporters' Group run a shoe bank (with a limited number available) for those needing to borrow black shoes. Speak to the committee members ahead of time, if you need shoe or uniform assistance. Please allow sufficient time to discuss your child's uniform needs.

## Performance Calendar

- Competitions
- Performance evenings
- Invitational events
- Music Camps
- Special events
- School events

### **Choral repertoire**

Repertoire will be chosen to highlight musical styles, prepare students for a competition (some repertoire is set by the organisers), practise students' part singing and intonation, and help students learn about different cultures and languages. Occasionally some choral repertoire will contain some religious words. Parents will need to notify the school if there are any issues around the singing of religious text.

### **Captains**

Two student Choir Captains will be appointed for each ensemble. These leaders will be the official representatives of the ensemble at public functions, lead by example, and assist the conductor when required.

### **Extension Opportunities**

Invitational events and performances, singing in a more advanced group, Music Camps, Choral Fanfare, Ringbalin & Festival of Music.

Students who join the music program during the year (e.g. new students) will receive an award if they display above criteria for the length of time they are in the program.

Without the extensive commitment of teachers, conductors, staff and parents this program would be unable to present the depth and quality of program that it has for so many years. As children move on to high school they are replaced by eager young candidates ready to receive the same commitment and quality that their preceding peers have. This will only happen if their parents and supporters step up and take the place of those who have moved on.

**Let them catch your enthusiasm!**