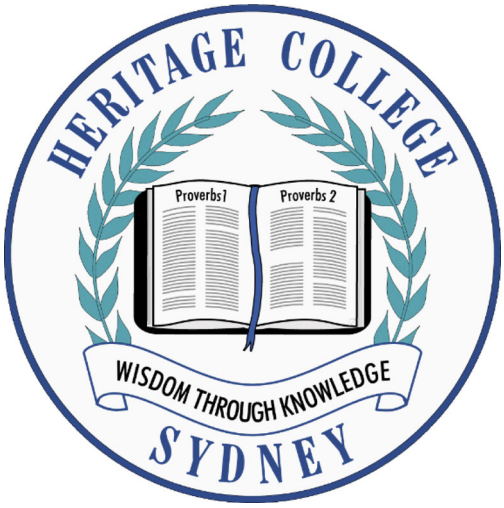

2026 CO-CURRICULAR MUSIC PROGRAM

AND

PRIVATE MUSIC TUITION POLICY AND HANDBOOK

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

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WELCOME

Dear Students and Parents,

We welcome students and their families who are considering joining our music program at Heritage College Sydney and those who are already part of the program. The music teachers at Heritage bring with them many years of experience as teachers and professional musicians. They aim to enrich your child's life by providing various opportunities to learn music individually and as part of one of the College's ensembles.

This handbook provides information and outlines expectations of the College's Music Program so that parents, students and teachers can work together to create a smooth, fun and challenging musical experience.

Parents, your children will require your encouragement to practise regularly at home as well as your support of the various performance opportunities your children are given in ensembles and as soloists. The calibre of our ensembles is a credit to our College and often a music ensemble is seen and heard as the face of the College to the public. We trust you will enjoy seeing your children grow musically as they experience all the benefits that a music education brings.

Students, your commitment to practising and being an active member of an ensemble is appreciated. You will learn valuable lessons in team work, in facing challenges and in building resilience whilst enjoying playing or singing great music.

Please contact us at any time if you have questions or feedback. We are looking forward to a year of music.

Nita Lawrie
Music Coordinator
Primary Music Teacher
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OBJECTIVES

The Music program offers private instrumental and vocal tuition at the College for any student in Years 2-12 who wishes to learn. In addition, selected students in Year 3, and all students in Year 5 are given the opportunity to learn an instrument through the Training programs. Students learning through the College program or externally are given the opportunity to be part of a large ensemble. The program adds enrichment to the Music classes that students receive.

THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Research shows that learning a musical instrument (including singing) can make significant differences to children's abilities related to learning, memory and social interactions. Learning and playing music can improve concentration, self-expression, reasoning, time management, communication and fine motor skills.

PRIVATE TUITION

At Heritage College Sydney we provide many opportunities for students to become involved in instrumental and vocal music. We provide private tutorials for piano, strings (violin, viola, cello, double bass), guitar, percussion, woodwind (flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, bassoon), brass (trumpet, French horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba) and voice. Students are expected to join one or more of the College's strings, concert band or vocal ensembles once they have reached an appropriate standard.

TUTORIALS

All ensemble members (excluding Training Strings and Training Band) must attend a weekly private tutorial either at school, or externally, until reaching Year 10 (at the director's discretion). Tutorials are held during the school day on a rotating timetable. **Tutors invoice parents directly in advance for half a term's lessons (around 5 weeks). Invoices are to be paid promptly.** If you have difficulty with this at any time, please contact the tutor directly. Timetables are placed on the Music notice board by Morning Assembly on the day of the tutorial, if not before.

Fees for 2026 are

- **$44.00 per 30 minute private lesson**
- **Shared 30 minute lessons for two students are available for Training Band/Strings and Transition Band/Strings students only at $28 per 30 minute lesson in Terms 1 and 2 only, but only if there are two students learning similar instruments at similar levels. Transition students are those in their first year after Training Band or Training Strings.**
- **Students in Years 10-12 may choose to have a tutorial every second week but only if another student wishes to take up the lesson in the alternate week. Senior Students may also choose 45 or 60 minute lessons.**

Students should not be enrolled for music tutorials unless their school fees are paid up to date.

For Students in Years 7-12, it is the student's responsibility to check the tutorial timetables displayed on the notice board for clashes with class tests and presentations etc, to organize a timeslot swap with another student, and to **inform the tutor of the change.** Timetables are arranged around excursions and examination periods. Students are expected to excuse themselves from class a few minutes before their tutorial begins to have their instrument and music ready on time. Students are responsible for making up the class work missed during their instrumental lesson. Students in Years 10-12 may request permanent lesson times at recess or lunch and some tutors offer before or after school timeslots. Please mark any requests on your application form. Students in Years 2-6 are retrieved from their classrooms by the tutors. This is part of the student's allocated time.

ABSENCES

Tutors are not obliged to make up or refund tutorials missed by students, except for school activities such as exams or excursions. Some tutors are able to attempt to reschedule with notice. If your child will miss a tutorial, please contact **your child's tutor directly** as soon as you are aware, but before 8am on the day of the tutorial. **Office staff cannot send messages on to tutors re absences. No make up tutorial or credit will be given for student absences due to illness or holidays during term time.** Please contact the Music Coordinator in the case of an extended absence.

WITHDRAWAL

It is expected that a commitment will be made by the student and his or her family for the school year. Any changes or withdrawal must be made in consultation with the Music Coordinator. After consultation, a minimum of 4 weeks' notice in writing is required if a student withdraws from private tuition.

PIANO AND PERCUSSION STUDENTS INSTRUMENT FEE

Students taking piano or percussion lessons are charged an annual non-refundable fee of $55 (including GST) for use of the school instruments.

STUDENT-PARENT-TUTOR

Students and parents will complete an enrolment contract which will outline their commitments. Tutors will use a paper notebook or an online document to comment and outline expectations for the next tutorial. Students are expected to read this to follow up on lessons. Parents can also keep up to date by reading the notes. Tutors may contact parents should a student not be performing to an acceptable standard or show a lack of practice, and/or poor attendance, or attitude. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the progress of their children by communicating with the instrumental music staff.

COLLEGE ENSEMBLES

Participating in music ensembles encourages students to play within a group, be responsible as a team player and find enjoyment and fun in learning with other people. Music students are expected to become involved in one or more of the College's music ensembles. Entry into some ensembles is by invitation and/or aptitude testing. Students will be expected to attend performances in and out of school time determined by the ensemble directors/instrumental tutors.

STRING ENSEMBLES

TRAINING STRING PROGRAM FOR YEAR 3

This one year program is offered to **selected** students in Year 3, based on aptitude testing and audition. Beginners from other years may be invited to join at the discretion of the director. The group meets for one half hour group lesson per week at no extra cost. Students may hire an instrument from the College for $190 (inc GST) per year (non-refundable unless the student provides their own instrument during the year), or may provide their own (please see the information about instruments on p10). The cost of the tutor book will be included on the student's family account (around $30). Students in the Training String program may also opt to take separate private lessons. Continuing students need to purchase their own violin/violas after the first year, and cellos after 2 years. **It is expected that after the first year, continuing students will take private or shared lessons and progress to the String Ensemble if they show strong evidence of practice, knowledge of the fingerings/notes of their instrument, and the required organisational skills to remember their instrument regularly.**

Please note that it is a requirement that EVERY student in Year 5 be a member of one of the String or Band Ensembles to meet the requirements of the Creative Arts Music Key Learning Area. If your child has left the String program by Year 5, he or she will be required to be in the Training Band in Year 5.

STRING ENSEMBLE

Students who learn a stringed instrument at the College are expected (and students who learn elsewhere are invited and encouraged) to be in the String Ensemble. All members of the Ensemble must receive private lessons either at the College or externally until Year 10 (at the director's discretion). Students are expected to provide their own instrument (with the exception of Year 4 continuing cellists and double bassists). There may be some College instruments available for hire, after instruments have been issued to Year 3 Training Strings students.

SENIOR STRING ENSEMBLE

This is a subset of the String Ensemble. Membership is by invitation and there are no extra costs for students, except for the annual Music Day Workshops and Group Tutorials.

BAND ENSEMBLES

TRAINING BAND FOR YEAR 5

All students in Year 5 learn an ensemble instrument (string or band) to meet the requirements of the Creative Arts Music Key Learning Area. The Training Band will consist of

- Year 5 students who are not already members of the String Ensemble, Transition Band or Concert Band
- Year 5 string ensemble students who would also like the opportunity to learn a band instrument
- Students from other years who would like the opportunity to learn a band instrument.

Students will attend group lessons for half an hour per week during school time at no extra cost. Students may hire an instrument from the College for $190 (inc GST) for the time they are in Training Band (non-refundable unless the student provides their own instrument during the year), or provide their own (please see the section on Instruments). The cost of the tutor book will be included on the student's family account (around $30 inc GST). Students in the Training Band program may also opt to take private lessons, single or shared with two.

Training Band runs for the whole year. Only those students who show strong evidence of practice, knowledge of the fingerings/notes of their instrument, and the required organisational skills to remember their instrument regularly will continue on to Transition Band.

After the first year, continuing students will take private lessons and progress to the Transition Band or Concert Band depending on their ability. Instruments are allocated to the students based on their physical size, suitability and their preference, with the balance of the band instrumentation being the overriding factor. The students are given the opportunity to try out the various instruments at the start of the year.

TRANSITION BAND

After Training Band, continuing students progress to the Transition Band which is a subset of the Concert Band. Students attend a group rehearsal either within the Concert Band rehearsal or separately. There is no extra cost for the group lessons. It is hoped that all students in the Transition Band would progress to full membership of the Concert Band by the end of their second year of playing. **All students in Transition Band are required to have private lessons either at the College or externally, single (or shared with two students, offered for Terms 1 and 2 only).**

Students are expected to provide their own instrument (with the exception of the larger instruments such as tuba). Please see the section on Instruments. There may be some College instruments available for hire, after instruments have been issued to Year 5 Training Band students.

CONCERT BAND

The Concert Band is the largest of the College's ensembles. All students learning a band instrument at the College are expected to (and those learning externally are encouraged to) be a member of the Concert Band. There is no cost to be in this ensemble but all members of the Ensemble must receive private lessons either at the College or externally until reaching Year 10 (at the director's discretion). Students are expected to provide their own instrument (with the exception of the larger instruments such as tuba). Please see the section on Instruments. There may be some College instruments available for hire, after instruments have been issued to Year 5 Training Band students.

SENIOR BAND AND JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Senior Band is a subset of the Concert Band and is the band that represents the school at Eisteddfods. The Jazz Ensemble widens the repertoire and musical experiences of the more advanced students. Membership to both these ensembles is by invitation. There are no extra costs for students in these ensembles.

ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCES

Ensemble performances are the culmination of the team effort that has gone into rehearsals and practice. Individual absences from a performance not only affect the quality of the ensemble but also adversely affect the team spirit of cooperation that the College is fostering. **All members of the Concert Band, Senior Band, Transition Band, Jazz Ensemble, String Ensemble, and Senior String Ensemble are expected to be available if called for School Functions. The ensemble members are also expected to be available to perform at any other functions where the ensemble is needed to represent our school.** These events would be considered carefully before the Principal and the Ensemble Director commit the band.

MUSIC PERFORMANCE UNIFORMS

FORMAL PERFORMANCES (eg Eisteddfod, Gala Concert)

- Long sleeved White Collared Shirt (a school shirt is suitable) that will suit a tie
- Black Skirt/Pants/Trousers (not tights/leggings)
- Black stockings or socks (no bare legs)
- Black polished shoes (school shoes are suitable)
- Hair accessories for girls in College colours

OUTDOOR CONCERTS (eg College Fair)

- Casual but neat shorts/skirts/pants/jeans
- School jumper or jacket if needed
- School hat if needed

OTHER CONCERTS (eg Solos Night, Presentation Night)

- School Uniform

COLLEGE MUSIC CALENDAR

Students in performing ensembles are expected to be present at events marked with an asterisk *. Please place them on your family calendar. Dates will be confirmed closer to the time.

Term 1

Week 1 Ensemble Rehearsals resume.

Week 2 Training Strings and Band aptitude tests and Training Band instrument trials. Tutorials resume for continuing students. Tutorials for new enrolments begin as information is processed.

Week 3-4 Year 5 Training Band and Year 3 Training Strings begin

Term 2

April/ May AMEB exam session (Video Repertoire exams may take place in Term 1)

Ensemble performances at the **College Fair Saturday 30th May, time to be advised ***

June/July Music Camp/Day at the College, **usually in the last weeks of Term 2 or early Term 3. An extra cost ***

Term 3

Mid Term in August Eisteddfod for selected ensembles *

Week 9 **Gala Concert (the musical highlight of the College year) all ensembles including Training Strings and Training Band) - Thursday 17 Sept in 2026 ***

Term 4

Solos Night usually Week 2 of Term 4 on a Thursday night, **Thursday 22 OCtober in 2026**

October/November/December AMEB Exams Session (Video Repertoire exams may take place in Term 3)

Presentation Night selected Ensemble Performances – Thursday 10 Dec in 2026 *

INSTRUMENTS

INSTRUMENT CARE

It is expected that students will look after their instruments whether they are hired from the College or are their own. Tutors will instruct the students in cleaning the instruments. All instruments are to be placed in the Instrument Store when at school and taken home for practice each day. Students are responsible for the safe transporting of their instruments to and from the College. The cost of any repairs not attributed to normal wear and tear will be invoiced to the student. Please do not try and fix the instrument yourself; the tutors can fix most problems at school and have the correct equipment for doing this. Any college instrument needing repairs beyond this will be sent to a reputable repairer.

Items listed in this table as 'provided' are issued once only at the start of the Instrument Hire and belong to the particular instrument. Parents are to replace any items as required through the year.

ALL INSTRUMENTS	WOODWIND	BRASS	STRINGS
Metronome (can be an app eg Tempo Lite (free))	**Flute:** Cleaning rod (provided)	Valve Oil (provided)	Rosin (provided)
Music stand for Home Practice	Cleaning cloth (provided)	Slide grease (provided)	Shoulder rest
Tag visible on the outside of the case with at least a parent's phone number, or College number for a hired instrument	**Clarinet and Saxophone:** Cleaning pull through (provided)	Mouthpiece brush (provided)	Endpin stopper (cello)
Instrument stand (desirable)	2 reeds (provided)		
	Cork grease for clarinets (provided)		
	Neck strap for saxophones (provided)		
	Extra reeds can be purchased from the Music Coordinator		

PURCHASING INSTRUMENTS

Please consult your child's tutor or the Music Coordinator when you are considering purchasing an instrument for your child. There are tried and tested brands which are recommended and which have good resale value. While these brands may be more expensive initially, the benefit of having a reliable instrument that is easy for your child to play outweighs having a cheaper instrument that could be out of tune, and poorly assembled and aligned.

Care should be taken when considering the purchase of a second hand instrument. It is always best to consult your child's tutor or the Music Coordinator, and have a professional repairer look over the instrument ***before*** you purchase.

PRACTICE (FOR PARENTS)

Students will be required to prepare for the next lesson by practising the goals set out by their tutor in the notebook which serves as the main line of communication between the tutor, student and parent. Some tutors may issue practice sheets from time to time which may require your signature. They will also be expected to prepare music for any ensembles they are in.

It is better to practice regularly and in short intervals. More can be achieved in twenty minutes each day than sixty minutes once per week. Practice should gradually lengthen in duration over time and be supported and encouraged by parents. Your child's tutor can give you an indication of what is expected.

Beginners will greatly benefit from your help and encouragement as they need to learn how to practice. As students progress, they will need your input less and less but your encouragement always.

Practice should take place in a room free from distractions (TV, devices etc). Players benefit from practising in front of a mirror so they can check their posture and instrument hold at any time. Practice should take place at a time when the student can concentrate (not just before bed or when they are hungry). A regular practice time each day works well, but allow some flexibility. You know your child best.

Anyone will acknowledge that listening to a practice session is not the best way to unwind, but keep in mind that to be able to perform confidently, your child has to start somewhere and will need lots of encouragement. Children love games so think about this whether you are actively listening to their practice, or are in the background. Encourage your child with statements such as 'I really like that one – can you play it for me again?' Set mini-goals such as asking them to play a section of a piece two times in a row without making a mistake, or asking if they can play another section with their eyes closed. Search out a professional who plays your child's instrument in a genre that *you* like on YouTube or elsewhere and watch (or listen if the video content is not appropriate) to these artists with your child (eg Two Cellos, The Piano Guys). If you recognise a melody (almost every tutor book contains well known melodies such as Jingle Bells and Merrily We Roll Along), let your child know you do. Encourage your child to play for others whenever possible.

Praise your child for his or her efforts. Wind and brass students are learning to use their facial muscles in a different way and to think about breathing which up until now worked autonomously without conscious effort. All students are learning to hold an instrument and their arms and bodies in ways that may not yet comfortable for them. They are learning to interpret the language of musical symbols to produce sound that makes sense to them. All of this, all at once.

Above all, be enthusiastic and encouraging. Your child is extending him or herself by learning an instrument and has taken on lifelong skills. Most will go through a stage or stages of wanting to 'give up'. Please liaise with your tutor if needed as children can't see the end goal. Happily, most will end up playing and singing for relaxation or making music with friends for life.

PRACTICE (FOR STUDENTS)

Why practise? So you will improve. Why improve? So you will enjoy playing more. Why more? The more you practise, the more pieces you can play, the more techniques you learn, the more skills you refine, and the more fun and enjoyment you have.

Any hints? Mark up your music in pencil that can be erased later. This can include key signatures, accidentals, definitions, counting, and fingering. Warm up properly how your tutor has shown you. Have goals, for example, to learn 'those' 16 bars, or focusing on the rhythm, or mastering that scale, or to work on your sound. Work slowly – aim for accuracy over speed. If it isn't accurate at a slow speed, it will never be accurate played fast. Check your notebook for comments and goals your tutor has assigned for you. Spend fresh time on the 'bits' you can't play – don't always start at the beginning that you can play already. But always reward yourself after concentrated effort by playing through the 'bits' you can play. Write any questions you have in the notebook for the next lesson. Check your posture and instrument hold in a mirror and check it again every 10 minutes. Listen to professionals playing your instrument and emulate their sound.