



Education &  
Communities

Public Schools NSW

# Band Handbook

Hurstville Public School



Our aim is to develop responsible young citizens with strong self-belief, a love of learning, the ability to make responsible decisions and respect for the rights and values of others.

Dear Band Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Hurstville Public School Band and congratulations on your decision to become involved in the band program.

Being a part of a school band is a wonderful experience for children. It not only helps them learn to play an instrument, but teaches them great teamwork, raises their confidence in performing in front of an audience and enhances their appreciation of a range of music.

Hurstville Public School offers a well-established band program in partnership with Engadine Music Education Centre. The band program provides students with an opportunity to learn to read music, play a musical instrument and play as part of a large band.

The program will also encourage children to develop confidence, self discipline, commitment and social skills vital to succeed in all areas of life.

### **Aims of the HPS Band Program**

The school band program exists to enable children to enjoy playing music with their friends and classmates as part of a group. Being in the band develops teamwork and a sense of achievement.

The school band program embodies the following guiding principles and values:

- We strive to be the best band we can possibly be.
- We do this because it is challenging, not because it is easy.
- To be selected as a member of the band is an honour and a privilege, not a right.
- Respect, co-operation and consideration for others within the band program are fundamental values.
- The successful overall operation of the band is of higher priority than the interests of individual band members.
- Our most valuable players are those who try the hardest to set our musical standards.
- The role of each band member is to strive for continuous improvement and a level of expertise that meets or exceeds the needs of the band.
- **Everybody who chooses to be part of the band program has an opportunity to contribute to an enjoyable and positive experience.**

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### **Commitment to the band**

Fundamental to the success of our band program is the full support and cooperation of all band parents and students.

Before applying for a place in the band program, parents and students should be aware of their responsibilities as participants in the band program. The HPS Band Code of Conduct (provided in this booklet) outlines the rights and responsibilities of parents and students.

***It is absolutely vital that new band students and parents read and understand the HPS Band Code of Conduct before committing to the band.***

It is expected that a child accepted into the band program will make a commitment to be a member for the entire year. New band members and their families often underestimate the amount of time, money and effort involved in learning a musical instrument. The HPS Band Program involves a **commitment of time, effort and financial support**. As band is elective, there is no financial assistance available. All fees must be paid on time to ensure the program can continue.

The Band Program relies on the development of members throughout **Years 4, 5 and 6**. This ensures that there are sufficient numbers of musicians across all instrument sections. It is detrimental to the program if students/families decide to withdraw from the program; therefore, careful consideration should be made before auditioning. Once a commitment is made, students will be permitted to withdraw only in exceptional circumstances, and any fees must be paid for the remainder of the year.

Support from home is crucial to the development of band members. Most children will progress on their instrument if they attend all tutorials and rehearsals. Students are expected to consistently practise at home.



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## Responsibilities

### **Students will:**

**.... be safe, be respectful and be responsible at all times.**

- Follow **school expectations** at all band rehearsals, performances and any other band event.
- Demonstrate **band etiquette** and **pride** through punctuality at performances and rehearsals.
- Attend all rehearsals and tutorials for the duration of the rehearsal or tutorial.
- Commit to practising at home.
- Bring necessary equipment to every practice.
- Show personal responsibility for instruments by keeping them in safe, designated areas during the school day and taking instruments home after school.
- Have all belongings labelled with name of student and class.
- Keep instruments in good working order prior to practices and performances. It is not the responsibility of the conductor to fix instruments during band practice as this disrupts the practice for other students.
- Use and handle instruments and equipment with care.
- Attend all band performances, bearing in mind that some performances will be held at night or on the weekend.
- Wear correct band uniform when required.
- Assist with setting up and putting away stands, chairs and equipment when required, particularly before and after a performance.

### **Parents or Carers will:**

- Understand that participation in the band program is on a yearly basis, thus providing security for band performances and finances. Parents need to seek advice from the conductor and band co-ordinator if their child is experiencing difficulties in band.
- Make every effort to get their child to band practice on time and ensure they stay until the end.
- Provide reasonable notice if their child is unable to attend a performance or tutorial.
- Use the suggested communication channels for contact with the band conductor so that practices are not interrupted or delayed.
- Use the suggested communication channels for airing ideas, issues or concerns relevant to the band program so that fair and reasonable outcomes are objectively achieved.
- Pay band fees promptly. Band fees are compulsory and if not paid promptly, your child may be asked to leave the band.
- Recognise and make provision for the extra costs associated with band membership.

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## **Our Partners**

Our experienced and talented conductors and tutors are provided by Engadine Music Education Centre's Bandtime program. We enjoy a long and positive relationship with Engadine Music Education Centre and work collaboratively with conductors and tutors.

## **Our Bands**

### **The Training Band**

The Training Band consists mainly of Year 4 students who do not have experience playing a musical instrument. Students usually remain in this group for 12 months although some may be promoted earlier if their progress is outstanding. At the end of the year, students will audition to join the Concert Band for the following year.

### **The Concert Band**

The Concert Band consists of students who have approximately a year's experience in playing a musical instrument. Students must audition to join the Concert Band. The Concert Band currently rehearses on Tuesday afternoons from 3-4pm.

### **The Wind Orchestra**

The Wind Orchestra consists of students who competently play a musical instrument. This is an audition based entry. Members are expected to undertake extra rehearsals, a challenging music program and other performance commitments. The Wind Orchestra currently rehearses on Thursday morning from 8-9am.



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### **Member Requirements**

Band members are to attend a **one hour band rehearsal** and **one half hour small group tutorial**, held before school, after school **or** during lunch time, and undertake **home practice sessions** weekly.

Students and parents must understand that membership of the band is a privilege. School work must at all times come first. If students fail to follow the expectations for school work and commitment to band, they may be asked to leave the band program.

### **Costs**

Lesson fees are paid directly to Engadine Music Education Centre. Engadine Music Education Centre offers hiring of instruments for a fee with a buy out option. Alternatively, you may wish to buy an instrument for your child.

Additionally, the school charges a one off band fee of \$60. This covers administration time for teachers, the upkeep of musical equipment, the provision of conductors at performances and the purchasing of pieces of music to support the band program.

Students will also be expected to purchase the band uniform from the Uniform Shop, and pay to participate in performances at a variety of locations.

Students will be involved in several performances throughout the year. Some of these will incur a cost for transport, competition fees and the provision of a teacher for supervision.

Some students will be invited to attend Band Camp, a two day camp providing students with the opportunity to join other bands.

The purchase of a portable music stand is desirable.



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## Performances

Throughout the year, students are given the opportunity to perform as part of a band. Any external activity incurs a cost to the students.

All bands perform at and compete in the Bandfest, which involves other schools in the region and which is judged by a professional adjudicator. All three of our bands have traditionally performed extremely well at Bandfest. Parents are invited to attend the Bandfest at no charge. The cost of this performance for students is approximately \$25-\$30.

Our Training Band performs at a Parent Showcase late in Term 1. This demonstrates to parents how much students have learnt in a short amount of time. This is held in the school hall during rehearsal time. There is no cost.

In some years, the Training Band has attended Bandtastic. This is a day when many school bands get together, learn a piece of music and play in a large band. They perform the new piece to parents in the afternoon. The cost of attending this day is approximately \$30.

Many of our bands often perform during Education Week celebrations. This is usually held at school and does not incur any cost.

In some years, our Wind Orchestra auditions for the Sydney Performing Arts Festival (SPAF). If successful in their audition, this will incur a cost and involve night time performances.

Some Concert Band and Wind Orchestra members are invited to attend Band Camp each year. This is a two day camp run by Engadine Music. It is optional and costs approximately \$180 - \$200.

In Term 3, our Concert Band performs for a selected year group of Hurstville Public School students. The concert takes place in the hall and does not incur any cost.

In Term 4, all bands perform for parents in the school hall at the End of Year Showcase, run by Engadine's BandTime. This is an opportunity for band students to demonstrate their growth and musical development. It does not incur any cost.

All bands perform at the HPS Performing Arts Showcase, a concert celebrating the many performance groups at Hurstville Public School. There is no cost for students, but parents purchase tickets to watch the performances.



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### **Audition Process**

At the end of each year, Year 3 students are invited to audition for the training band. **There is no preparation required for this test.** Students are not expected to know how to play the instrument as they will be guided by the conductor.

When auditioning students for band, our conductors consider such factors as:

- Experience in playing an instrument
- Musical Aptitude Test (aural examination)
- The student's physical features (mouth/teeth size and shape, hand/finger size)
- Ability to make an initial sound from the instrument
- Each child's instrument preferences
- Overall balance of instruments within the Training Band leading into the Concert Band
- Availability of instruments for the following year.

In addition, factors such as organisational ability, capacity to manage time, follow directions, work as a member of a team and deal with competing workloads will be considered.

If successful in the audition, students will either be asked to join a band or be placed on a waiting list if no additional positions are available. The instrument a child is assigned will be determined by the conductor in consultation with the student. Successful applicants will be notified as soon as possible after the audition.

New band parents and students are required to attend the Band Information Evening held in Term 4.





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### **Communication Channels:**

Engadine Music will communicate via email provided by parents. This will include information about upcoming events and reporting on student progress.

Hurstville Public School band coordinators will communicate fortnightly via the Belltower newsletter. Notes will be sent home regarding performances held outside the school.

**For questions or issues regarding the music program, payment for lessons, reports, instruments or absences, please speak to the band conductor or Engadine Music.**

**For questions or issues regarding timetables, behaviour, school fees or excursions, please see your band coordinator.**

### **Contact with the conductor or coordinator:**

When wanting to speak to the conductor please make an appointment for **after** band practice or at a mutually convenient time. Please indicate the topic you wish to discuss.

Alternatively you should contact your band coordinator through school email or written correspondence to discuss any concerns. Please avoid meeting directly with teachers, as they are busy preparing for their class.

Please **notify the conductor** if your child will be absent from a series of practices due to a holiday or illness. Absence from practice must be explained to the conductor.

### **Code of Conduct**

Before being accepted into the band program students will be required to read, understand and sign the Code of Conduct which outlines their responsibilities to the band.

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# Hurstville Public School Band

## *Code of Conduct*

*I agree to the following terms to become, and remain, a member of the HPS band for 2016.*

*I understand that the band is a team effort and that we must work together to play well and have fun, therefore I cannot withdraw.*

*As a member of Hurstville Public School band, I accept my responsibility to:*

- attend all tutorials, rehearsals and any other band commitments, such as performances, workshops or band camps*
- be on time for rehearsals, tutorials and performances and stay for the duration of the rehearsal or tutorial*
- practise my instrument and band music regularly at home*
- take care of my instrument and clean it after use*
- always show respect and be attentive to band staff*
- display appropriate behaviour at all times, especially when representing the school*
- help to set up and pack away chairs, music stands and instruments*
- wear the correct band or school uniform, as required.*

I agree that I have read the above and discussed this with my parents / carers. I understand my responsibilities and would like to be part of the HPS band.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Band: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Carers Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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