



# BAND PROGRAM

## 2026 HANDBOOK

## WELCOME TO THE MURRAY FARM BAND PROGRAM

Murray Farm PS in partnership with Teaching Services Australia (TSA) welcomes you to the Murray Farm Public School band program!

This booklet will give families an overview of how the band program operates.

Participating in the Band Program at Murray Farm is a fun and valuable learning experience for children. Through consistent effort and regular practice, children will develop their own musical skills and play together in a band. Band members will enjoy the excitement of competitions and the pleasure of performing as a team in front of peers and the school community.

Becoming a band member at Murray Farm also provides a great opportunity for children across stages to get to know each other better. **Please review this handbook with your child.** It is important that all members of the bands and their parents/guardians understand the conditions of band membership.

Should you have any queries, concerns or suggestions, contact should first be made through Teaching Services Australia. We look forward to your family's involvement in the Band Program!

## ABOUT US

The Murray Farm Public School band program consists of three bands - Training Band, Concert Band and Performance Band. There are over 130 students involved.

Students from Year 3-6 are eligible to join the band.

Each year the bands perform at a variety of school events such as the Cracker Carnival and Open Day and enter local competitions and eisteddfods such as the Ryde Eisteddfod. They also perform regularly at school assemblies and in family concerts.

## COMMUNICATION

The main form of communication between families & TSA happens via email. We strive to give as much notice and information as possible of upcoming events with notes sent directly to band families via email.

Band administration is run separately from the school office. Band families should contact TSA directly by email or phone:

**Email:** [info@teachingservices.com.au](mailto:info@teachingservices.com.au)

**Phone:** 9651 7333 ext 2

**Website:** [www.teachingservices.com.au](http://www.teachingservices.com.au)

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to contribute to the band program by helping as needed. For example, this may include providing extra supervision at events or packing away band equipment and chairs following performances.

## **JOINING THE BAND**

The band program is open to all students from Years 3-6. To enrol in the school band, simply return the TSA enrolment form enclosed to TSA directly with any other relevant forms. An intake is held at the end in Term 4, for the next calendar year.

The structure of the program is as follows:

- **Training Band**  
Any child in Year 3 or above can join. No musical experience is required. Training Band members usually start in Year 3, although some start in years 4, 5 and 6. There is no minimum requirement for Training Band members – no formal audition is required.
- **Concert Band**  
The Concert Band is mostly made up of children in Year 4 and a small number of students from other grades. Students progress to the Concert Band after one year in the Training Band and meeting certain competencies.
- **Performance Band**  
The Performance Band consists mostly of children in Years 5 and 6 with some other talented children from other grades. Students may progress to this band after one year in the Concert Band and successfully passing the audition.

## **COMMITMENT**

Band members are expected to commit to the band program on a semester basis minimum, however it is important that each student endeavours to remain in the band for the full year.

If your child does not wish to continue in band, please discuss the issues with TSA. Should you decide to withdraw your child from the band program before the end of a term, you will still be charged the fees for the full term.

## INSTRUMENTS

Children will attend an instrument demonstration concert at school, and then have an opportunity to meet a tutor to run through some tests (how easily they can shape their mouth, hand size, etc.) A recommendation for the most suitable instrument for each child is made, and a mostly balanced band is created. It is important that a child is comfortable with their choice of instrument. Parents have several options to obtain an instrument for their child, including hiring a brand-new new instrument from TSA, or purchasing a new or secondhand instrument.

The instruments available to play in the school band include:

|                  |               |                      |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Flute            | Trumpet       | Percussion           |
| Clarinet         | Trombone      | Electric Bass Guitar |
| Alto saxophone   | French Horn*  | Bass Clarinet*       |
| Tenor saxophone* | Baritone Horn | Baritone saxophone*  |
| Oboe**           | Euphonium*    | Tuba*                |
| Bassoon**        |               |                      |

*\*school hire instrument may be available*

*\*\*Please contact TSA for more information prior to enrolment*

## INSTRUMENT HIRE

Brand new instruments may be hired from TSA for a monthly fee. TSA hires brand-new instruments so that parents may have the option to buy-out their instrument if they choose. Flute, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, euphonium/baritone horn, bass guitar, clarinet and French horn are all available on the TSA hire scheme.

Larger or more expensive instruments (marked with an \* above) owned by the school may be available for hire through TSA for an annual, non-refundable hire fee. The hire fee cover repairs, annual cleaning and servicing. School instruments hired must be returned at the end of the calendar year. Some of these larger instruments are only offered to children in higher bands as an extension instrument.

If a school instrument is damaged due to negligence on the student's part, the parents are responsible for the cost of the repair. Should your own instrument require service or repair please contact TSA and they will direct you to the relevant instrument repairer for assessment or repairs.

## INSTRUMENT PURCHASE

TSA offers discounted new and second-hand instruments for purchase. Second-hand instruments come serviced, cleaned and many with a balance of warranty. Accessories and books can also be purchased to be sent directly to the school. Please call TSA for more information on instrument or accessory purchases.



## CARE OF INSTRUMENTS

Students are asked to look after their own instrument and to respect others' instruments. Please check with your tutor for information on how to clean and care for your specific instrument.

Please note:

- Instruments must be clearly labeled with name, address, telephone number and school. Take special care on public transport and in the school playground.
- Exposure to sun and hot vehicles can damage the instrument and the case.
- Any malfunction of, or damage to instruments must be brought to the attention of TSA immediately. Please do not try to repair instruments yourself or take them to another music shop.

## BAND REHEARSALS

Rehearsals take place in the school Hall promptly at 7:45am. Please arrive a few minutes early to help set up.

| Band             | Rehearsal Day |
|------------------|---------------|
| Training Band    | Tuesday       |
| Concert Band     | Wednesday     |
| Performance Band | Friday        |

## REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

All band members must attend every practice as they are part of a team. If your child cannot attend a practice or performance, TSA should be notified by email as soon as possible. If an instrument is being repaired, attendance is still required at band rehearsal. It is important to be present to keep up with instructions and tuition given to your section and/or to the whole Band. All Band members must bring their music book/folder to each practice session.

## BEHAVIOUR DURING REHEARSAL

A high standard of self-discipline is required of each band member. This includes good listening skills and teamwork. There will be times when students will be required to sit quietly and listen to the playing of other members or sections of the band. The school PBL of "Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best" also applies to band.

All students are required to assist with the setting up of band equipment before rehearsals and packing it away again afterwards. Every student is expected to help. Students are not permitted to leave a rehearsal or performance until all the equipment (music stands, chairs, drum kit, etc.) has been packed away. This can be done quickly and easily if everyone co-operates.

## PRACTISE AT HOME

Regular daily practice of band pieces is essential to keep up with the challenges and demands of the Band. If members fall behind, they may lose interest and feel discouraged. They may also jeopardise the progress of the whole band.

Initially small amounts of regular practice are necessary (10-15 minutes at least four times per week). This will gradually expand to longer periods as your child improves. Practice needs to become a GOOD HABIT; this will only happen through repetition. Please encourage your child to practice.

## TUITION

Children must attend weekly instrumental tuition outside of the band rehearsals.

For Training Band students, group instrumental tuition lessons are held at school, usually before or after school. Parents will be informed of the day and time of group lessons as soon as possible after enrolment, most likely in January 2027.

Group lessons for beginners are invoiced directly to parents by TSA. Makeup lessons or refunds for missed group lessons are not possible except in cases of hardship or prolonged absences for medical reasons.

After their first year of learning, students move out of group tuition and into private lessons. Private lesson spots at MFPS are extremely limited and parents are advised to secure private tuition at one of many local providers. Parents are responsible for setting up private tuition for their child. A list of recommended tutors will be provided to parents as their children near the end of their first year of learning.

## BAND EVENTS

Band members are expected to participate in all band activities. When a child is unable to attend a scheduled band performance or event due to an unavoidable conflict, parents are to provide notice in advance to TSA. This is a courtesy to the conductor and to other band members, who depend on the whole band to be there and play their part.

## BAND WORKSHOP

The band workshop is a **compulsory** event for all band members. It is a one-day intensive music workshop that will be held to prepare for band competitions. The workshop is held at school over a weekend. The fees collected for the workshop cover the cost of the conductors, tutors, activities, music, equipment and all other administration.

## BAND UNIFORM

Students in Training Band wear their school uniform for performances. Once out of Training Band, all band students wear a Band uniform for all performances unless otherwise notified in the school newsletter or via email from the Band Coordinator. Uniforms are available via Flexischools or the Uniform Shop.

Band uniform consists of:

- short-sleeved band polo shirt (available from the school Uniform Shop)
- clean black school shoes & black socks
- long navy pants
- navy or red hair accessories

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BAND PROGRAM

Please advise the TSA office in writing if you intend to withdraw permanently from the Band. No refund will be made for:

- Band fees for the current term
- Workshop fees
- Hire fees
- Music book

## Band Fees

All band students are required to pay a band rehearsal/membership fee.

Band fees are invoiced by TSA at the beginning of each term. It's important that parents pay the fees promptly upon receipt of the invoices as these fees are required to cover all band costs including wages for conductors and the administration of the program.

All group lesson fees band rehearsal are fixed for the term, regardless of the number of weeks.

If you have difficulties with payment or would like to discuss another method of payment please contact TSA. The purchase of consumables such as reeds or oils are not covered by instrument hire fees and are the responsibility of the instrument user.

| Item                                                                                                                                                                                          | Amount                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Group Lessons</b> <i>Training Band - beginners only, Includes band membership</i>                                                                                                          | \$270/term                |
| <b>Band Only Fee</b> <i>Concert and Performance Bands</i>                                                                                                                                     | \$120/term                |
| <b>Private Lesson Fee</b> <i>if available</i>                                                                                                                                                 | \$520/term                |
| <b>Enrolment Fee</b> <i>payable upon initial enrolment with TSA</i>                                                                                                                           | \$35                      |
| <b>Band Workshop</b> <i>1-day compulsory workshop<br/>Covers conductor &amp; tutors' fees, music and administration</i>                                                                       | \$85 per student TBC      |
| <b>Music Book</b> (Accent on Achievement)                                                                                                                                                     | Included in enrolment fee |
| <b>Resource Levy</b><br><i>Covers incidental whole-band expenses, such as festival entry fees, purchase to musical scores, power boards, percussion servicing, etc.</i>                       | \$10/term                 |
| <b>Band Shirt</b> <i>Not required until student is in Concert Band, available through Flexischools or the Uniform Shop</i>                                                                    | \$27                      |
| <b>School instrument hire</b> <i>if available</i><br><i>School hire fees are only available for very specific instruments. This is a yearly fee, charged up front, and is non-refundable.</i> | \$240/year                |



## **RESPECT – RESPONSIBILITY – PERSONAL BEST AT BAND**

### **Respect**

- Follow the instructions of the Band Director, tutor, teachers and coordinators
- Show respect for fellow band members' instruments.
- Allow yourself and others to learn in tutorials and band rehearsals
- Play your instrument only when asked

### **Responsibility**

- Be on time to band rehearsals and lessons
- Be prepared with your instrument and equipment
- Band members represent our school with their uniform and conduct.
- Share in the packing away and care of band equipment
- Commit to the band “team” and attend all rehearsals and performance events

### **Personal Best**

- Practice regularly to keep up with the band and continually improve
- Be resilient
- Set a good example for your fellow band members, and the younger bands

