



WAITARA PS BAND PROGRAM

2026 HANDBOOK



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WELCOME TO THE WAITARA PUBLIC SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

Waitara Public School, in partnership with Teaching Services Australia (TSA) welcomes you to the school band program!

This booklet has been put together to give families an overview of all you need to know about involvement in the school band program.

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

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 (TSA). We look forward to your family's involvement in the Band Program!

ABOUT US

The Waitara Public School band program consists of three bands - Training Band, Concert Band and Senior Wind Ensemble.

There are over 125 students involved. Students from Year 3-6 are invited to join the band.

Each year the bands perform at a variety of school events, as well as external band festivals and eisteddfods.

Teaching Services Australia is an external provider brought in by the school to coordinate the band and has worked with Waitara PS since 2017.

COMMUNICATION

The main form of communication with families 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. Occasionally, important information will also appear in the school newsletter, or you may sometimes receive an SMS.

Band administration is run separately from the school office. Contact should be made directly to TSA by email or phone:

Email: heather@teachingservices.com.au

Phone: 9651 7333 ext 2

Website: www.teachingservices.com.au

JOINING THE BAND

The band program is open to all students from Years 3-6. An intake is held at the end of each year for the next calendar year, with online enrolment.

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**
Players generally progress to the Concert Band after one year in the Training Band.
- **Senior Wind Ensemble**
The Senior Wind Ensemble consists mostly of children in Years 5 and 6 with some talented children from other grades. Students may progress to this band after one year in the Concert Band and successfully passing an audition.

COMMITMENT

Band members are expected to commit to the band program at a minimum of one semester, 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 or the Band Director. Should you decide to withdraw your child from the band program before the end of a term, you will still be charged the full term's fees.

Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their child from band for part of the year to study for exams. This is very disruptive to the band and its preparation for performance events and may affect the parts given in band. Research has proven that learning a music instrument enhances cognitive ability.

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.

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-owned hire instrument may be available*

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

INSTRUMENT HIRE

Brand new instrument hire is available through TSA as part of a hire-purchase scheme. This may suit parents who are unsure about their child's commitment to band, or who prefer to spread out the purchase.

Larger, more expensive or unique instruments may be available for hire from the school for some students. The hire fees covers annual cleaning, servicing and repairs. If an instrument is damaged due to negligence on the student's part, the parents are responsible for the cost of the repair. Should your 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 secondhand instruments for purchase to Waitara students, which come serviced, cleaned and with a balance of warranty. Please contact TSA for more information on instrument purchases.

Parents are advised to only purchase quality, name brand instruments. A second-hand instrument of a good brand is far superior to a new, cheap instrument sold by a major chain store.

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.

- Instrument cases should be clearly labeled with name, address, telephone number and school. This ensures instruments are not mixed up and helps in their recovery if they are left on public transportation.
- Exposure to sun and hot vehicles can damage the case and the instrument.
- Any malfunction of or damage to hired instruments must be brought to the attention of TSA immediately. Do not attempt DIY repairs of instruments.

BAND REHEARSALS

Rehearsals take place in the school hall at the following days and times:

TRAINING BAND	CONCERT BAND	SENIOR WIND ENSEMBLE
Thursday morning 7:30am	Tuesday morning 7:30am	Tuesday afternoon 3:10-4:30pm
		Friday morning 7:30am

Please arrive a few minutes before the start time to set up and be ready to play: morning rehearsals start promptly at 7:40am.



Band rehearsal

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. Arriving on time for rehearsals is very important, as late arrivals can be disruptive. 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 the development of 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. Please also review the Code of Conduct at the end of this Handbook.

All students are expected to assist with the setting up of band equipment before rehearsals and packing it away again afterwards. This can be done quickly when everyone cooperates.

PRACTISE AT HOME

Regular practise of band pieces is essential to keep up with the challenges and demands of the band. If members fall behind, they may lose interest, feel discouraged and jeopardise the performance 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.

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.

When participating in a concert or festival, students are expected to remain at the concert until the end. Please do not attempt to take your child home immediately after their band finishes playing unless discussed beforehand with the Band Director or TSA.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BAND PROGRAM

Please advise the TSA office in writing if you intend to withdraw from the Band.

Black band folders must be returned to the band director or TSA if your child withdraws from band, as the music inside the folder is covered by strict copyright conditions.

MOVING FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL

If your child has moved to Waitara PS and participated in the band at their previous school, they are very welcome to join the band at Waitara. A video audition will be organised with the band director, to assess the appropriate ensemble level for their ability.



TUITION

It is a requirement of the Band Program that children attend weekly private instrumental tuition outside of the band rehearsals, to learn how to play their instrument and keep up with the progress of the band. At the band rehearsals, the Band Director has up to 50 children at one time – he or she cannot teach an individual child how to play their instrument during this rehearsal time.

There are several tutors who provide lessons at school, after school hours, including for children enrolled in BASC. A list of tutors will be provided to new enrolments, and parents should contact tutors directly to arrange a mutually acceptable lesson time.

Students must be enrolled in the band program to access instrumental tuition on school grounds.

Percussion students must receive tuition from the tutor on school grounds. This is to ensure quality of tuition and access to the extensive percussion equipment.

Tuition Guidelines for Parents

- Tuition on school grounds is a private financial arrangement between parents and the tutor.
- Tutors set their own fee, based on market rates
- Tutors may charge in advance for the term's lesson, with their own payment terms.
- The school charges tutors \$5 per hour to utilise the facilities for private lessons. This cost will be passed on to parents.
- Parents must give tutors 4 weeks PAID notice if their child will be discontinuing private tuition.
- Tutors must also give parents 4 weeks notice if discontinuing teaching for any reason.
- If your child will be absent from their lesson for any reason, it is your responsibility to alert the tutor in advance. TSA does not manage school event calendars or individual student attendance.
- As children progress in their learning, tutors may request parents purchase specific method books (for example, AMEB books)



Private tuition lesson

BAND FEES

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

Band fees are invoiced by TSA at the beginning of each term. Parents should 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 fees 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.

	Item	Amount
1	<u>Band Membership</u>	\$135/term - Training Band & Concert Band \$185/term – Senior Wind Ensemble
2.	<u>Instrument</u>	Depends on instrument, and whether hire or purchase. Brand new hire from \$46/month. Second-hand instruments also available for purchase. Some limited school instruments may be available for hire.
3.	<u>Private Lessons</u>	\$45 - \$55 per week <i>30-minute lesson</i>
4.	<u>Band Workshop (at school)</u> <i>Covers conductor & tutors' fees, food, music, and administration</i>	\$200 per student TBC
5.	Music Book (Accent on Achievement) <i>Book 1 required for Training Band/new beginners only.</i>	Included in \$35 enrolment fee
6.	Resource levy fee <i>Covers incidental whole-band band expenses, such as festival entry fees, purchase of musical scores, power boards, percussion servicing, etc.</i>	\$10 per term

BAND WORKSHOP

A Band Workshop may be held, which will be a two-day intensive music workshop. Over the two days, students will cover a term's worth of learning and progress. A family concert is performed at the end of the workshop.

The Band Workshop fee will cover the cost of the conductors, tutors, food, activities, music, equipment and all other administrative fees.



BAND CODE OF CONDUCT

Respect	Band members are expected to treat each other and the conductor with courtesy and respect at all times.
Punctuality	Every band member needs to know the importance of being ready at the right place and at the right time.
Listening	Every band member needs to develop the ability to listen courteously to band conductors, coordinators, teachers, tutors, parents and other band members.
Co-operation	Every band member should respond positively and respectfully to the requests of band directors, coordinators, teachers, tutors, etc.
Conduct	The band members should remember that they represent our school in their behavior.
Commitment	The band member and their parents acknowledge they are part of a team, and their participation in all band rehearsals and events is essential.
Play only when asked	Always be considerate to other bands, their own band members and all Band Directors when others are practicing, performing and when they are not playing.
Equipment	All band members should share in the set up and packing away of all equipment as requested and should show respect for other band members' instruments.
Practise	All band members should commit to practise regularly, several days per week.
Self-discipline	Students are expected to sit quietly and to listen when the Band Director is talking to, or instructing, individual members or other sections.
Dress Code	Band members should take pride in their appearance with a neat and clean school uniform when representing the school.