

- Teaching Services Australia -

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for the expression of interest in your child joining the band program at school and welcome to 'Teaching Services Australia'. Teaching Services Australia is a company which provides band programs throughout greater Sydney and the Central Coast.

At TSA we pride ourselves on providing equitable, enjoyable and effective instrumental music tuition as a stepping stone to further music education or just a fun, social musical experience. For many students, band is the first exposure they have to instrumental music. We aim to give all our students the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in band and hope to inspire them to delve further into the rewarding world of music and the benefits it has to offer.

The following step-by-step guide outlines the steps necessary to complete your child's enrolment process. We understand how overwhelming all this information can be, particularly for new parents, especially when it comes to choosing instruments and decisions such as 'rent or buy' and 'new or second-hand'. Should you have questions at any stage, feel free to call TSA on **9651 7333** or email us at teachin@bigpond.net.au. You may also find some useful information on our website – www.duralmusic.com.au.

Step 1) Read the Information provided in *Introduction, Terms & Conditions* overleaf

Step 2) Discuss and finalise your child's choice of instrument – use the *Instrument Blow Test* information provided on the front of this envelope to gauge your child's preferred instrument

Step 3) Fill out the 'Enrolment Details' section of the *TSA Enrolment Form*

Step 4) Fill out the 'Instrument' section of the *TSA Enrolment Form* (Note: you must fill out this section of the form even if you are providing your own instrument. For further advice on instruments read on overleaf.)

Step 5) Fill out the 'Accessories' section of the *TSA Enrolment Form* (Note: you must fill out this section of the form even if you are providing your own accessories. For further advice on accessories read on overleaf.)

Step 6) Sign and date the *TSA Enrolment Form* and return to the address above (Note: **do not return to the school office** as your enrolment may not be processed, your completed enrolment paperwork should be returned directly to Teaching Services Australia's PO Box address above, by fax or in person to Dural Music Centre.)

- Please ensure you have provided an email address with your initial expression of interest, alternatively make sure it is provided with the enrolment form so we can contact you easily in January to confirm starting dates, times and instrument delivery.
- Your school band director will also contact you in the first days of term 1 to confirm the first day of lessons. Your child should bring any instrument or accessories they have to school on this day and wait to be called from class for a lesson. If you have ordered an instrument or accessories from TSA, they will be provided at this lesson.

Thank you again for supporting your child's interest in music. With practice, support and encouragement the squeaks and honks you are soon to hear will rapidly develop into tunes and the gift of making music will change your child's life forever.

Kind regards,
Ben Miesch
Director

Steven Lavis
Music Director

Introduction, Terms & Conditions

Rehearsals and Tuition

Band *rehearsals* generally take place before school for 30-45 minutes depending upon the size and experience level of the band. Instrumental group *tutorials* (group average - 5) take place during school time timetabled in conjunction with classroom teachers.

Private tuition – some students also elect to receive private (one-on-one) tuition outside of school and this is to be encouraged. In such cases it is recommended that students continue to attend school based *Group Tuition* where possible though a *Band Only* enrolment is available provided your child has an experienced external tutor.

Practise – along with school based rehearsal and tuition, it is expected that students will spend regular time at home practising their instrument. At least 3x20min practises are required to satisfactorily revise each week's tuition, perhaps more for some.

Tuition Fees – band and lessons are provided on a term-by-term basis with a term typically consisting of 9 -11 lessons. Tuition fees are payable at the commencement of each term and includes *all* group tutorials, band rehearsals and concerts for the term. If a *public holiday, pupil free day* or other '*whole school*' activity occurs and less than 9 lessons can be taught, extra 'make-up' lessons may be arranged.

Group Tuition - \$130 per term	Band Only - \$65 per term
(Includes group tuition <i>and</i> ensemble rehearsal)	(Plus the cost of weekly private tuition)

Payment - an invoice will be mailed to you at the beginning of each term and is **payable within 14 days** by *phone* with credit card, by *mail* with cheque/money order/credit card details or a *direct debit* from your credit card may be set up. *You may incur late fees* or your child may be **excluded** from rehearsals and lessons if unpaid.

Absences – the nature of group tuition dictates that a lesson goes ahead even with a group member absent. As such, no refund is provided for individual student absences. A 'make-up' lesson may be offered, though please note that timetabling make-up lessons in a group situation can be complicated and so make-ups are given as a goodwill gesture and should not be expected at all times in all situations. The following outlines TSA's policy on absences:

- **Re: School Excursions/Events** – *depending on the notice the teacher has been given*, he/she will attempt to inform you in writing of alternative arrangements. Make-ups are often a second lesson on the same day, covering additional material. *(Do not rely on the school to inform TSA of such school activities, it is the parent/students responsibility to do so!)*
- **Re: Sick Days** – If your child is absent from a lesson due to sickness, it is the parents' responsibility to send a note to the instrumental teacher. The teacher will attempt to provide a make-up lesson where possible.
- **Re: Forgetting Lessons** – Teachers usually send for students if they forget. Often students are not located and other students cannot waste their lesson chasing students who forget. *No make-up can be given for forgetting lessons.*
- **Re: Forgetting Instruments** - If your child forgets their instrument on any day, they can still participate in the lesson by observing (or using a spare instrument if available). *No make-up can be given for forgetting instruments.*
- **Re: Long Holidays/Extended Absence** – If you plan a long holiday or are to miss 3 or more consecutive lessons due to injury, extended illness, new braces, etc contact TSA main office to see what can be arranged.

Withdrawal - minimum commitment for tuition is 1 term. Notice of withdrawal must be given **prior to the new term commencing** or that term's tuition fees will be charged. No refund is given for mid-term withdrawal (*we will give consideration for hardship*).

Correspondence – All enrolment, fee and general enquiries should be directed to TSA main office. The most effective means of contacting TSA is by calling, emailing or faxing the TSA office directly (details above). The office of the school your child attends will not be responsible for handling any TSA business. Notes sent to school (even to TSA staff in schools) can often take days or weeks to arrive at TSA's main office so for urgent matters, be sure to contact TSA **directly**.

The Instrument

Hopefully by now you have an idea of which instrument your child would like to play. Use the *Instrument Blow Test* information on the front of this envelope as a guide if you are unsure. The rule of thumb is that "if they love it, they will practise it" but the right size hands and a natural ability on an instrument can often make it a lot easier.

It will also soon become obvious that some instruments cost more than others. If price is an obstacle, we encourage you to contact us for advice and avoid buying a cheap version of an expensive instrument (like saxophone) as this can end up costing you more in repairs and depreciation. There are often alternatives (e.g. clarinet is an instrument students can learn and later transfer to saxophone) we might suggest, or second hand/ex-hire instruments available which can help ease the cost.

After deciding which instrument your child would like to play, you have a few options of where to get an instrument:

- 1) Check with **extended family/friends** for unused/stored instruments (*check it is in good condition!*)
- 2) TSA supplies **new** instruments at **discounted** prices (*see orange Instrument Purchase Agreement for information*)
- 3) TSA offers a **rent to buy** scheme, which is a good way to start if you are unsure of your child's commitment to the program (*see the blue Instrument Rental Agreement for information*)
- 4) TSA also has a **limited range of near new second hand instruments** available for sale.

You may also choose to look for a new or second hand instrument elsewhere. Whether buying new or second hand, there are several important things to look out for. See the orange sheet for helpful hints on buying an instrument.

Be aware – buying or hiring an instrument is an extra cost and is *not included in tuition fees!*

Accessories

All students require a **tutor book** for band and lessons (*Accent on Achievement* – \$14.95rrp) and a **music stand** is recommended for home practice (\$21.95). Clarinet and Saxophone players will need a steady supply of **reeds** (box (10) clar \$27.95, sax \$40.95) with beginners often going through a reed every week. Reeds do tend to last longer as students progress on their instrument.