



RUNCORN STATE HIGH SCHOOL



INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC HANDBOOK 2025



INDEX

Overview.....	4
General Information	4
Instrumental Program	5/6
i) Lesson Policy	
ii) Attendance Policy	
iii) Reporting Procedure	
iv) Instrument Loan	
v) Instrument Storage	
Instrumental Music Staff	7/8
Instrumental Ensembles	9
• School Ensembles	
• Chamber Ensembles	
• Selection Criteria	
• Ensemble Rehearsal Times	
Music Events	10
Parent Involvement and Music Support Group (MSG)	11
Instrumental Fees and Levies.....	11
Music Folders, Performance Uniform	12
Student Behaviour	13
Music Practice Rooms	14
Practice Tips	15



Overview

This booklet has been developed to assist parents and students in understanding the various facets of the Music Department at Runcorn State High School.

The reading of this booklet by both students and parents will assist in the smooth running of the Music Department, as well as enabling the participants and their families to understand their responsibilities and the commitment required.

Information regarding instrumental ensemble structure and membership will enable students to adequately prepare for participation in a suitable ensemble.

Welcome Instrumental Students

Welcome to the Runcorn State High School's Instrumental Music Program. We value your contribution. This year your teacher, your parents and the school will give you the highest level of support for your music study and you will have many opportunities to excel. You will be provided with a varied and comprehensive repertoire both through your instrumental lessons and through your participation in the school's ensembles.

So that you obtain maximum benefit and opportunity from this program, please understand that you have certain responsibilities that are set out in this booklet. We look forward to your full participation and enjoyment through making great music!

General Information

The music noticeboard is located just inside the Music Block, where instrumental lesson timetables, ensemble information, general music information and advertisements are posted. Students must check this board regularly.

There will be two document racks located on the music staffroom door which will contain permission notes, what's on info or newsletters for students to collect.

There is a blue box located next to the staffroom for students to place return slips from permission notes, at any time the block is open. PLEASE DO NOT PLACE MONEY IN THIS BOX.

Please read carefully the following information, which explains the various ensembles and the responsibility and commitment of participating students to the music program at Runcorn High.



Instrumental Program

The Education Queensland Instrumental Music Program at Runcorn State High School allows students to undertake tuition in string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments (guitar and piano tuition are not offered by Education Queensland, but these instruments are taught in classroom music programs in whole class lessons).

(i) Lesson Policy

At the beginning of each year students will be placed in a tuition group for the learning of their chosen instrument. Students are taught on a rotation system, so that they do not miss the same subject each week. Rotation extends across the whole length of time the instructor is at the school. Adjustment to tuition groups may occur throughout the year. For example, if in week one the instrumental lesson is in period one, the following week it will usually be in period two etc. This will continue until the rotation is complete. The rotation will then recommence.

Each week students leave their regular class to attend their instrumental lesson (although parents may be concerned with students missing other subject classes, the system has successfully run at all QLD state school since implementation in 1972). Students are limited by Education Queensland to take only one lesson a week in school time. ***It is the student's responsibility to complete all classroom work and homework missed.*** They should ask a reliable student to collect information for them or see the class teacher at a break. In almost all situations, students will attend part of their regular timetabled class thereby making it possible to catch up on missed work.

If students miss an instrumental lesson because of a music department function or an instructor absence, students should check on the subsequent day's timetable for a new lesson time, or approach the instructor when they return to make alternate arrangements.

(ii) Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend lessons on a weekly basis and **sign in** at the student counter (Roll Clerk) prior to and after their lesson. (This will change to the music block once we get the required equipment)

To be granted absence from their instrumental lesson, the instrumental teacher must be informed the morning of the lesson or as soon as possible, preferably in writing, via email is fine. It is accepted / realised that students will need to miss an instrumental lesson if they have a class exam or excursion. Again, the student must inform the instrumental teacher as soon as possible and, in some instances, another lesson time can be negotiated.

To not offer an explanation or apology will result in the student being marked "absent" and appear on the absentee sheet, and called to account for their absence. Frequent absences from instrumental lessons may result in students being withdrawn from the program or other school activities.



Enrolment into the program carries with it a minimum one-year commitment and as such, fees are non-refundable. This minimum commitment ensures consistency within the ensembles and instils in students the importance of team-work, persistence and resilience.

(iii) Reporting Procedure

In line with the school reports, instrumental teachers will include a report on each student's progress throughout the year based on students achievement across the assessment tasks of the IM curriculum.

(iv) Instrument Loan

A number of school instruments will be available for loan periods at the discretion of Music staff in consultation with the Head of Department - The Arts. An instrumental *Loan Form* (EQ11 Form) must be completed before the instrument is issued.

Please note that the Queensland Instrumental Music Program policy specifies that students who have been participating in the scheme for a number of years would purchase their own instrument, to allow incoming students to use the school's loan instruments. A number of music stores offer a rental scheme where the instrument is paid off over a period of time. Parents may choose to make use of this option for instrument purchases.

- **Damages / Repairs**

Students are to treat all loan instruments with care and respect. They should be cleaned regularly by the student. If a loan instrument is damaged, the instrumental instructor or music teacher needs to be informed immediately. Depending on the nature of the damage, students may be asked to contribute to the cost of repairs.

- **Insurance**

Once instruments leave the school premises they are no longer insured by Education Queensland. Parents are requested to insure the instrument their child is using under their own House and Contents Policy. This is particularly important as the replacement cost for many instruments is quite prohibitive. Carefully checking your Insurance provider's Policy Disclosure Statement is necessary.

(v) Instrument Storage

Where possible, all students will be allocated a place to store their instrument and folder while at school. All instruments and folders must be clearly labelled with student names. It is in the best interests of all concerned to keep these storage areas tidy. Instruments are not to be left on the floor unless indicated. It is expected that students will take their instruments home for practice between lessons and ensemble times.

Instrumental storage is located in the Music Block. **No instruments** are to be left in the classrooms or hallways.



Instrumental Music Staff

**HOD The Arts
Instrumental Music Coordinator**

**Ms Amy Kallis
Ms Janita Phillips**

**Woodwind/Brass/Percussion
(Wednesday)**

Ms Amie O'Callaghan

Concert Band

Strings

Mr Andrew Biedermann (Friday)
String Ensemble

Classroom Music Staff

**Ms Janita Phillips
Mr Ricky Ong**

At Runcorn SHS, we have an amazing team of dedicated Instrumental and Classroom Music teachers who spend many hours outside of the timetable school day to provide opportunities for students to be involved in the “wonderful world of music.”



Ms Janita Phillips: *Classroom Music teacher and Instrumental Music Coordinator*

Graduating from QUT with a Bachelor of Arts: Music, also achieving her A. Mus A. on Piano and a Diploma of Education Secondary, she has taught throughout QLD in secondary schools, run IM programs including interstate and primary school tours, directed Concert Bands and Stage Bands. Janita has accompanied extensively as lead keyboardist for school musicals, vocal ensemble, string ensemble and individual student's private music exams. Having a passion for the Arts, and particularly musical theatre, she has performed as lead keyboardist in over 25 school-based musicals and loves the opportunity that musicals offers students in experiencing the Arts.



Mr Andrew Biedermann – IM Strings – Violin; Viola; Cello; Double Bass

Andrew Biedermann is the current String Instrumental Music Specialist teaching at Runcorn SS, Runcorn Heights SS and Runcorn SHS. He has more than 30 years of teaching experience both in string and classroom education. Andrew studied Performance at the QLD Conservatorium of Music, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst, and Education at QUT. He has performed with many musicians, orchestras and ensembles in Australia and throughout the world and lived and performed in



Europe during the 1990's. Andrew has taught music since 1983 and has worked in various locations including Education QLD, some of Brisbane's leading Private Schools, the University of QLD and QLD Conservatorium of Music. He thoroughly enjoys educating young people and works diligently and tirelessly to establish and guide students to having a lifelong love of music.



Amie O'Callaghan – *IM Brass, Woodwind, Percussion*

Amie studied a Bachelor of Music, majoring in Musical Theatre, at the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Mackay, and a Graduate Diploma of Secondary Teaching, majoring in Music and Instrumental Music, at the University of Queensland, Brisbane. She taught Classroom Music at Spinifex State College and Instrumental Music Multi for the Mount Isa District, also participating in the community jazz band Bandana. Amie is a multi-instrumentalist, having played Clarinet, Bassoon and Baritone Saxophone from her school days to now, as well as dabbling in Ukulele, Piano, and singing in 'The Buzz', a local band based in Mount Isa. Her hobbies include reading, listening to a wide range of music, and performing in plays and musicals.



INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES THAT WE HAVE!

- **String Orchestra** – selection for, and position in this orchestra is made by the string instructor, based on lesson performance and preparation.
- **Concert Band** – a balanced ensemble designed for woodwind, brass and percussion students. The decision on entry into this ensemble, and position in it is made by the Woodwind, Brass and Percussion instructors. Specific auditions may be used to determine entry and position.
- **Runcorn Pops Orchestra** - our string ensemble and concert band students come together to play a range of contemporary music. This ensemble practices a couple of times a term and works on repertoire in lessons. The decision on entry into this ensemble is made by the directors of both string and concert band ensembles.
- **Percussion Ensemble** – a small and vibrant mix of both tuned and untuned percussion instruments performing across a range of styles and genres. The decision on entry into this ensemble is made by the Percussion instructor and percussion students perform in both Concert Band and Percussion Ensembles.
- **Chamber Ensembles**- the school actively promotes participation in small ensembles such as duos, trios, and quartets. The formation of these will be instigated by instructors in instrumental lessons.
- **Vocal Group** – catering for all vocalists. The decision on entry into this ensemble will be based on audition.

Selection Criteria

To be eligible for membership of a school ensemble, students must be undertaking private instrumental lessons and/or school instrumental lessons. In addition, the school actively promotes participation by all students in choral singing in classroom music activities.

All students at the beginning of the year will be allocated a position in an ensemble appropriate to their level. At the discretion of the music teacher, the student's position in the ensemble may be altered at any time.

Some ensembles are designed to cater for the more advanced students and entry to these ensembles will be by instructor selection and, in some cases, audition. Students who are new to the school will have the opportunity to audition.



Ensemble rehearsal times

Rehearsals are in the Music Block unless otherwise stated. **Students must arrive at least 10-15 mins before start time for set-up and be ready to play at the times listed below.** Attendance is compulsory at all rehearsals. If for any reason you are unable to make the rehearsal, please let your instructor know in advance. Repeated absence with no reason may result in being withdrawn from the Instrumental Music Program or other school activities.

These times are correct at the time of printing.

Wednesday	7:30-8:30am	MU02	Concert Band	Miss O'Callaghan
Friday	7:30 – 8:30am	MU02	String Orchestra	Mr Biedermann

Music Events

Runcorn State High School ensembles perform at both school and community events throughout the year. Major school events appear in the school calendar, including:

- Leadership ceremonies
- ANZAC day ceremony
- School Assemblies
- Music Concerts/Instrumental Showcase
- Creative Generation
- Arts Showcases such as Arts Fusion
- Karawatha Instrumental Music Workshops
- Runcorn Primary school workshops
- Sound garden lunchtime performances
- Awards Night
- Senior Formal
- Year 12 Graduation
- AHEP/SHEP
- Instrumental Music Gala

Students will be notified as soon as possible about other events such as competitions (eg. SHEP, AHEP, Chamber Music Festival and Eisteddfods), camps, tours, community concerts and primary school visits. A permission note will need to be completed and returned to school by the date specified for activities off campus.

A regular update of performance events appear will be sent via email updates from IM Coordinator and HOD – The Arts and via letters home. Students also need to regularly check the notice boards in the Music and Performing Arts Blocks for current information.



Parental Involvement

You may encourage and support your child in their Instrumental study by:

- ✓ Encouraging them to attend lessons and to practice regularly.
- ✓ Enabling them to attend ensemble rehearsals punctually as scheduled.
- ✓ Attending all performances*
- ✓ Attending the Music Support Group (MSG) meetings and helping out where possible.

Music Support Group (MSG)

The MSG is a sub-committee of the Parents & Citizens' Association and was formed to support the ongoing needs of the Music Program. Currently we do not have an active music support group, but it is in endeavoured that we will pursue this in 2024. The below format is a brief overview of how the music support group could be run. Meetings are held in the Music Block. Members of the MSG:

- Liaise with teachers and instructors about the Music Program
- Fundraise for the purchase of music items (instruments, music, music uniforms, equipment, buses, travel, etc.)
- Communicate with families through articles in the school newsletter informing parents and students about events and issues relevant to the musicians at Runcorn SHS.
- Assist at concerts, workshops and other performances.



Instrumental Music Levies

If you have your own instrument	\$ 75 per year
If you loan a school instrument	\$100 per year

A deposit must be paid by Friday 7th March with the remaining balance due by the end of term one.

All fees are non-refundable as commitment to the program is for a minimum of one year.

Music Folders and Performance Uniforms

At Runcorn State High School, all instrumental ensemble students are issued with a Music Folder after they have paid their music levy. The Levy goes towards purchasing music, folders, maintaining instruments, and other costs involved with running the Instrumental Music Program.

Students must present their receipt to the music teacher so that a folder can be allocated (these items are barcoded and allocated specifically). The cost of lost folders will be charged to parents. Students will be issued with a name tag to place on their folder, or a sticker to place inside the folder with their name and class for easy identification. No other stickers are permitted.

Performance Uniforms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concert Band • Runcorn Pops Orchestra • String Orchestra • Chamber Ensembles 	
Black long-sleeved tailored shirt with collar. Black dress pants (no jeans and tights/leggings) Long black socks, black leather shoes, black belt	Provided by students
Runcorn State High School formal uniform (including white socks and black leather shoes and ties for senior students)	Provided by students



Student Behaviour

Student behaviour at all rehearsals, concerts, music excursions, camps, tours and performances should demonstrate the school values with an attitude that is positive and shows respect.

Unacceptable behaviour will be referred to the Head of Department – The Arts.

The Student's Agreement

As a member of the school's instrumental Music Program, students are expected to:

1. Attend lessons on a regular basis. If, due to special circumstances, the lesson time is a problem, students will advise their instrumental teacher beforehand and negotiate an alternative time.
2. Organise with class teachers any work missed due to instrumental lessons.
3. Practise regularly – both lesson and ensemble material.
4. Take good care of their musical instrument and any music sheets lent.
5. Become a loyal member of their school ensemble and attend all rehearsals and performances as required.
6. Attend workshops and camps as recommended by the instrumental teacher, as these activities help student learning.

Other Responsibilities

1. Students may be allocated some original music for use in ensembles. Costs will be incurred for lost or damaged originals.
2. Through the Music Department, students will be loaned a folder for the year. It is the student's responsibility to care for these items and to bring them to all performances as indicated. All items must be returned in good condition at the end of the year.

Music Practice Rooms

We encourage students to use practice rooms at school to improve skills individually and in small ensembles, and work on music compositions.

The following rules apply to ensure fair and proper use of practice rooms in the Music Block.

1. No student is allowed to use a practice room without direct permission from a member of the music staff.
2. If a member of the Music Block staff room is not present, then the practice room **cannot** be used.
3. The practice rooms are only for instrumental, vocal and class work. Spectators are not permitted.
4. Rehearsal rooms are available to Year 12 Music Extension (Performance) students during their “spares”, or at a designated time, where space is available.
5. No food or drink is to be taken into the practice room. All fans / air conditioners and lights should be turned off when the rooms are vacated.
6. Students are to use the booking sheet to use practice rooms during breaks.
7. Borrowed equipment (CD, guitar, music, drumsticks, etc) must be returned at the end of the period or break.





Practice Tips

Below are some tips for developing effective practice habits.

The following times are for **maintaining current level of progression** and are a minimum requirement. Your individual instructor will advise you on a specific practice program for your ability.

Year 7 & 8	20 – 30 minutes 5 times/week
Year 9	30 – 40 minutes 5 times/week
Year 10	40 – 50 minutes 5 times/week
Year 11& 12	50 – 60 minutes 5 times/week

Routine practice organisation would include the following disciplines:

- Warm ups (body and instrument) – very important to focus on sound, long tones ease into practice.
- Technical skill building – scales and techniques, exercises on the instrument, flexibility etc.
- Specific development – on areas requiring work as specified by teachers eg. range / speed / new position or fingering etc.
- Set works – music / songs / ensemble pieces.

Practice Tips:

- Set a specific time to work and a room without distraction, and use that time and place always.
- Set yourself small goals **each** practice so you achieve something each day.
- **Listen** to yourself – be very critical of your playing and only accept your very best.
- Use a music stand to enable correct posture always.

For More Information

We welcome your input into the operation of the Music Program at Runcorn High and your suggestions and queries will be attended to. Please contact any of the Classroom or Instrumental Music staff, or Ms Phillips Instrumental Music Coordinator jphil35@eq.edu.au for more information.