

# Neutral Bay Public School



## Band Handbook

### **WELCOME TO THE NEUTRAL BAY BAND PROGRAM**

The Band Committee welcomes you to the Neutral Bay Band Program. Together we will endeavour to make being a member of the band an enjoyable musical experience for your children and for you. The information in this handbook has been compiled by the Band Co-ordinators with the advice of music professionals and in consultation with the School Principal. Its purpose is to inform both parents and children about being a member of the Band Program at Neutral Bay Public School.

Through consistent effort and application, children will progress quickly and have fun. The twice-weekly band practices, the excitement of competitions and the pleasure of performing as a team in front of peers and others all contribute to a rich learning experience. The annual Band Camp is often the highlight of the year for the children. It is also an invaluable learning experience – lots of rehearsals and tutorials to improve skills.

Should you have any queries, concerns or suggestions, a member of the Band Committee will be very happy to assist you. We look forward to your family's involvement in the Band Program!

### **WHO CAN JOIN THE BAND PROGRAM?**

#### ***Junior Band***

Anyone in Year 3 or above can join. You don't need any musical experience. Junior Band members usually start in Year 3. Some start later in Years 4, 5 and 6. There is no minimum requirement for Junior Band members. The majority have never played their chosen instrument previously and cannot read music.

## **Senior Band**

Junior Band members can expect to advance to the Senior Band after their first year in band, provided that they meet the audition requirements. Other children, who have played their chosen instrument previously but may not have been part of a band program, may audition for this band. It is also common for children who are already in the band program to be part of senior band for two sequential years. If your child is in his/her second year of senior band he/she will play a key role in the band, gaining the experience, skills and confidence to join Concert Band.

## **Concert Band**

Concert Band is the school's top band. Members generally have at least two-three years' experience with their instrument and within a band program. All band members will be auditioned and required to meet the published audition requirements. (see below)

## **AUDITIONS**

Senior and Concert Band auditions are held at the school at the beginning of each year – usually during the first week of Term 1. Children are asked to perform scales, to sight-read and if they wish may perform a short prepared piece.

**Senior Band** members should be able to recognise and play the following scales:

Flute, Oboe, Lower Brass	C, G, F, B Flat Majors Chromatic Scale 1 Octave
Clarinet, Trumpet, Alto & Tenor Sax	C, F, G Majors & Chromatic Scale 1 Octave
Keyboard, Electric Bass Guitar	C, F, G, B Flat Majors Chromatic Scale 1 Octave
French Horn	C, F, G Majors, Chromatic Scale 1 Octave
Percussion	C, B Flat Majors and Chromatic

**Concert Band** children should be able to competently play the musical scales listed below:

Flute, Oboe, Lower Brass	C, G, F, B flat, D majors, EFlat major Chromatic Scale 2 octaves where possible
Clarinet, Trumpet, Alto & Tenor Sax	C, G, F, D, B Flat, E Flat Major Chromatic Scale 1 octave, 2 if possible

Keyboard	C, F, G, D, B Flat, E Flat Major and Chromatic
Electric Bass Guitar	C, F, G, D, B Flat, E Flat Major Chromatic Scale 1 Octave.
French Horn	C, F, A, B Flat Major, Chromatic Scale1 Octave.
Percussion	Able to tune Timpany; play scales on Glockenspiel/Xylophone; show proper technique for snare drum and other percussive instruments.

### **BAND REHEARSALS**

**All band members must attend every rehearsal as they are an integral part of a team.** If your child cannot attend a rehearsal or a performance, you must advise the Bandmaster or Band Co-ordinator as soon as possible *in writing*.

**If a Band member leaves his or her instrument at home, or it is being repaired, attendance is still required at rehearsal.** It is important every band member is present to keep up with instructions and tuition given to your section and/or to the whole band. It is discourteous and disruptive to the Bandmaster and to the other band members not to attend.

All Band members must bring their music folders and a pencil to each rehearsal. Junior Band members must also bring their Essential Elements book.

### **SET UP AND PACKING UP AFTER BAND REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES**

All students are required to assist with the setting up of band equipment before rehearsal and packing it away again after rehearsal. Each student is expected to help. Set up and pack away should be completed before students attend to the packing and unpacking of their instruments.

Band members are not permitted to leave a rehearsal or performance until **all** of the equipment has been packed away – music stands, chairs, drum kit, etc.

This can be done quickly and easily if everyone co-operates.

### **BEHAVIOUR**

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 discuss appropriate band behaviour with your child.

## **BAND PRACTICE PARENT ROSTER**

Having a child in the band program comes with a requirement to be placed on the parent roster approximately once in each term, at either the morning or the lunchtime session. If the rostered parent does not attend his/her rostered rehearsal the Bandmaster may CANCEL the rehearsal.

Rostered parents mark the roll and provide a supervisory role – they are NOT expected to set up chairs, music stands and equipment. This is the responsibility of band members.

## **BAND PERFORMANCES**

In addition to performing at school functions, the bands are committed to perform at several events outside of school. Currently these include:

- Band Workshop
- Band Camp
- Neutral Bay Public School events
- NSW School Band Festival
- Sydney Eisteddfod
- Inter-School events

Details of these events will be advertised in the Weekly Newsletter and by email from band co-ordinators. Please watch for these notices and mark the dates in your diary!

Band members are expected to be at these events. On the rare occasion when a child is genuinely unable to attend a scheduled band performance, parents are requested to provide written notice to the Band Co-ordinator of their band.

## **SUPERVISION OF BAND ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SCHOOL BUT DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

When a band performance occurs during school hours at a venue outside the school, a signed permission note is required from parents. ***Children who have not returned the required permission notes are not allowed to participate.***

The normal method of travel to and from performances during school hours is by hired bus. Teachers and parents provide supervision. Parental assistance is often requested. If you are able to help, please volunteer. It's fabulous to see the children perform!

Band activities outside the school that are conducted during school hours are subject to the same care and supervision requirements as all other school excursions.

## **CARE OF INSTRUMENTS**

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

specific instrument. Please ensure that instruments are clearly labelled with name, address, telephone number and school. It is also a good idea to make a note at home of the instruments's serial number. Take special care on public transport and in the school playground. Note that exposure to sun (and even the heat inside a car) can damage the case and the instrument.

**Any malfunction of instruments should be brought to the attention of either the Bandmaster, tutors or hiring organisation. Please do not try to repair instruments yourselves** as this can cause irreparable damage.

## **PRACTICE AT HOME**

All Band members have music folders for sheet music, which they are expected to bring to each rehearsal. Regular daily practice of their pieces is essential in order to keep up with the Band. If members fall behind, they may lose interest and feel discouraged. They may also jeopardise the steady progress of their Band.

## **TUITION**

It is a requirement of the Band Program that children attend weekly private tuition outside the Band Program, in order to keep up with the progress of the Band. **Tutors should devote approximately 10 minutes in each 30 minute lesson to Band pieces.** Therefore, it is essential that students take their practice folders and workbooks to their private lessons. It is not the role of the Bandmaster to give individual tuition.

Parents must organise lessons for their children. The Band Co-ordinators and Bandmasters are happy to assist you in locating suitable teachers. Please ask if you are unsure.

## **BAND UNIFORM**

For formal school performances the full winter or summer uniform is to be worn, unless otherwise instructed.

Performance shirts owned by the school will be provided for external competitions before performances. Band co-ordinators will advise details and coordinate this. The shirts are to be returned to your band co-ordinator, unwashed, after the performance. Band members must wear the long navy regulation school pants with the performance shirt. The Band has some long pants that can be borrowed.

## **BAND FEES**

Band fees cover the Bandmasters' fees, costs of Band Camp, sheet music, music stands, hiring transport, competition fees and the general upkeep of band equipment. Direct debit Cheques & Credit Cards only are accepted for payment of fees. No cash payments. **If you would like to discuss another method of payment please contact your Band Coordinator.** We collect fees in term 1, dates will be provided at the beginning of each year.

Band fees are strictly non-refundable if your child leaves the program during the year, as capital expenditure is made annually based on fees paid at the beginning of each year.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT: Expected Behaviour**

- Punctuality** Every band member needs to know the importance of being ready at the right place at the right time.
- Listening** Every band member needs to develop the ability to listen courteously to bandmasters, co-ordinators, teachers, tutors, parents and other band members.
- Co-operation** Every band member should respond positively and respectfully to the requests of bandmasters, co-ordinators, teachers, tutors, etc.
- Conduct** The band members should remember at all times that they represent our school in their behaviour.
- Play only when asked** Band members should always be considerate to other bands, their own band members and all Bandmasters when they are practising, 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. They should show respect for other band members' instruments i.e. "only blow your own horn!"
- Self-discipline** Students are expected to sit quietly and to listen when the Bandmaster is talking to, or instructing, individual members or other sections.
- Dress Code** The Bands represent the school and members need to be responsible and to take pride in their appearance. Band uniforms should be neat and clean and everyone should look their best.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT: Consequences**

While every endeavour will be made to understand and address the causes of behaviour, it is important that when safety is an issue and when the treatment of others is unacceptable, then clear consequences will occur.

- First Warning** The child is spoken to and given a warning by the Bandmaster.
- Second Warning** The child receives a written warning called "*Band: Notification of Concern*" which must be taken home and signed by the parent/guardian. It is then returned to the Bandmaster before the child may participate in the next band practice/performance.
- Third Warning** The child is sent to the Principal and appropriate action is taken. The parent/guardian will be advised by letter or

verbally, either by the Principal or Bandmaster. A parent conference will be arranged. Temporary expulsion from the band may be an option until a workable solution is found.

**Note:** In case of serious breaches of the code the school Principal has the right to summarily dismiss a child from band irrespective of warnings.

## **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

It is the intention of the Bandmasters, Band Co-ordinators, teachers, parent volunteers and school faculty to utilise positive feedback and praise to recognise, encourage and reinforce good discipline and effective learning – as set out in the school's *Student Welfare and Discipline Policy*.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM BAND**

Please advise the Band Co-ordinator and the Bandmaster in writing if you intend to withdraw permanently from the Band.

PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD IS AWARE OF BAND EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR

## **BAND CAMP**

Attendance at the annual Band Camp is compulsory. The special benefit of this weekend is the intensive tuition provided by the Bandmasters and specialist tutors. Recreation, outdoor and social activities are included in the program. The weekend concludes with a Sunday afternoon concert for family and friends. Band camp is a special and enjoyable experience that the vast majority of band members look forward to for weeks in advance.

Please note that band members are expected to attend camp for the entire weekend: children will not be permitted to leave for sporting events, etc.

Parent involvement at band camp is essential and further information about parent duties over the weekend will follow. *It is important to note that the success of the camp is entirely reliant on family members volunteering for roster duty. Without the help of parents, the Band Camp will not succeed.*

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# ***BAND PROGRAM***

## **BAND DECLARATION**

**Please hand this completed section to your band co-ordinator.**

Parents: Please read this handbook with your child. It is important that all members of the bands and their parents/guardians understand the conditions of band membership, and that they sign the declaration below.

I, .....of Year..... and .....Band  
Child's Name

have read and understand the conditions of the Band Handbook. I will do my best to meet those conditions at all times.

Child's Signature .....

I have read the Band Handbook with my child and I understand and agree to the requirements of the NBPS Band Program.

Parent's/Guardian'sName .....  
[please print]

Email .....

Mobile .....

Parent's/Guardian's Signature .....

Date .....

*Thank you for your support and cooperation.*