

# **INSTRUMENTAL TUITION FOR MY CHILD?**

## **A GUIDE FOR PARENTS**

**S.E.L.B. MUSIC SERVICE**

**Who provides tuition?**

The S.E.L.B. Music Service through a team of visiting tutors.

**Which instruments are taught?**

All orchestral instruments, some band instruments, guitar, recorder and class singing.  
Please note that we are unable to offer piano tuition.

**Where do the lessons take place?**

Core teaching takes place in schools but certain lessons are also available in Music Centres.

**Is tuition available in every school?**

One positive outcome from the introduction of charges is that it has been possible to expand the service and be more responsive. Tuition is currently available in every school that has requested it.

**What is expected of the school?**

- to provide adequate accommodation
- to permit pupils to be released from class to attend music lessons
- to back up the work of Music Service tutors

**How long are the lessons?**

Most lessons last for 20 minutes. Some shared lessons may last longer up to a maximum of 30 minutes. Advanced Teaching lessons in Music Centres are for 40 minutes.

**When do the lessons take place?**

During school hours or after school up to 5.00 p.m. Advanced tuition is also offered on certain evenings at each of the three Music Centres.

**Will my child have to miss class to attend music lessons?**

Yes. The school and the parent must give permission for pupils to be released from class.  
Tutors make every effort to rotate the timetable so that pupils do not miss the same class every week.

Occasionally, lessons can be arranged on school premises after school hours.

### **How does my child get tuition?**

- 1 Your child must normally attend a school where tuition is available
- 2 Beginner lessons on certain minority instruments may be available on request at one of our Music Centres.
- 3 Some schools now offer whole class tuition. These 'Pathways' programmes can be an excellent starting point for your child.
- 4 Pre-tuition programmes are often used with potential new starts to highlight basic musicianship skills and introduce the instruments.
- 5 We also continue to offer our 'Listening Quiz' as an initial aptitude test. This is taken in the appropriate year group when there are vacancies.
- 6 Where places are limited, an assessment of the child's commitment to school musical activities can be invaluable in highlighting the level of interest.
- 7 The tutor will carry out an individual assessment in order to assess suitability for the instrument/s on offer.

### **Can my child choose to play a particular instrument?**

We will always do our best to consider particular requests. Do bear in mind, however, that not all instruments are taught in every school. The tutor will assess a child's aptitude for an instrument and will recommend the one to which the child is most suited. In some cases instruments are offered as they become available from tutors' stock and in line with the needs of the school and/or the Music Service.

### **Does my child need to have an instrument?**

If your child is selected for tuition an instrument will normally be provided.

### **What happens if the instrument is lost or damaged?**

This should be reported to the tutor and Portadown Music Centre immediately. You should not attempt to carry out your own repairs. We have our own instrument workshop that deals with repairs and replacements.

### **What is expected of my child if he/she gets a place?**

- regular daily practice
- care of the instrument
- regular attendance at lessons
- commitment to both S.E.L.B. and school ensembles

### **What is expected of me as a parent?**

Give encouragement to your child and support to Music Service and school activities.  
Make sure that daily practice is taking place.

Obtain any music and/or accessories required as promptly as possible.

**How will I know how my child is progressing?**

- Reports are issued annually by the tutor.
- Annual parent-teacher consultations take place at each of the three Music Centres.
- Examinations and ensemble membership are also an indication of progress.

**Do I have to pay for lessons if my child is selected?**

- Tuition costs are subsidised and represent a small percentage of the cost of providing the service.
- Your school pays an annual contributory charge for instrumental tuition and has the right to pass these charges on to you.
- Some schools may be in a position to subsidise tuition costs and so you may experience differences in charging arrangements from one school to another.

You will also be required to pay a fee to the Music Service for any of the following services:

- membership of Music Service ensembles.
- instrument loan and repairs
- examination fees
- theory and aural tuition as required

Please Note:

- centre-based tuition may be available as an alternative to school based lessons, especially in the higher grades.
- music and most accessories must be purchased directly from recognised suppliers as advised by your instrumental tutor.

**Is there any financial help for parents towards fees and charges?**

Families in receipt of free school meals pay a reduced fee for instrument loan and membership of orchestras, bands and ensembles. All parents must be prepared to pay for music, instrument accessories and exam fees. Each school operates its own remission policy to cover the charges for school-based tuition.

**Will my child be able to join a Music Service orchestra or band?**

Yes, depending on successful audition and availability of places.

- Saturday attendance is a vital part of each child's musical development and is compulsory for students in the Advanced Teaching Service.
- Attendance at Junior Ensembles, which take place weekly, from September to March, at each of the three Music Centres is strongly encouraged.
- Every pupil should aim to become a member of a youth orchestra, band or ensemble at some stage.

### **Will there be exams?**

Exams are not compulsory but they are recommended as an excellent indication of progress. The Music Service uses the examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Percussion students may also be entered for Trinity Guildhall exams.

Exams are available from beginner to grade 8 and diploma standard.

Pupils are also prepared for theory exams and for GCSE, AS and A level practicals.

#### UCAS Points

A pass at Grade 6, 7 or 8, in a practical subject or theory, now attracts points within the tariff of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). These points can be used as part of a student's application for places at universities and colleges within the UK.

### **Can my child's tuition be stopped?**

We are always conscious of the demand for places and therefore tuition is carefully monitored to ensure that students are taking full advantage of the service we provide.

Although we try to offer an alternative, tuition cannot be guaranteed if your child moves to a school where tuition is not already provided.

We cannot continue to provide tuition or lend an instrument, if your child moves to a school outside the S.E.L.B. You should approach the new school or E.L.B. about their provision.

### **How will my child benefit from learning to play a musical instrument?**

Research in recent years has helped to clarify what many of us already believed.

Recent research suggests that exposure to music may benefit a child's intelligence and the development of certain parts of the brain.

Learning to play an instrument will teach a child discipline and perseverance.

The rewards come with the very personal sense of achievement when they can enjoy playing a piece of music and entertaining others.

Playing a musical instrument can provide balance in an otherwise busy life, relieving stress and inspiring confidence.

It can be hard work, but playing an instrument is fun and rewarding and playing music with others is a great way to make new friends.