



Instrumental lessons at St Martin's

Be The Best You Can Be

A NOTE FROM THE HEAD OF MUSIC

Dear Parent or Carer

We are delighted to hear that your son or daughter has expressed an interest in learning a musical instrument and hope they continue to pursue this interest not just at St Martin's, but throughout their lifetime.

The benefits of learning to play are endless. Music is a passion for life for many, and the vast majority of adults wish they were able to learn an instrument, or had persevered with learning one. It assists with concentration, breathing, posture, and is a vehicle for self expression and self discipline. It is also a highly social activity – music is a language, and speaks to everyone.

At St Martin's, we have a plethora of musical activities that your son or daughter will be able to benefit from. We are very fortunate to be extremely well-resourced and have the highest standards of teaching. In this booklet, you will be able to read all about the extra-curricular opportunities we have to offer, as well as all of the intricacies that come with learning a musical instrument.

I look forward to welcoming your son or daughter to the music department. In the meantime, I welcome any queries you may have.

Mr M Harris, Head of Music

OUR TUTORS

Ms T Cooper
Violin, Viola, Piano

Ms T Downs
Piano

Ms S Elliott
Voice

Mr A Farrant
Piano, Trumpet, Trombone

Mr S Leggett
Drums and Percussion

Mr R Stokkereit
Guitar

Mrs M Toft
Flute, Clarinet and Saxophone

THE LESSONS

Students can have ten lessons per term (one per week) or five lessons per term (one per fortnight) at a cost of £17 per lesson.

In the event of planned student absence, it is requested that the parent contacts the teacher in advance of the term beginning in order for them to be timetabled accordingly. In the event of unplanned absence (such as illness), it is requested that the parent contacts the teacher as soon as possible – the teacher will undertake to re-schedule the lesson, however this cannot be guaranteed. Refunds cannot be given if the lesson cannot be re-arranged. If a student forgets to attend their lesson, no refund will be given. Parents will be contacted if their child misses multiple lessons per term.

Timetables will be distributed to parents directly from the tutors at the beginning of the term, and students are expected to inform their classroom teachers in advance if they will be missing their lesson. Students must catch up on all classwork missed due to a music lesson. Timetables will also be posted on the notice board in the music department, and on the school website. Students are expected to check their relevant timetable on a weekly basis. Lessons are on a rolling timetable so students will only miss part of the same lesson once per half term.

The importance of regular e-mail communication between parents and teachers should also be highlighted – not only will this allow parents to regularly keep track of their child's progress, but it will also ensure timetables are written to avoid clashes with the student's prior activities (such as a school trip or exam). Students in the Sixth Form should have their lessons during their free periods and these should be arranged directly with the instrumental teacher.

Please direct any queries regarding instrumental lessons to Mr Scates, Performing Arts Technician and Administrator (jscates@st-martins.essex.sch.uk) who will then refer to the Head of Music if necessary.

EXAMINATIONS

If your child's instrumental teacher believes they have made sufficient progress over the course of the term, they may decide they are able to take an exam.

There are a variety of music exam boards, such as ABRSM, Rock School, Trinity and the London College of Music. Different teachers have different preferences regarding which exam board they use, however it must be emphasised that all exam boards are equally accredited and they all provide a sufficient level of challenge. No exam board is more highly regarded than another.

The teacher will use their professional judgement, obtained from their years of experience to decide whether a student is ready for an exam or not. Parents must not overrule a teacher's judgement and enter them for an exam of their own accord, as this will cause unnecessary stress for both the student and teacher.

REPORTS

Your son or daughter's instrumental teacher will issue you with a report, which details their progress and attainment, at the end of each term. This will be sent to you electronically via e-mail.

EQUIPMENT

With the exception of vocal lessons, it will be necessary for the student to own their own instrument so they are able to practice at home. This is essential for brass, woodwind and strings lessons, as they will not be able to use their teacher's instrument in their lesson.

Instruments can be costly, however the Essex Music Education Hub offers an instrument hire scheme enabling students to hire a good-quality instrument for an extremely reasonable price (roughly £30 per term). The Hub will also deliver the instrument directly to St Martin's. For more details, see here:

<https://www.essexmusichub.org.uk/site/parents-carers/instrument-hire/>

Students should also bring a pencil, notebook and their sheet music to each lesson, as well as any equipment specific to their instrument (eg. a reed for a clarinet).

PRACTICE

In order for students to make good progress and achieve highly on their instrument, daily practice is essential. The following amount of daily practice is recommended:

Pre-grade 1 standard: 10 minutes

Grade 1-2: 20 minutes

Grade 3-4: 30 minutes

Grade 5: 40 minutes

Grade 6: 60 minutes

Grade 7: 80 minutes

Grade 8: 100 minutes

PRACTICE ROOM PASSES

Students that have music lessons at St Martin's are entitled to a Practice Room Pass – this enables them to use the practice rooms in the music department before school, after school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes to practice their instrument. Passes can be obtained from a member of music staff. Students must have their practice room pass on them at all times to ensure access to the practice rooms.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

At St Martin's we have a rich musical extra-curricular programme on offer, with three clubs/ensembles taking place each lunchtime. All students receiving instrumental lessons at the school are expected to contribute to the department by being members of at least one of these.

Our current programme is as follows:



Extra-Curricular Programme – 2021-22

Monday

Production Rehearsal – Mr Harris – Room C001 – **Lunch**
Percussion Ensemble – Mr Leggett – Room C002 – **Lunch**
Brass Ensemble – Mr Farrant – Room C006 – **Lunch**
Steel Pans – Mr Williams – Room C002 – **After School**

Wednesday

Senior Choir – Mr Harris – Room C002 – **Lunch**
AV Tech Club – Mr Scates – Room C006 – **Lunch**
Jazz Band – Mr Bates – Room C002 – **After School**

Friday

Ukulele Ensemble – Oliver Grimes – Room C001 – **Lunch**

Tuesday

Junior Choir – Ms Elliott – Room C002 – **Lunch**
Music Technology Club – Mr Williams – Room C006 – **Lunch**
Production Band – Mr Harris – Room C002 – **After School**

Thursday

Production Rehearsal – Mr Harris – Room C001 – **Lunch**
Guitar Ensemble – Mr Stokkereit – Room C002 – **Lunch**
Concert Band – Mr Harris – Room C002 – **After School**

Lunchtime ensembles run from **1.40pm-2.00pm**. After school ensembles run from **3.30pm-4.00pm**.
When free, **Room C006** can be used by GCSE and A Level Music students to work on coursework.

PAYMENT

Lessons are priced at £17 per lesson, and students are able to have ten or five lessons per term. Lessons are booked on a termly basis, although if your son or daughter is already having lessons, there is no need to submit another application form.

Parents or carers will be sent an invoice before the beginning of each term to inform them that payment is due, and no lessons will take place until payment is received. Invoices will be received at least two weeks before the end of the previous term, and payment for the next term's lessons will be due one week before the end of the previous term. Should this deadline be missed, your son or daughter's provision may be in jeopardy.

Once lessons are committed to and timetables have been made, **refunds will only be given in the most extreme of circumstances**. This is in order to protect the integrity of our teachers, and ensure they are remunerated for the time they have set aside to teach your son or daughter.

PUPIL PREMIUM

Students on the Pupil Premium register are eligible to have free music lessons at St Martin's. If your son or daughter is on the Pupil Premium register and you wish for them to have instrumental lessons at St Martin's, please ensure you select this option on the application form.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss your son or daughter's eligibility for free music lessons, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Harris, Head of Music.

TERMINATION OF LESSONS

Should your son or daughter no longer wish to have lessons at the school, we request that you inform the relevant teacher and the Head of Music via e-mail with at least half a term's notice. This enables us to offer the space to another student, should there be a waiting list.

KEY DATES 2021-22

It is also expected that students learning an instrument at St Martin's contribute to our regular concerts and performances, some of which are in collaboration with the Drama department. Below is a list of events that we intend, but do not undertake to produce due to the current COVID-19 situation:

Wednesday 6 October – Young Soloist of the Year

Friday 12 November – St Martin's Day

Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 December – Christmas Concerts

Friday 14 January – Year 10 Showcase

Tuesday 8, Wednesday 9 and Thursday 10 February –
Upper School Production

Wednesday 23 March – Spring Concert

Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 June –
Lower School Production

Wednesday 29 June – Summer Concert

THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Mr M Harris

Head of Music

mharris@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

Mr A Williams

Teacher of Music

awilliams@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

Mr C Bates

Teacher of Music

cbates1@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

Mr J Scates

Performing Arts Technician and Administrator

jscates@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

The department is housed in the purpose-built Creative Arts Building towards the north of the St Martin's campus. We have three teaching rooms, including one newly-upgraded iMac suite, a recording studio and four practice rooms all containing pianos.

The department is extremely well-equipped in terms of instruments, and all computers are running the latest software (Logic Pro X, Sibelius).

APPLICATION FORM FOR INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS AT ST MARTIN'S SCHOOL

Please note, for lessons to start the following term, the deadline for submitting this form is always three weeks before the end of the previous term.

Student name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Instrument: _____

Please select: 5 x 30 minute lessons (£85 per term) [☐]

10 x 30 minute lessons (£170 per term) []

Pupil Premium – 5 lessons per term []

Pupil Premium – 10 lessons per term []

Signed: _____

(Person with parental responsibility)

Print name: Mr/Mrs/Miss

Date: _____