

Connect Charter School Band Handbook



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Connect Charter School Band Program

Welcome!

Welcome to Connect Charter School Band Program! We are very excited that your child has a passion for music, and we get to explore it with them. Our long term goal is to capture and develop their passion for music and to create lifelong music lovers. Whether they play an instrument throughout their life or invest time during middle school we hope to instill an appreciation for music.

This handbook has been created to help you get familiar with the band program. If you have any questions throughout the year please do not hesitate to contact me. The best way to reach me is by email or phone.

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Band Class Structure

Students can be in band in grades 6-9. Music at the grade 6 level is mandatory according to the Alberta Learning grade 6 curriculum. Band is compulsory for all grade 6 students and becomes an option for all grades 7-9 students.

Grade 6 Band occurs every other day in the schedule. Each class is 40 minutes.

Grade 7-9 Band (HONOUR BAND) meets every Tuesday for 60 minutes.

Throughout the year, each band will be given many exciting opportunities to develop their musical skills. Band Workshops, Concerts, Festivals, and Band Camp are some examples of activities the bands participate in throughout the year.

Course Topics

Some of the topics the students will cover in beginner grade 6 and 7 Band include:

- Instrument care and maintenance
- Proper playing position
- How to create and maintain a warm sound on their instrument
- Fundamentals of music
- Detailed rehearsal of music
- Proper practice techniques
- Playing as a soloist and an ensemble
- How to prepare and perform for an audience
- Basic music composition and arranging

Band becomes an option at grade 7 so students can decide whether to pursue the study of their instrument for another year, or switch to another instrument such as a percussion instrument. If a student has enjoyed band, but not their instrument, they can discuss changes with the teacher at the end of their grade 6 year. It is not recommended to change instruments because grade 7 students start at the second level of band, but some exceptions are made depending on the situation.

Honour Band is an option at the grades 7, 8 and 9 level. Students have played their instrument for at least a year. Students will take band class with their grade level and we will combine the grades for various performances throughout the year. **Some extra rehearsals can and will be required and it is, therefore, necessary that all students attend every rehearsal. Any extra rehearsals will be posted well in advance so that students can arrange transportation.**

Some of the topics the students will cover in Honour Band include:

- Instrument care and maintenance
- Proper playing position
- How to create and maintain a warm sound on their instrument
- Fundamentals of music
- Skill development

- Advanced rehearsal of music including section leaders
- Effective practice techniques
- Playing as a soloist and in an ensemble
- How to prepare and perform for an audience
- In-depth study of various styles of music (such as Concert Band, Instrumental, Jazz, Swing, Blues, Classical, and Classic Rock ect)

Band Activities

Below is a tentative schedule for the students. Detailed information will be sent home through email closer to each date.

Students must attend **all** performances by the band during the school year as they are considered in their performance and participation grades and are important to the success of the program.

Grade 6 Concert Band	Dates	Activity
	August 28, 2019	Head Start Beginner Band Workshop
	October 9, 2019	Fall Band Workshop
	December 5, 2019	Winter Concert
	April/May TBA, 2020	Calgary Performance Arts Music Spring Festival
	June 10, 2020	Summer Concert

Honour Band		
	September TBA 2019	High School Tour
	October 28,29, 2019	Band Camp @ Camp Chestermere
	November 7, 2019	Remembrance Day Assembly
	November TBA 2019	Spruce Meadows Christmas Market Performance
	December 5, 2019	Winter Concert Rehearsal all day Concert @ 7pm
	December 14-18,2019	Peace Festival Week
	April TBA 2020	Calgary Performance Arts Music Spring Festival
	June 10, 2020	Summer Concert

Sign-Up / Instruments

At the end of the year, grade 5 students are able to explore a variety of instruments available for them to play in grade 6. Students will then select their top three choices, with preference given to their first choice, where possible. Careful consideration from both the teacher and the parents is considered for both budget and to develop a balanced band. After several weeks of play, instrument changes may be considered to better suit the needs of a student's physical ability.

The Instruments that are available to choose from for Beginning Band are the:

- Flute
- Clarinet
- Bass Clarinet
- Alto Saxophone
- Tenor Saxophone
- Trumpet
- French Horn
- Trombone
- Baritone
- Tuba

Some students also begin to challenge themselves and start to learn more advanced instruments, such as percussion, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, and/or baritone saxophone. These changes will be discussed between the teacher and students prior to the school year.

Percussion instruments are assigned very carefully starting in grade 7 Band. Beginning band students are encouraged to play one of the above woodwind or brass instruments before introducing another instrument to the band. Percussion performance will be determined on a variety of factors: involvement, training, and commitment. **Parents are required to supply an instrument for their child no later than the first week of school in August.**

Instrument Rental Programs

There are many places to get an instrument. St. John's Music and Long & McQuade have RENTAL programs that include the option to rent or rent-to-own a new or used musical instrument. The school will rent out instruments, on a first come first serve basis, at a cost of \$200.00 for the year. Transportation of these larger instruments can be challenging, but not impossible. Of course, any instruments that may be already in the family can be used. Please determine that the instrument is in playable condition. An instrument that does not work will not be acceptable because the student will not be able to practice or perform with a good tone quality.

Band Program Expectations

1. Behavior standards are expected to be adhered to in band class and on band field trips. These behavioral guidelines are outlined in the Connect Charter School Student Handbook.
2. Students must be prepared for every band class. They must have their instrument, music, method books, pencils and instrument supplies (reeds, valve oil etc.). In the event that a student forgets their instrument, participation is still required. They may be able to use a spare instrument or be assigned another band assignment.
3. Students are asked to bring only the required supplies to band. Extra supplies such as binders and textbooks are to be put in their locker before they come to class.
4. Students are asked not to chew gum or candy when they are playing their instrument. Sugar and food particles will eventually ruin the instrument. If band occurs after lunch or recess, students are asked to please rinse their mouth out prior to coming to class.
5. Students' instruments are very personal. The utmost respect towards your instrument and other students' instruments is essential. Students are asked to only play their instrument. Percussion students are the only students allowed to use the percussion equipment.
6. Students are to be in their seat, warmed up and ready to play when class begins.
7. Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts is mandatory for the benefit of the student and the entire band.
8. Students are expected to review music and practice music exercises at home. They are expected to complete and hand in a monthly practice sheet.
9. Students are expected to have a clean and pressed band uniform for performances.

Home Practice

Practicing at home is essential in all grade levels. Please encourage your child to practice at home by providing them with a quiet, private space to work. Having a music stand at home also helps create proper posture while playing. Students are expected to practice at home and rehearse in class. This concept makes for a

better learning environment and improves the quality and overall sound of the band. Practice times always vary throughout the year but here are a place to start:

Grade 6 and 7 students should aim to start practicing for 10-15 minutes per day.

Grade 8 and 9 students should aim to start practicing for at least 20-30 minutes per day.

Practicing can and may include:

- Breathing exercises
- Buzzing through the mouthpiece for brass players
- Fingering along while reading the notes in the music
- Clapping the rhythms
- Singing the music
- Playing the required musical excerpts/songs

Students are assessed on their practice at home through a practice journal. Students are asked to hand it in at the end of the month after their parents have looked it over and signed it. They must also remember to pick a new one up. There is a mailbox to drop off the completed journal and pick up the new month in the classroom. Practice calendars will start in October. The first practice calendar is included in this package.

Band Uniform

All band students are to wear a similar uniform for performances. Every student is required to supply his or her own band uniform. The band uniform consists of black pants, black socks, black shoes and a white long-sleeved collared shirt. Students may choose to wear a black skirt that is knee length or longer and black tights, black shoes and a band uniform shirt. A band sweater vest is supplied and will be used for various performances throughout the year. The band sweater vest will be handed out for performances only and is not to be taken home.

Instrument Property Care

If there is any damage to the instrument, it is important to repair it. Please bring it to Mr. Bolen first to see how minor or major the repair may be. Proper tools to repair

or replace the part/key can be used to fix minor problems, however; a professional should handle all major repairs. Repair costs are the responsibility of the students, except in the instance of the low brass instruments rented from the school.

One very important rule in band class is that an instrument that belongs to another student or to the school should only be handled or played by the appropriate student. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT PLAY AN INSTRUMENT THAT BELONGS TO ANOTHER STUDENT.** Every year, students have had to pay for "accidents" (broken reeds, key bent, etc,) to other students' instruments, which can be avoided by following these rules in and out of the band class. Any band student who deliberately damages an instrument belonging to the school or someone else will pay for all damages and may be dismissed from the band program.

Band Assessment

The learning management system used will be Fresh Grade.

All band students will be assessed for the full year in the following ongoing ways:

1. Daily classroom playing progress. Students will post their playing test recordings to Fresh Grade for assessment.
2. Skill Development on their instruments – students are asked to perform scale studies or technical exercises for their teacher privately and/or in class. They may also record and submit these to Fresh Grade.
3. Concert etiquette – wearing a complete uniform to concerts and appropriate behavior during concerts (no cell phones etc.)
4. Theory assignments, including music theory, rhythm dictation and ear training completed in work books and on the ipad.
5. Playing assignments – students are asked to perform excerpts from their music for their teacher privately or in class. They may also record and submit these to Fresh Grade.

Students are expected to complete their playing tests and recordings on time. Should students not be able to complete assignments, parents are to contact the teacher to communicate a legitimate reason. Failure to complete work without communication will result in teacher connecting with parents/guardians to discuss an action plan to get the student work up to date.

Band Instrument Supplies

Supplies that all band students need to be successful throughout the year will include:

- Pencil
- Instrument
- Instrument supplies – SEE MATERIAL LIST BELOW

Brass: Valve oil and various cleaning supplies

Woodwinds: Reeds and various cleaning supplies

* All woodwind students that use reeds are required to supply their own reeds.

- Polishing cloth to wipe down their instrument
- Concert Band Uniform
 - Black pants/skirt and black socks/tights/black shoes (needed for concert dress)
- Music folder (supplied by teacher)
- Method Book (supplied by teacher)
- Sheet Music (supplied by teacher)

*Please note that if method book or sheet music is lost or damaged, it is the student's responsibility to replace it and there may be a cost.

Needed Materials and Recommended Materials for Each Instrument

Woodwind

Reeds

Students who play Clarinet, Alto Saxophone and Tenor Saxophone need to provide their own reeds. The photos above show the top three brands of reeds to buy. Beginner students will start on a hardness of 2 ½. As the musician matures, they may prefer a higher hardness of about a 3. Students will need a box of 10 reeds throughout the year. Students are expected to have at least two good reeds in their case immediately, in case one breaks while they are playing. In an emergency, students can buy a reed from Mr. Bolen for \$3.00. It is not always guaranteed that he will have some in stock.

Material needed and recommended supplies for Woodwind Instruments

Required

- Reeds
- Cork Grease
- Instrument Neck Strap
- Cleaning Rod

Recommended

- Cleaning polishing cloth
- Cleaning swab cloth
- Reed case
- Mouthpiece brush

Materials needed and recommended for Brass Instruments

- Required-
- Valve Oil
 - Trombone slide grease

Recommended

- Cleaning Cloth
- Slide Grease
- Mouthpiece Brush
- Cleaning Snake

Materials needed for Percussionists

- Percussion Stick Bag
- 2 pairs of Drum Sticks
- 1 pair of hard plastic mallets
- 1 pair of soft yarn mallets
- Practice drum pad

It is recommended that students have a piano or keyboard at home to practice mallet instruments.

Percussionists need to attend extra percussion sectionals during the year to practice and rehearse on all the percussion instruments

Most music stores carry cleaning supplies and reeds. Long and McQuade and St. John's Music carry the supplies but local music store also have these supplies.

Parent Volunteers

The Concert Bands need lots of volunteers! There are many jobs that need to be done throughout the year. If you are interested, please contact Mr. Bolen at Andrew.b@connectcharter.ca

All volunteers must comply with the Better Impact volunteer registration process. A clearance of the "Agreement to Search and Disclosure" form is required prior to volunteering in the school. However, it is good for five years after you have completed it. We encourage all parents to fill in this form. Band requires a certain number of female and male volunteers and the process does take a while to complete. Therefore, we encourage parents to fill in the forms in case they may want to volunteer at some time in the future.

Band Parent Committee

Parents are always encouraged to get involved in their child's education.

The purpose of this committee will be:

- Enhance the musical experience and broaden the musical understanding of the Connect Charter School students.

- Foster the value of a strong music program in support of the school as a whole, in terms of cross-curriculum expectations, community public relations and community spirit.

- Support a strong band program with the band students, the school, and the parent community, and encourage teamwork, pride, responsibility, self-confidence, social abilities and time management skills.

- To provide experiences to motivate students and build a lifelong appreciation of music opportunities beyond Connect Charter School.