Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning

Strings Handbook

2021-2022

**Wheaton Christian Grammar School**

**Beginning Strings Handbook**

2021/2022 School Year

Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome to the 2021/2022 Beginning Strings Program at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. My name is Mrs. Emily Mittlestaedt and I look forward to being your conductor and teacher this year. In this handbook, you will find all the policies and procedures in order to make your orchestral experience positive, problem free and great fun.

**Parents**

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter the opportunity to be in orchestra this year. They will have the opportunity to experience the joy of making music and mastering new skills. It is essential that we partner together to encourage each student to reach their potential through effective practice. I believe that students who use effective practice techniques become more enthused about playing music and progress more quickly. Let’s work together on this!

Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Students and parents must sign the form and return it by **Tuesday, August 31st**.

I am looking forward to having a wonderful year together, glorifying the Lord through it all. Please feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Emily Mittlestaedt

630.668.1385 ext. 262

emittlestaedt@wheatonchristian.org

**Daily Rules and Procedures**

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules reduce the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurt the entire orchestra.

1. Enter the orchestra room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
2. Quickly get your instrument and music and take your seat.
3. Concert attention will be observed when the director steps on the podium and no further talking will be permitted.
4. Students will not play other students’ instruments. **This includes all instruments including percussion instruments and keyboards.**
5. Orchestra members will have the following at every rehearsal:
   1. INSTRUMENT (with necessary accessories)
   2. BINDER WITH ALL MUSIC
   3. PENCIL (you supply your own)
6. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
7. Instruments MUST be stored in instrument lockers when not being played at school. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT IN HALLWAYS**. If you would like to lock your instrument in your instrument locker, locks are available. Please use WCGS locks only.
8. Practicing is very important. More is accomplished in rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule.
9. Students who do not have their instrument or music for rehearsals or sectionals will have points deducted from their grade.
10. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in rehearsal. (water is OK)
11. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
12. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

**Grades/Points**

Grades are based on an average of assignments, preparedness in Class and Sectionals, and Concerts.

**Beneficial Experiences**

**Concerts/Recitals** – Students are encouraged to attend concerts or recitals featuring their instrument. Concerts and recitals can be very inspirational.

**Private Lessons** – Every instrumentalist should consider taking private lessons on his/her instrument. Although not a requirement, private lessons can be extremely beneficial.

**Fine Arts Solo Recital** – This recital held at WCGS in April is a great opportunity for solos to be played for fellow classmates.

**Sectionals**

All students in Beginning Strings have a scheduled weekly sectional during the regular school day. Since academic classes will be missed for sectionals, IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPSONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK! **It is critical that every orchestra student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of our orchestra’s success.**

**Practice**

All students are required to practice at home. A minimum of 100 minutes per week is required. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 20 minutes, 5 days a week, or 25 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 100 minutes at one time. No practice logs are required but I strongly suggest that students record each day’s practice time for personal accountability. Quality of student practice will be evaluated through assignments and in-class assessment.

**Instrument Care and Maintenance**

All students must have instruments in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This year, Quinlan and Fabish will visit our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs.

**Rehearsal Schedule**

Beginning Strings will rehearse once a week on Tuesdays, from 11:15-11:45am. Always be on time to rehearsals.

**Class Materials/Curriculum**

Each student will be issued a new folder with copies of the music the orchestra will be playing. It is the student’s responsibility to take good care of this folder and have it present at every rehearsal and sectional. Music and folders that are lost are subject to replacement fees.

All Beginning Orchestra students will be working out of a method book entitled *Sound Innovations for String Orchestra*, Book 1. Book may be purchased through Quinlan and Fabish.

**Concert Uniforms**

The concert dress code for Beginning Strings is as follows:

**Girls**: Black blouse, black skirt (see student handbook for appropriate length) or dress pants, black shoes.

**Boys**: Black, collared dress shirt, black dress pants, black belt, black socks, black shoes (NO gym shoes).

**Concerts and Important Dates**

Concerts are mandatory and are to be viewed as a final exam.

Veterans Concert……………………………………………….………………………...……..TBD

Christmas Concert………………………………………………..…Thursday, December 9th, 2021

Music Ministry Performance Day……………………………….………..Friday, March 11th, 2022

Spring Concert……………………………………………………...……Thursday, May 12th, 2022

In addition to concerts, students may choose to be involved in the following events:

ILMEA Concert Orchestra Auditions…………….....………...…virtual submission, deadline TBD

ILMEA Music Festival………………………...…………….……...Saturday, November 6th, 2021

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest……………………....…….…..Saturday, February 26th, 2022

**Beginning Strings Commitment Form**

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Beginning Strings. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2021/2022 school year to the WCGS Beginning Strings.

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Student’s Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

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Instrument

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Student’s Signature

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Parent’s Signature

**Please detach this form, sign and return to Mrs. Mittlestaedt by Tuesday, August 31.**