

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning
Orchestra
Handbook

2019-2020

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning Orchestra Handbook

2019/2020 School Year

Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome to the 2019/2020 Beginning Orchestra Program at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. My name is Mr. David Petersons 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 commitment form and return it by **Thursday, August 29**.

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,

Mr. David Petersons

630.668.1385 ext. 262

dpetersons@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:
 - a. INSTRUMENT (with necessary accessories)
 - b. ALL MUSIC
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.**
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 student participation and preparedness in Class and Sectionals, Concerts, and SmartMusic assignments.

This is the percentage breakdown of the student's orchestra grades:

- 45% - Playing in rehearsals
- 20% - SmartMusic assignments
- 20% - Playing in sectionals
- 15% - Playing in 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 Orchestra have a scheduled weekly sectional during the regular school day. Since academic classes will be missed for sectionals, **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK!** The only exception for missing a sectional is if a teacher is giving a test during that period in class and it cannot be made up at another time. **It is critical that every orchestra student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of our orchestra's success.**

SmartMusic Practicing System

All students are required to practice at home several times a week. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. This year, we will again use the SmartMusic computer program. Each student is **required** to purchase a subscription and enroll in the SmartMusic program. The cost for a one-year subscription is \$40.00. Periodic assignments and playing tests will need to be completed and submitted throughout the year. We have several SmartMusic stations in the music department that are available for student use. Students who do not have access to a computer at home may submit their assignments at school either during orchestra rehearsal, during study hall, before school, or after school. To register, go to www.smartmusic.com where you can subscribe and download the program. Once you have downloaded the program, you can enroll in Beginning Strings for the current school year.

Practicing

All students are required to practice at home. 100 minutes per week is suggested, but not 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. However, instead of recording amounts of time on the practice sheet, students will be demonstrating their practice effectiveness on Smart Music tests. The goal is not quantity of practice, but quality of practice. Time will be spent in class discussing effective and efficient practice strategies.

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 Orchestra will rehearse twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11:15-11:45pm. Rehearsals will then continue through the end of school year. Always be on time to rehearsals.

ParentsWeb

Assignments and progress will be posted on ParentsWeb. Grades are based on: Student participation and preparedness in Class and Sectionals, Concerts, and SmartMusic Assignments. **Students and parents can access the exact assignments, as well as grades for submitted assignments by checking ParentsWeb. ParentsWeb is the best way to check a student's progress.**

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.

Price: \$8.99

Concert Uniforms

The concert dress code for Beginning Orchestra is as follows:

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

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

Concerts and Important Dates

The concerts and events listed below are mandatory. These events are to be viewed as a final exam.

Christmas Orchestra Concert.....7:00pm, Thursday, December 12, 2019
Spring Orchestra Concert.....7:00pm, Thursday, May 7, 2020

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

Fine Arts Solo Recital.....Monday, April 20, 2020

Beginning Orchestra Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Beginning Orchestra. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2019-2020 school year to the WCGS Beginning Orchestra.

Student's Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Instrument

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign and return to Mr. Petersons
by Thursday, August 29.**