

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning
Band
Handbook

2019-2020

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Beginning Band Handbook

August 27, 2019

Dear Band Members and Parents,

I am really looking forward to working with the Beginning Band students this school year. It is my desire to work with each one of you in creating the best sounding band we can be. In this handbook you will find my policies and procedures of the band program as well as information concerning this school year.

Parents

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter the opportunity of playing a band instrument. Playing in a band is a unique experience like nothing else. It is crucial that I have the support of parents as we partner in training your children in becoming great musicians. Please encourage your children in the area of practicing. Being an instrumentalist for over 49 years I know that the only way to improve as a musician is to spend time practicing. A musician's expertise on an instrument is directly proportional to the time spent practicing – it's as simple as that!

Response

Please read through the following information very carefully. Students and their parents must sign and return the attached sheet by Friday, August 31.

I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Sincerely,

Mr. David Wright
Director of Bands

Discipline

Band by its very name suggests oneness, teamwork, ensemble, and cooperation, with everyone striving for a common goal. This all comes at a student's life when individual identity is desired. As Christians, we all recognize the importance of working together cooperatively, for one goal – bringing glory to God. A very small number of students find they cannot make this kind of sacrifice and become disruptive discipline problems in the band rehearsal. These students will not be allowed to affect the quality of learning taking place in class. Continued problems will result in that student being removed from rehearsal, and ultimately dismissed from the instrumental program. Consequences may include a one on one conference with the director, after school detention, call to parents, and a reduction of the student's daily grade. Band members need to accept *responsibility* for their actions, good or bad. Students should be looking to glorify God and work toward the success of our band program.

Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules are responsible for reducing the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurting the entire band.

1. Show respect to your band director and your peers.
2. Enter the band room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
3. **BE ON TIME!** Students are considered late to class if they are not **in their seats, instruments ready, music on their stands, and ready to play** by **11:17 a.m.** Class begins at 11:15 a.m.
4. Students will not play other students' instruments. **This includes percussion instruments and keyboards.**
5. Band members will have the following at every rehearsal:
 - a. INSTRUMENT (with the necessary accessories)
 - b. ALL MUSIC
 - c. PENCIL
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 ON THE BAND ROOM FLOOR OR IN HALLWAYS!** If you would like to lock your instrument in your instrument locker, locks are available. Please use WCGS locks only.
8. **Practice, practice, practice!** More is accomplished in band rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule.
9. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in the band room or practice rooms. (water is OK)
10. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

Grades/Points

Grades are based on progress that includes at-home practicing (Practice Records), rehearsals, concerts, SmartMusic assignments, and sectionals. Points are accumulated for each activity listed above. All students are required to practice at home. A minimum of 100 minutes 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 30 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 60 minutes at one time.

This is the percentage break down of the students' band grades:

- 40% - Playing in rehearsals
- 20% - Playing in sectionals
- 25% - SmartMusic assignments
- 15% - Playing in concerts

Sectionals

All students in Beginning Band have weekly scheduled lessons (sectionals) during the regular school day. Since some academic classes may 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 band student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of the student's and our band's success.**

Rehearsal Schedule

Beginning Band will rehearse twice a week on **Wednesdays and Fridays, from 11:15-11:45 a.m.** Since students will not have their instruments during the first 1-2 weeks of school, I will be teaching them the fundamentals of music, including reading notation, rhythms, musical terminology, etc., during rehearsals. Instruments will be slowly added to rehearsals as the students become more proficient in their playing. At the beginning, most of the work learning the instruments will be done during sectional lessons. We will continue to work progressively through the method books at weekly lessons. If you know you will be out of school on a particular day, please see Mr. Wright ahead of time to cover what you will miss.

SmartMusic Practicing System

The SmartMusic computer software program is part of our instrumental music curriculum. ***Each Beginning Band student is required to purchase a subscription and enroll in the SmartMusic program.*** Weekly assignments will need to be completed and submitted throughout the year. These assignments will make up 25% of the student's quarter grades. Students who would rather do SmartMusic at WCGS may submit their assignments at school either during study hall, before school, or after school as the computers are available. We have several SmartMusic stations in the music department that are available for student use. If you already have a SmartMusic subscription make sure that you renew your license, update your software to the latest version of SmartMusic, and enroll in Cadet Band for the current school year. If you are new to WCGS, or do not have a previous subscription, go to SmartMusic.com to download the program and purchase a student subscription. SmartMusic is also available as a free app (to be used with a subscription) for the iPad. The SmartMusic subscription rate is \$40.00 per year. Practice rooms are open Monday-Friday from 8:30-8:50 a.m., and 3:30-4:00 p.m. for students to use.

Class Materials / Curriculum

All Beginning Band students will be working out of a method book entitled *Essential Elements Interactive, Book 1*. Books may be purchased through Music and Arts Center.

Prices:

All non-percussion instruments - \$11.50

Percussion – \$18.50

Practice Records

I would like students to keep track of how long they practice each day. Please use the chart inside the cover of your method book to write down assignments and practice times. Even though this will not be graded, it is a good practice to write down times in order to develop good habits and consistency.

Instrument Care and Maintenance

All students' instruments must be clean and in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This includes reeds, mouthpieces, mutes, valve oil, slide cream, cork grease, etc. Music and Arts, Inc. visits our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs. I recommend the following companies for purchasing supplies: Sam Ash Music samash.com (at Main Street and Roosevelt Road in Lombard), Music and Arts Center - musicarts.com (on Irving Park Road east of Rt. 53, Itasca), The Woodwind Brasswind – wwbw.com, Musician's Friend – www.musiciansfriend.com, or Amazon - amazon.com.

Here is a list of accessories each student will need for the proper care of their instrument(s)

Flute - Cleaning rod, flute swab, polishing cloth

Oboe - A minimum of 3 medium strength reeds, Oboe Swab, Cork grease

Clarinet - A minimum of 4 Vandoren 2.5 clarinet reeds, 4-reed holder, Yamaha 4C mouthpiece or similar, Cork grease, Mouthpiece brush, Clarinet swab

Saxophone - A minimum of 4 Vandoren 2.5 saxophone reeds, 4-reed holder, Yamaha 4C mouthpiece or similar, Cork grease, Mouthpiece brush, saxophone swab

Trumpet - Al Cass or Blue Juice Valve Oil, Cleaning snake, Tuning-slide grease, Mouthpiece brush, Cleaning rag, Bach 7C (4th - 5th grade) or 5C (6th - 8th grade) mouthpiece.

Horn - Holton Farkas Mouthpiece Medium Deep Cup, Valve Oil, Cleaning snake, Tuning-slide grease, Mouthpiece brush, Cleaning rag

Trombone - Polishing cloth, Cleaning snake, Cleaning rod, Cheesecloth, Mouthpiece brush, Tuning-slide grease, Conn SuperSlick or Trombotine slide cream, Water spray bottle, Bach 61/2 AL or 5G (7th or 8th grade) mouthpiece.

Baritone/Tuba - Al Cass or Blue Juice Valve Oil, Tuning-slide grease, Polishing cloth, Cleaning snake, Mouthpiece brush

Percussion - Snare / Bell Kit, Stick Bag, SD1, 5A or 5B (7A for Jazz Ensemble) Drum Sticks, Bell Mallets

Concert Dress Code

The **concert** dress code for Beginning Band 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).

Parent Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers for our concerts. We need parental supervision for concerts and people to help tune instruments before performances. Sign-up at Meet Your Child's Teacher Night or email Mrs. Beth Wright at bwright@wheatonchristian.org as soon as possible.

Concerts and Important Dates

The concerts and events listed below are **mandatory** and may not be missed for any reason other than illness or a death in the family. Student's grades for concerts cannot be made up with the exception of illness or death in the family. These events are to be viewed as a final exam. Failure to attend any of these events will cause a drop in the student's quarter grade.

Christmas Band Concert 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 10, 2019
Spring Band Concert..... 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 5, 2020

All Concerts are to be held in the WCGS Commons unless noted otherwise.

Beginning Band Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Beginning Band for the 2019-2020 school year at WCGS.

Student's Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Student's Signature

Instrument

Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign and return to Mr. Wright by
Friday, August 30, 2019.**