



# A Parent's Guide to Music

at

## Gresham's Pre-Prep School



# Peripatetic Music Teachers

## **Violin/Viola**

Mr Keith Hobday  
[khobday@greshams.com](mailto:khobday@greshams.com)

## **Flute + Recorder**

Mrs Sacha Howard  
[showard@greshams.com](mailto:showard@greshams.com)

## **Clarinet**

Mrs Elsabe Ray  
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## **Guitar/Ukelele**

Mr Justin Breame  
[jbream@greshams.com](mailto:jbream@greshams.com)

## **Trumpet/Trombone**

Miss Lynne Roberts  
[lroberts@greshams.com](mailto:lroberts@greshams.com)

## **Piano**

Miss Briony Roper  
[epenfold@greshams.com](mailto:epenfold@greshams.com)

## **Cello/Violin**

Mr Hefin Miles  
[hmiles@greshams.com](mailto:hmiles@greshams.com)



## Music Contacts

### **Music Administrator**

Mrs Fiona Ross  
[fross@greshams.com](mailto:fross@greshams.com)

01263 714626 / 714590

### **Pre-Prep/Prep School**

Miss Lynne Roberts  
[lroberts@greshams.com](mailto:lroberts@greshams.com)

Director of Music  
01263 714584

## Local Music Shops

St George's Music Shop:

17-19 St. Georges Street, Norwich NR3 1AB.

01603 626 414

Cookes Instruments

34 St. Benedicts Street, Norwich NR2 4AQ

01603 623 563

## Introduction

This booklet is designed to help parents as their children embark upon the early stages of learning an instrument at Gresham's Pre-Prep School. It will hopefully answer some of the most frequently asked questions, as well as provide suggestions to aid practice. Individual music lessons are not included in the normal school fees and are considered an extra cost.

It must be remembered that all teachers will have different approaches to teaching, but we hope this guide will be of some general assistance, in particular to those with no musical expertise. If more than one teacher teaches an instrument the same series of books is used as far as possible in order to maintain consistency and continuity. If two children in the same family begin lessons at the same time – particularly in the case of twins – different books may be used in order to discourage too much sibling rivalry! We wish your son or daughter every happiness in their music making.

## Why learn an instrument?

Learning a musical instrument is a gift for life. The enjoyment cannot be underestimated and an instrumentalist can find much satisfaction in playing with other people, often forming strong friendships. Though a little ahead for some of our pupils, the ability to participate in music can open doors when progressing through the Prep and Senior Schools.

The disciplines involved in playing an instrument, such as commitment, organisation and concentration are all transferable to other aspects of life.

Music is regarded as an important part of school life and all pupils are encouraged to participate. Individual instrumental tuition is provided by visiting teachers, and lessons are generally given during school time on a rotating basis. When your child has reached the appropriate level, he/she will be invited to join one of the school music groups.



## How should our child choose an instrument?

Ring or email us for advice or ask for Mrs Lynne Roberts, Director of Music, to call you. If interest in an instrument (e.g. strings) is outside her field of expertise, she will put you in touch with the correct teacher. Often at Pre-Prep level the size of a child's hands is the major factor, followed by reading and counting ability! In some cases, particularly in Reception, children will not have the necessary powers of concentration required to learn an instrument, in which case it is better to wait for another year or two.

You may request lessons by either filling in the form from the school office (for new children) or emailing Mrs Ross.



## How do we acquire an instrument?

There are a number of school instruments available for hire at a reasonable cost per term. Many music shops operate a hire scheme, with the hire price taken off the total cost of the instrument if you wish to purchase it after a period of time. Please consult your teacher for advice before buying an instrument or before embarking on any scheme.



## **Hiring an instrument from school**

If you choose to hire an instrument from the school, it should be looked after and treated in the same manner as a personally owned instrument would be. The school will continue to maintain the instrument during the period of hire and the hire fee will be added to your school bill each term. Parents are asked to let us know in writing if the hire is to be terminated. School instruments are covered by the School's insurance policy whilst kept in the UK only. As pupil's own instruments are NOT covered by school insurance, we do urge you to make sure that any instrument is adequately insured. Please ensure the instrument is clearly named.

## **How much will it cost?**

The cost of hiring an instrument is £20.00 per term for the first 2 terms and £40.00 per term, thereafter.

## **When will the lessons take place?**

We will endeavour to make sure your child has his/her music lesson on the same day each week but not at the same time. This will mean that there is always a full week between lessons but will also ensure that your child is not always missing the same subject.



## **Where should instruments be stored?**

There is provision for secure instrument storage at the Pre-Prep.



## How much will the lessons cost?

The full cost per music lesson is £23 for 35 minutes. However, this can be too long for some pupils and lessons are likely to be shorter. The following will give you an idea of what charges are applicable to a shorter lesson;

15 minutes	£ 9.87
20 minutes	£13.16
30 minutes	£19.74

## How will we be billed for the instrumental lessons?

Over the course of a 3-term academic year, they will undertake to teach 30 lessons to each pupil. Parents are charged for the lessons and sheet music on their end of term bill.

## What happens if my son/daughter needs to miss a lesson?

If your child is ill, it is important to let the Pre-Prep office know that your child will be absent for his/her music lesson and she will pass the message on to the appropriate music teacher. Depending on other commitments, it may or may not be possible to reschedule the lesson. In the case of known absences (e.g. holiday) it is vital that you ask for your child's music teacher to be informed (or inform them yourself) otherwise a charge may be incurred.



## How can we help with practice?

Regular practice is the key to progress on an instrument. Children find it difficult to establish a routine on their own, and parental involvement (including some supervision of your child) can make all the difference.

Encourage your child to establish a regular time for practising so that a routine is established.

When helping your child to practise, do consult the teacher's comments in the practice booklet they will have been issued with, and follow any specific instructions. In the early stages it may be possible to attend one of your child's lessons to see what is being expected. Establishing a good technique from the beginning is the key to success on all instruments. This includes such things as posture, correct bow hold (string players), and embouchure (wind players). Most teachers will adopt a basic format of scales, technical studies and pieces.

Some theory may also be set, although not all music teachers will include this as part of their tuition.

Please ensure that the instrument and the necessary music are bought to school on the day of the lesson.

## REMEMBER - LITTLE AND OFTEN!

4 - 5 practises a week, each of 10-15 minutes in the early stages are adequate. This is always better than one long practice the night before the lesson. Some children will find their instrument physically tiring and will not be able to engage in extended practice. Playing an instrument is hard work and requires a lot of time and patience. Whatever the sounds, always be encouraging and give lots of support - even if you do not play a musical instrument yourself!



A little healthy bribery to practise never goes amiss but be cautious about leaving a child to do 'constructive' practice on their own!

## Will my child have to take grade exams?

Learning an instrument need not mean undertaking a series of exams, but the graded practical exams are a recognised indicator of standard and provide a ladder for learning.

Entering for an exam can:

- Focus the pupil - and parents!
- Motivate a child to do more practice and attain higher standards
- Enable a child to reach the grade 5 standard required for music scholarship to a senior school

Both teacher and pupil should be happy about the prospect of an exam; discussion between all parties is essential. Your child's teacher will advise you when the moment is right. If your child is entered for an exam, please encourage the learning of scales well before the exam!

There should, however, never be any compulsion to take exams; neither should your child be confined to learning purely exam repertoire. Most teachers will offer a variety of pieces.

Exam fees will be added to the end of term billing and all exams. Both accredited exam boards (ABRSM and Trinity/Guildhall) send examiners to examine at Gresham's towards the end of each term.





## What do we do if we have a problem?

Do tell your child's music teacher:

- If there is any change in your personal circumstances that may affect your child's progress or ability to practice.
- If your child is not enjoying lessons and showing signs of wanting to give up.

It may be that a change of pieces is needed, or maybe a change of teacher. Always discuss with the teacher or consult with a member of the music staff before giving the required half term's notice.

Many adults say that they wished they had been encouraged to continue when they were children!



### Do tell us:

- If your child has any medical problems or learning difficulties that may affect his/her playing, e.g. dyslexia, limited arm movements, teeth problems, breathing problems.
- If your child feels unhappy about playing in a school music group.
- If your child feels that the standard is not right for him/her.
- If he/she has not been included in a group and would like to be.

Good communication between teacher, parent and pupil is the key to a good relationship.



## **What individual performing opportunities are there for school musicians?**

During your child's time at the Pre-Prep they will be exposed to a variety of musical genres and instruments. If your child chooses to have instrumental lessons there will be several concerts where your child can perform if they wish to do so. This includes but is not limited to:

- School services
- Assemblies
- 'Mini Maestros' concert

Often music teachers will ask if a child can perform to their class, year group or to the whole school and we are always happy to arrange this.



## **What opportunities are there for group music making?**

Every child here at the Pre-Prep will have the opportunity to learn an instrument within a group setting. During the individual whole class music lessons the children are taught a variety of instruments throughout the year. Currently the instruments include:

Reception– Chime Bars  
Year 1 - Ukulele  
Year 2 - Dood

We also offer a Recorder hobby and have the Pre-Prep Philharmonic Orchestra. Where appropriate, children who have reached a higher standard may be invited to join music ensembles at Gresham's Prep School. Here they gain further experience with playing alongside similar or higher ability pupils.

## Music available to children at Gresham's Pre-Prep School

- Individual music lessons on Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Recorder, Clarinet, Flute, Trumpet, Trombone, Guitar and Ukulele.
- Twice weekly class music lessons including whole class instrumental lessons.
- Weekly hymn practice
- Weekly Pre-Prep Philharmonic Orchestra
- Year-group performances
- Annual 'Upbeat!' instrumental day at the Prep School
- Annual Concert at the Britten Building
- Annual Summer Celebration Concert at the Auden Theatre



## **Live music - do take your son/daughter to a concert!**

Taking your child to hear his/her teacher can be an ideal starting point. There are frequent concerts in the region, and many of the school's music teachers perform regularly in Norfolk and Norwich in such groups as the Academy of St Thomas, the Norwich Philharmonic and Norwich Pops Orchestra.

## **Care of your instrument - some general points**

- **Please ensure that instruments are insured and that both music and instrument cases are clearly named.**
- Instruments should never be left in the sun or by a radiator.
- Do not let other people touch or play your instrument.
- Be careful where you leave your instrument.

## **Stringed Instruments**

- If a string 'goes loose', only tune it up if you are confident about how to do it, otherwise bring it into school to be tuned by a teacher.
- Keep replacement strings in your case in the event of one snapping.
- Never attempt to repair your instrument. (NB: bridges are not meant to be glued on!)
- Always loosen your bow after use and don't apply too much rosin.
- Violinists: check you have removed the shoulder rest before closing the case.

## **Wind Instruments**

- Do not touch any of the screws with a screwdriver - leave it to the expert.
- Always take out the reed out of the instrument when not in use.
- Always keep spare reeds, even if it is an old one that still works.

## **Brass Instruments**

- Keep oil and grease in your case and apply regularly to the valves/slide.
- Avoid pushing the mouthpiece in too tightly.

