



# BEESTON HALL SCHOOL

9<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents,

I do hope that you have had a restful summer and both you and your children are looking forward to returning to school. I know that there will be a variety of questions regarding music lessons and ensembles and I hope that you will find the attached information and documents both encouraging and useful.

Please take the time to read through the below information and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

## **Instrumental and singing lessons**

Lessons will begin in Week 2 and the timetables for the lessons will be on the parent portal, printed in the music school corridor for the children and also circulated to academic staff.

Peripatetic staff will be teaching from specific rooms and will have to adhere to the timetable published to best enable them to teach in different schools, each now with the rigidity of the Covid-19 protocols. Sticking to published timetables is of most importance this term. If for any reason your child cannot make a music lesson, then do please let us know. Without sufficient notice, the lesson is not able to be rearranged.

Each child should have a practice diary in which the instrumental teacher writes what the child needs to focus on for his/her weekly practice. Due to Covid-19, we will be encouraging the children to write in the books themselves during the lessons in order to reduce sharing of resources. Peripatetic teachers will wipe down surfaces between each lesson.

## **Instrumental storage**

Children will not be storing their instruments in their usual storage area and, instead will be storing them in separate year groups. Please see the below table as to where your child's instrument will be kept whilst at school and kindly remind them.

<b>Instrument store location</b>	<b>Year group</b>
Original Instrument storeroom	Year 8
Choir robes room	Year 7
Music tech room	Year 6
Designated areas on the stage in main music room	Years 3,4,5
Pre-prep classrooms	Reception, Year 1 and 2

## **Music practice**

Music practice will take place in year group sessions or boarders 'pods' in order to reinforce the bubble system. Measures have been taken in order to ensure that the music school is a safe but also welcoming environment where the children enjoy spending time and feel that they are able to progress in their chosen musical instrument.

## **Boarders**

Boarders will have timetabled sessions during the morning directly after breakfast between 7.50am and 8.15am. I will assign each boarder that needs to practice the appropriate slots. Senior boarders will also be able to practice during the evening slot at 7.15pm-7.45pm. If they wish to attend at this time then they need to inform me.

## **Day pupils**

Day pupils are encouraged to manage their practice time between designated school sessions and home practice. I would recommend practice sessions of between fifteen to twenty minutes for the younger children and no more than thirty minutes for the seniors. Please discuss this with your child and if you would like your child to sign up for a practice slot here then please let myself and their class teacher know.

## **Music Ensembles**

After much guidance surrounding the restarting of musical groups, I have planned as much of the usual ensemble activity that we offer whilst keeping within effective guidelines.

All ensembles have been risk assessed to ensure that there is enough space and ventilation in order for these to take place. Most ensembles will take place in one of the marquees, sports hall or the music school for much smaller groups.

Do please have a look at the attached ensemble timetable and encourage your child to get in touch with me if they are keen to join any of them.

## **Performance opportunities**

We are fortunate to have enough space to continue to facilitate Informal concerts and a Michaelmas concert at the end of the term, however changing guidelines continue to have an impact. These will be in each separate year group which will have their own individual mini concert. These were to take place in the sports hall, with a limited socially distanced parent audience, but the most recent regulations mean that they will have to be live-streamed to parents. If this were to change, we will contact you to organize a very 'VIP guestlist' for parents to attend, but sadly not possible at the moment.

Given the changing picture I will write again regarding the Michaelmas concert at the end of term.

### **Meet the instruments**

This is annual session usually involves children encountering wide variety of orchestral instruments with parents witnessing the excitement thereof. It will come as no surprise that children spitting down and sharing instruments is perhaps not the best activity at this moment, so the session will involve children from the pre-prep and years 3 and 4 enjoying year group performances, followed by a Q & A session between the teachers and children. Do please ask your children which instruments they enjoyed seeing and listening to and if there were any that particularly captured their imaginations – then pers they will take one up!

If you have any further questions regarding your child's musical progress or if they express an interest in having a taster lesson in a new instrument, then do please contact me. Please do note that parents are not currently allowed in the Music School themselves, therefore I am more than happy to arrange phone or Zoom calls when appropriate.

I appreciate that there is a lot of information to peruse and I will do all that I can in order to assist and encourage your children in their musical endeavors. I look forward to pressing on in the Music School in what can only be described as unusual times. Music throughout lockdown, and now the slightly strange environment that we are in, is such a vital way for children to continue to express themselves creatively.

With very best wishes,

Rachel Casey