

1217. AM/ST. shd/ltp/music

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Headteacher: Miss Z J Linington

Dear Parent/Carer of a Possible Musician!

You are receiving this letter because your child has indicated that he/she might be interested in learning an instrument through our free one year First Access Scheme. The details below provide a little information regarding instrument choices, reasons to learn an instrument, the commitment required by a child and my ideas for a little motivation and encouragement! I hope that you will consider the option and if you/your child is interested then please complete the attached slip and return it by this Friday (9th September).

First Access Scheme

I am delighted to inform you that we will again be extending our invitation to all Year 6 pupils to learn an instrument as part of our 'taster lessons'. Our own 'First Access Scheme' is an extension of the government led initiative in which all pupils are given the opportunity of learning an instrument at **no cost**.

We are pleased to be able to confirm that First Access lessons for this year will be available in:

1. Flute
2. Clarinet
3. Brass (Trumpet/Trombone/Horn)
4. Violin
5. Cello

First Access lessons are given in small groups by visiting instrumental staff and will be around 20 minutes in length (depending on the group size). Lessons are timetabled once a week during the normal school day but are rotated so that pupils do not miss part of the same lesson each week. We provide instruments for the pupils to take home to practise. Some of these have been funded by fundraising, sponsorship and donations; others have been loaned from the County Music Service. Pupils will obviously be encouraged to care for and treat the instrument as if it were their own.

Unfortunately the 'free' lesson element only applies for the first year and therefore any pupils wishing to continue in Year 7 would then pay for lessons in line with the usual Herts Music Service fees (from £68 per term). Free loan of the instrument would however continue.

So, why learn an instrument?

If you were to ask any musician: "Why learn an instrument?" I expect they would all give the same answer . . . "Because it is enjoyable". Such enjoyment could come from the ability to learn and perfect a new skill; playing music for yourself; taking part in a band; performing on stage or many other reasons. For many, including myself, it is a combination of all of these. However the benefits of learning an instrument go far beyond this and indeed much has been written on this subject. Any google search brings up long lists of benefits, such as this one from <http://www.effectivemusicteaching.com/>

Music:

1. Increases memory capacity
2. Refines time management and organisational skills
3. Boosts team skills
4. Teaches perseverance
5. Enhances co ordination
6. Betters mathematical skills
7. Improves reading and comprehension
8. Increases responsibility
9. Exposes to cultural history

10. Sharpens concentration
11. Fosters self expression and relieves stress
12. Creates a sense of achievement
13. Promotes social skills
14. Boosts listening skills
15. Teaches discipline
16. Elevates performance skills
17. Promotes happiness in your life and those around you!

There is nothing better than learning an instrument and for a child I believe it is one that will have a lasting immeasurable effect in their lives!

New Players - Motivation and Practice

Some children are naturally motivated to practise however, the majority will, in the early days need reminding so support from home is very important. From my experience (both as a musician and mum) I think this can be compared to children learning to read. When first learning to read it is a bit of a challenge to persuade a four year old to sit down and 'sound out words' however with time once they can begin to read they go on to discover the enjoyment in books. The same is true of music, it takes a bit of time, but once the basics have been mastered then it becomes much more appealing!

As any existing parents of musicians would tell you, little and often is most definitely key! If you can encourage an initial daily "10 minute practice before TV" type routine then children fall into the habit of practice.

We will help by rewarding children with a credit for each week for regular practice (with their Practice Diary signed) and a further credit for outstanding progress!

So, if your child is interested in learning an instrument, please complete the slip attached and return to the office by Friday 9th September. Lessons will begin next week, w/c Monday 12th September.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me via email (a.mitchell@rsat.org.uk).

Kind Regards



Amanda Mitchell
To: Roysia Middle School

APPLICATION FOR FIRST ACCESS LESSONS

Name of Pupil:	Class:
Instrument (from the list given):	1 ST CHOICE: 2 ND CHOICE:
Signature of parent:	Date: