



Instrumental Music Handbook 2026



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AIMS

The St Thomas More College Instrumental Music Program promotes process-based education in an educational and safe environment. It provides the opportunity for students to develop learning skills, self-esteem and a lifelong involvement in music. The Instrumental Music Program will develop in students the ability to work effectively through such traits as persistence, co-operation, teamwork, responsibility and a positive work ethic that will promote scholarship in other areas of education. Opportunities will be given to students for self-expression and self-discovery in music, fostering a respect for and appreciation of cultural developments, and an awareness of its aesthetic values.

Music enhances the process of learning. The systems it nourishes, which include our integrated sensory, attention, cognitive, emotional and motor capacities, are shown to be the driving forces behind all other learning.

- From *Empathy, Arts and Social Studies, 2000*; Konrad, R.R.

The aims of the Instrumental Music Program are:

1. To provide an opportunity for the musical development of students through instrumental instruction on a private or small group basis
2. To provide ensemble experience for students which will enable them to develop ensemble performance skills as an integral part of their music education
3. To encourage solo and chamber performances by students to develop confidence and independence in performing
4. To develop a sense of artistry, expression, and aesthetic sensitivity through music
5. To support and compliment the whole school music program
6. To engage students in unique learning opportunities that will enable them to develop skills beyond the classroom (e.g., performing with professional artists; writing, recording and publishing their own music)

GOALS

The goals of the Instrumental Music Program are:

1. To offer students the opportunity to explore and develop their musical abilities through playing an instrument and participating in ensembles.
2. To enhance the students' enjoyment of music by enabling them to respond with deeper understanding and sensitivity gained through a knowledge of melodic and rhythmic properties.
3. To involve students by catering to their individual musical ability and needs.
4. To motivate students to explore and recognise a variety of musical literature.
5. To discover the value of music as a mode of expression while at school, in preparation for a lifetime leisure activity or vocation.

PROGRESS REPORTS for TUITION STUDENTS

A progress report for each student will be provided at the conclusion of each semester. The report will include performance musicality, technique, knowledge and understanding, behaviour and attendance as assessed by the instrumental tutor over the course of the semester. If students are working towards external assessments through AMEB, etc., progress and results of these examinations will be the basis for students' reports.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TUITION

Lesson Timetables

1. Lessons are organised on a term basis, with the provision of a minimum of thirty-two lessons per year. The individual Music Tutor will arrange lesson times. Timetables will be issued to each student at the beginning of each Term, emailed to parents and students, and if requested, placed on the Teams Calendar and in Teams Files. It is the responsibility of the student to check their lesson times.
2. Tutors will stamp lesson times into the student's diary for the coming week and will sign their current lesson time, to indicate attendance/absence. This record is also used by classroom teachers to verify lesson schedules and student attendance. Parents are asked to monitor the Student Diary and check their own emails for attendance and lesson time alerts.
3. Although every attempt is made to keep lesson times on the same day from week to week, lesson times often change due to excursions, camps, public holidays, and other College activities. Generally, lesson times will be on a rotational basis, to ensure the same academic lessons are not continually missed. Out of class lessons, if possible, are offered first to Senior students.
4. Lesson timetables are set at the onset of each term and so, if students find their time clashes with something else that they must attend, students are encouraged to negotiate a more suitable time with their Music Tutor as early as possible.

Absenteeism

It is expected that Instrumental Tutors will be advised of a pending absence with the IM Leader included in this email.

In the case of illness, the most appropriate way to indicate your child's absence at a music lesson, is to email the tutor directly and to cc into this email, the IM Leader. Contact needs to be made by 7am at the latest so that the tutor is able to reschedule a make-up lesson.

Lessons missed by students without prior notice or an adequate excuse, will not be rescheduled, with the cost of the lesson forfeited. 24-hour notification is expected for excursions and exams, or at the latest, 7am (on the day) in the event of illness.

Parents will be emailed by the IM Leader if two lessons are missed in succession, without notification.

Fees

Fees are determined in accordance with the Music Teacher's Association of Queensland guidelines and are reviewed annually. The College will charge music tuition fees on College Academic

Fee statements at the beginning of each Term. The following fees are anticipated for 2026, however please note that very slight adjustments may occur.

Music		New rate	Year	Per Term
Individual Lessons	30min	\$ 44.00	\$ 1,408.00	\$ 352.00
Individual Lessons	60 min	\$ 88.00	\$ 2,816.00	\$ 704.00
Group lessons	Group	\$ 30.00	\$ 960.00	\$ 240.00
\$55 for all Ensembles per semester				
Scholarship = 50% off 60-minute Individual lesson				

Once students have reached Grade 3 AMEB or Trinity College level of achievement, they are recommended to have individual lessons. It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for students in 5th Grade or above to have hour-long lessons to achieve the requirements and standards for these advanced levels. Students preparing for examinations or other solo performances will also be required to pay fees for

the examination. If requiring an accompanist, this is to be organised privately and paid for by the student/parent).

An Ensemble fee of **\$55** per semester will be charged to students who participate in any of the College ensembles. This is a one-off semester fee included in Term 2 and Term 3 account fees. The fee covers all ensembles and assists with the cost of music purchase and printing, entries to competitions and festivals, bus hire, score arrangements, etc.

Loan Instruments

St Thomas More College offers hire instruments with first preference given to Years 7 and 8 Music Students. Hire fees for 2026 are stated on the Loan Agreement Form.

1. Hire fees are charged to college accounts or when hiring commences.
2. If a student discontinues lessons or changes instruments, the hired instrument must be returned to the library immediately by the student and signed off in the STMC hire database, by the library staff. Please note: -
 - The Music Department will not cancel or alter the hiring arrangement unless the above procedure has been followed.
 - If an instrument is returned during the academic year, a proportional hire refund will be credited to the College account.
 - Instruments must be cleaned before they are returned.
3. Maintenance - students and parents are reminded that they are responsible for the safekeeping of instruments during the hire period. Please note: -
 - If an instrument is lost or damaged, please inform the IM Leader promptly so that the appropriate action can be taken.
 - Music and books should not be rolled up or jammed into instrument cases – this can damage music and instruments.
4. Instrumental Tutors have been asked to check the condition and cleanliness of instruments each week. Urgent repairs are done during the term, otherwise, general maintenance will take place during the last week of each term. Please note: -
 - Students are expected to clean their instruments regularly, seeking the assistance of instrumental staff in this matter.
 - All students must take their instruments home over the holidays and are asked to take particular care when transporting instruments.
5. The College covers the cost of general maintenance of college instruments; however, parents will be expected to pay for excessive damage and/or neglect, or replacement if the instrument is lost. College instruments in need of repair are to be reported immediately to the IM Leader or to a member of Instrumental staff. Parents and students are requested not to undertake their own repairs or make their own arrangements for the repair of instruments.

Storage

All instruments, when not in use, should be stored in the Music Storeroom, PC 8 or the Music Tutor Rooms. All instruments and instrument cases **are to be clearly labelled with the student's name and year level.**

*The College **will not** be held liable for lost or stolen instruments.

*****Termination of Lessons***

On commencing lessons, students are required to complete a **minimum of one term's study**. Should **parents decide to withdraw their child at the end of a term from instrumental lessons**, it is necessary that such notice of withdrawal be forwarded in writing to the Instrumental Music Leader at the end of that term and not at the start of the following term. Withdrawal from tuition during term time is not permitted except in extra-ordinary circumstances. Notice of withdrawal by the student will not be accepted.

Where notification of withdrawal has not been received by the parent by the end of a term, payment will be required in full for the following term, even if the student does not wish to take the lessons or does not attend lessons. This allows the College to meet its obligations with part-time instrumental staff.

PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLES

Expectations of Ensemble Members

As a member of the St Thomas More College Instrumental Ensemble Program, students are required to adhere to the following terms and conditions:

1. Some ensembles require auditions. This enables tutors to place students in ensembles suitable to skills and stage of development. In some cases, it may be recommended that students are placed in developmental ensembles to work on technique, music reading and confidence.
2. Attend all designated performances and rehearsals. Where attendance is not possible, notification is required to the appropriate Ensemble Director before rehearsal.
3. Failure to attend three rehearsals within one term, without prior notification, will result in a meeting with the Leader of Instrumental Music to discuss continuation within the ensemble.
4. It is expected that all students participate to their full potential during the rehearsal. Full concentration on both the music and the Ensemble Director is expected.
5. Students will be required to practise the music given, in preparation for fluent ensemble rehearsals and to bring all accessories (including music and a pencil).
6. Students must ensure they are seated and ready to start at the designated rehearsal time.
7. Students should arrive 10 minutes before the rehearsal commences, when possible, so they can warm up and prepare for the rehearsal.
8. Co-operation is expected in the setting up and packing down at rehearsals and performances.
9. The student is expected to take care of all sheet music handed out throughout the year.
An ensemble folder is recommended.

Performances

Performance dates are posted to the STMC Calendar.

As much forward notice is given, for students to attend and partake in special events such as,

- school fetes, concerts, festivals, photoshoots, competitions, etc.

Any College commitment must take priority over a commitment with an outside group.

In the event that a student is not able to attend a performance, notification is compulsory (at least one week before the event if possible). It is an expectation that **parents notify the Program Leader of impending absence and not the child.**

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In 2008, St Thomas More College began a bold initiative to strengthen student learning and to engage more students in the Arts program, with the introduction of Instrumental and Performance Music Scholarships.

To support the talent of our student body, the College introduced a Scholarship program for students interested in Performance Music.

In 2026, St Thomas More College will be offering:

- Scholarships at 50% off Individual Lessons to current students who successfully fulfil the audition process and criteria.

In addition, the College will offer in Semester 2:

- 6 x Scholarships at 25% off to incoming Year 7 students who have enrolled in both individual tuition and the Ensemble Program. Applying students will be required to demonstrate commitment to the Instrumental Program.

To assess the applicants equitably and impartially, all students, including those holding scholarships for the current year, those continuing with individual tuition who believe they fulfil the criteria, and those new to the program, should all apply for the appropriate scholarship by the stated date on the form.

**Current and NEW students, in Years 7-12, will be required to fill in the scholarship application form located on our STMC Website and return to Program Leader – Instrumental Music Ms Stacey Comino by email: scomino@stmc.qld.edu.au*

****Incoming Year 7, 2027 student applications will be due Friday 9th October 2026 with auditions to follow in Term 1, 2027***

To be awarded a scholarship, students must:

- have been learning their chosen instrument for a minimum of two years (negotiable for Year 7 students)
- currently be/become involved in STMC Ensembles suited to their instrument selection. Students can be involved in a number of bands/ensembles, but it is a **mandatory** requirement that they are in the ensemble for the instrument for which they receive the full or half scholarship. For example, if a student receives a voice scholarship, they are welcome to be involved in Rock Bands, etc., but they must be part of the Contemporary Choir as a mandatory requirement
- demonstrate regular homework practice
- attend weekly lessons
- represent the College through all **expected performances** including College events such as College Masses and Liturgies, ANZAC Day, the College Musical/Music Event and other concert performances that may evolve through the year, as well as outside festivals and events.
- select Classroom Music for at least one semester

Scholarships are only available for students pursuing the College Individual lesson options. If the student successfully auditions for scholarship, it will cover the following amount based on projected 2026 fees:

- Scholarships at 50% off Individual Lessons

Scholarships are based on 30-minute Individual lesson costs. **The remittance will be paid across four terms (or 2 terms in the case of Year 7 applications).** Scholarships are not available for group lessons. If lessons are suspended after the term of deduction, the scholarship will be revoked, and lessons charged.

COMMUNICATION

St Thomas More College aims to include its parent body in every facet of the Instrumental Program. It is essential that teachers and parents alike support and encourage students in their performances and practising of their musical instruments. Letters and email notification from STMC will provide information and communicate events, student progress and additional information. It is recognised that parental support is essential to the successful running of the Instrumental Program. STMC endeavours to maintain meaningful and regular contact with parents in order to ensure that the needs of our students and their families are met. It is, therefore, paramount that parents/guardians regularly check emails.



Instrumental Music Program - Opportunities

At St Thomas More College, we have the below offerings available for students passionate about playing an instrument or making music.

- Request for Music Tuition
- Musical Instrument Hire Agreement
- Instrumental Musci Scholarship Audition Registration Form

If you are interested, please fill out the application forms on our College website and email the completed form/s through to our Program Leader of Instrumental Music, Ms Stacey Comino, at scomino@stmc.qld.edu.au

NEW students please complete & return these form/s by Friday 9th October 2026.

*For current students, tuition will continue for 2027, unless notified otherwise.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONTACT

PROGRAM LEADER – INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Ms Stacey Comino

St Thomas More College

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PO Box 140 Sunnybank Qld 4109

Phone: (07) 3323 4600 - **Email:** scomino@stmc.qld.edu.au