

SWINDON MUSIC SERVICE
A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CHARITABLE INCORPORATED
ORGANISATION

Swindon
music
Service



PARENTS HINTS AND TIPS PACK

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ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

SWINDON MUSIC SERVICE
THE PLATFORM, FARINGDON ROAD SWINDON SN1 5BJ



BENEFITS FOR YOUR CHLD

Swindon Music Service and Swindon Young Musicians provides a wide range of instrumental and singing lessons, music workshops, after school clubs and rock schools for children and young people across Swindon and the surrounding areas.

Music is an essential part of the fabric of our lives. It is an extremely powerful means of communication, playing a role in many of our social institutions and religious rituals.

Making music can break down cultural barriers and strengthen socialunity. Music making:-

- **Bulids greater social and team skills**
- **Improves reasoning capacity and problem solving skills**
- **improves maths and language performance**
- **Improves memory, concentration, creativity, self esteem and self discipline.**

Practice is far more important than musical ability when it comes your child' success. You can help and encourage them to make the best of their talent.

Dear Parent / Guardian

This booklet contains all of the information you need to know about your child learning a musical instrument.

I am sure you are aware that learning to sing or to play a musical instrument can be an extremely rewarding experience and we hope that this introductory booklet will help to guide you in supporting your child throughout their musical learning.

For more information on tuition and ensembles please visit our website www.smscio.org. If you would like any further information, please contact us at Swindon Music Service.

Peter Clark

Chief Executive Officer



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The benefits of music

Music education, including learning to sing and to play a musical instrument, provides enormous benefits for young people in terms of their intellectual, social and emotional development, motor skills, language, and overall literacy. All children can enjoy and respond to music and everyone can become involved in music making to some degree.

What are the social benefits?

Music for pre-school children can help their transition into primary school

Introducing music to children at an early age can improve their ability to learn and promote sharing, creativity and concentration. These are all invaluable skills when they enter a primary school where they begin to form new friendships and develop social skills.

Learning to sing or to play a musical instrument impacts greatly on personal and social development

Learning to sing or to play a musical instrument can be extremely motivating and provides a feeling of accomplishment when goals are achieved. It improves coordination, motor skills and teaches discipline through regular practice. Music has been shown to increase children's confidence and self-esteem as a result of the encouragement and support from their teacher and by performing in front of peers or an audience. For children who have difficulty communicating verbally, music provides a way for them to express themselves in a non-verbal way. Music is a medium that is both accessible and inclusive.



Here are a few tips

Help your child to get organised

- Make sure your child takes their instrument and music to school, or the music centre, for their lesson on the right day each week.
- If the lessons are on a rota (carousel), ask your child if they know what time they need to be there.
- Get a musical routine going at home
- Practice should be a regular part of your daily child's day routine. Try to have a time set aside for them to practice each day, and try to spend some time with them when you can.
- Daily practice, even for a short time, is better than one long session just before a lesson. Ten minutes may be enough for a young child. Their tutor will be able to give you guidance.

Encourage your child

- Listen to their practice as often as you can, ask them questions about what they're doing and the pieces they're playing.
- Have a practice plan and help your child decide what they want to achieve in each practice time.
- Ask what they did in their lesson and what they're expected to achieve by the next lesson. This helps them remember and reinforce new concepts and new material.
- Many instruments sound far from beautiful when played by a beginner. Children need all the praise and encouragement that you can give them. Make your child feel that you are enjoying their music, and be tactful about any imperfections. Don't expect too much in the early stages.
- Help them practice the whole 'performance' experience - play their exam pieces to friends and family so they get to experience a few nerves and learn how to cope with them.
- Swindon Young Musicians run a range of after school music clubs such as orchestras and rock schools which may interest your child further develop musically.

Have fun

- Try to make practice fun and stop your child loses interest.
- Doing your practice probably won't sound much fun, so talk about playing instead. They'll find it more encouraging and appealing.

The role of the parent / guardian

The role of a parent / guardian of a child learning a musical instrument is extremely important in helping them reach their potential. This can be achieved by:

- Encouraging them to practise at least five days a week and monitoring their attendance at lessons, supporting any feedback from the tutor.
- Allowing them the appropriate space to practise away from distractions such as pets, televisions etc. The ability to concentrate and listen is very important.
- Providing the necessary resources such as music, strings, rosin, reeds, valve oil etc. where appropriate. It is important to provide a music stand or a similar arrangement which allows the child to sit / stand properly. Bad postural habits can affect the child's technique or, if learning a woodwind or brass instrument, their breathing technique.
- Ensuring that you have collected their instrument (if appropriate) before the lessons commence and being aware that it is the child's responsibility to maintain their instrument.
- Having an active involvement in their development and sharing their enthusiasm.



The role of the parent / guardian

Good Practice

Communications:

Communications must be undertaken by parents/carers and not pupils on the parental devices. Ensure that no private chats happen between your child and any tutor or that they share images. Do not allow your child to communicate with any tutor outside of the scheduled session.

Appropriate Language:

As with all communications, the content and language of messages must at all time be professional by all parties concerned. The duration of the lessons should be kept to a reasonable length in order to allow the family to 'get on' with their day.

Suitable Teaching Environment:

Both pupils and tutors must be physically located in safe working spaces, appropriate for online lessons; a lounge or study is appropriate, a bedroom or bathroom is not. Parents should ensure that their child is in a room with, or near, an adult and that the adult can hear and see the lesson taking place. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that this happens.

Professional Standards:

Online classrooms must be regarded as an extension of the physical classroom and the safeguarding expectations that pertain to this, such as, professional communications, attire, and language.

Adult Supervision:

The tutor should confirm at the start of each lesson that an adult is in close proximity to the pupil with you. If you cannot ensure that an adult is available at the pupil's home, the lesson should not go ahead.

Professional Appearance:

Pupils and tutors should be dressed appropriately for remote teaching.

Safeguarding:

Parents/carers should ensure tutors wear a badged lanyard at all times during the lesson. Parents should check with Swindon Music Service that the tutor has an up-to-date DBS check. SMS tutors are checked every three-years

The role of the student

Learning to sing or to play a musical instrument can be an extremely rewarding experience that requires commitment and consistent practice. The student should be prepared to:

- Practice at least five days a week as recommended by their tutor.
- Attend lessons with the appropriate equipment and music.
- Participate in school and ensemble activities appropriate for their level where available.
- Maintain their instrument as instructed by their tutor if appropriate.



Lessons

Our team of specialist tutors deliver lessons both in school or at the music centre.

Below is a guide of appropriate staging ages for various instruments.

String	Woodwind	Brass (Y 3+)	Other
Violin (Y1+)	Flute (Y3+)	Trumpet / Cornet	Percussion (inc. Drum Kit (Y1+))
Viola (Y1+)	Oboe (Y3+)	French Horn/Tenor Horn	Keyboards / Piano (Y1+)
Cello (Y1+)	Clarinet (Y3+)	Baritone	Singing (Voice (R+))
Double Bass (Y3+)	Bassoon (Y3+)	Euphonium / Tuba	
Guitar (Y2+)	Saxophone (Y3+)	Trombone	
Ukulele (Y1+)	Recorder (R+)		

The delivery of a block of 10 lessons is guaranteed. Should the minimum of 10 lessons not be delivered due to tutor unavailability, a pro rata refund or credit at the end of the block of 10 lessons will be made.

Applying for lessons

Lessons can be applied for via our online registration system on our website. Should you need any assistance in applying for lessons, please contact: Lynn Hawkins **T:** 07395887191 **E:** lhawkins@smscio.co.uk or

Fees

Fees are published annually and are available to view online at www.smscio.org

Payments

You will receive an invoice prior to the beginning of the 10-week block of lessons. The payment of lessons and instrument hire can be paid to Swindon Music Service by credit/debit card payment by phone or online through Parent Mail, or by bank transfer. You will receive details of these payment methods along with each invoice.

Terms & Conditions

For full terms and conditions for on-line tuition can be see the **website:** www.smscio.org

Remissions

Income Support

Where a family is in receipt of income support there is a discount of 60% to access Swindon Music Service's provision, please contact us for a registration form or download a form at www.smscio.org. This provision is limited to lessons and associated instrument hire on one instrument whilst funds are available.

Swindon Music Service will need verification whether the parent/guardian is in receipt of income support.

Bursaries

A limited fund is available to provide support to families who would not otherwise be able to access provision.

If you have any queries regarding payment or remissions, please contact:

Lynn Hawkins **T:** 07395887191 **E:** lhawkins@smscio.co.uk

Cancellation of Lessons

As per our Cancellation Policy, should you wish to withdraw your child from lessons, written notice is required before the end of the 10-week block if you wish tuition to cease. Notification must be received in writing to: **Swindon Music Service, The Platform, Faringdon Road Swindon SN1 5BJ or by email: lhawkins@smscio.co.uk.**

Contacting your Tutor

Parent communication with tutors is channelled through the Admin office. We encourage parents not to contact tutors directly, until we have permission from both the parent and the assigned tutor to exchange email addresses in accordance with GDPR rules and procedures.

Tutors' contact should only be made through their business email address and not their personal email address.

Quality assurance

Our tutors are all quality assured by Swindon Music Service Management team. Should you have any queries regarding a tutor please contact:

LynnHawkins
SYM Artistic Manager
T: 07395887493
E: lhawkins@smscio.co.uk

Additional tuition

Students receiving lessons through Swindon Music Service are advised not to receive additional tuition from another tutor/teacher on the same instrument. There are no benefits to having an additional tutor/teacher and it is important that you are aware of the issues that can arise if you choose to do this. Each tutor/teacher has an individual approach to teaching and therefore learning with two specialists can be very confusing for the child and may hinder progress.



Care of instruments

Musical instruments are fragile and expensive, it is the child's responsibility to maintain their instrument. We would recommend that you:

- Ensure that the instrument is treated with care at all times as directed by the tutor and, if on loan, is returned in good condition when requested.
- Allow the instrument to only be used by the student to whom it belongs.
- Ensure that space is made available for the safe keeping of the instrument, when it is not being played it should be kept in the case.

Hire

Instrument hire is available through the Swindon Music Service Hire Service, parents are required to collect and return the instrument from/to the SMS office at The Platform, Faringdon Road, Swindon SN1 5BJ. For more information on Instrument hire, ask for the separate brochure: **Instrument Hire** or visit the website: www.smscio.org

Buying an instrument

If you are considering buying your child a musical instrument, we strongly advise that you speak to your child's tutor who will advise you which instrument is best for your child. Our tutors are specialists in their field and have a vast knowledge on the appropriate make and price of instruments suitable for the level of your child.

The Swindon Music Service Instrument Hire Service sometimes offers second hand instruments for sale at low prices. An Assisted Purchase Scheme is also sometimes available. Through this scheme the service purchases the instrument of your choice, you then repay the service interest free over an agreed period of time. The instrument remains the property of Swindon Music Service until all payments have been made. Should you move to live elsewhere away from Swindon all outstanding costs must be completed. This scheme is available to all students in receipt of a lesson through Swindon Music Service and in full time education in Swindon.

If you have any queries regarding instrument hire or buying an instrument, please contact:

Summer Scotford: **T:** 07395887493 **E:** sscotford@smscio.co.uk

ABRSM, Rockschool & Trinity College examinations

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and Trinity College London offer music examinations. These examinations provide a progressive system of assessments ranging generally from Grade 1 to 8 and are recognised as international benchmarks of achievement valued by teachers and music institutions all over the world.

To read more about ABRSM, ABRSM Music Medals, Rockschool and Trinity College London examinations please visit the links below:

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

www.abrsm.org

RSL Rockschool

www.rslawards.com

Students may be invited to enter for an examination by their tutor when they have reached the appropriate level of skill and technique on their instrument.



Opportunities

Playing in ensembles, bands and orchestras is an integral part of a student's musical development, as they are a fun and social way to greatly develop their playing. Not only does it enhance young people's musical and social skills but additionally teaches them transferable skills such as teamwork, discipline and achievement.

Swindon Young Musicians (SYM) Ensembles

Swindon Young Musicians offer a variety of ensembles to Swindon Music Service and private students. SYM including orchestras, wind bands and choirs. Rehearsals take place in The Platform, Faringdon Road, Swindon SN1 5BJ

Swindon Young Musicians orchestras, bands and ensembles provide a friendly, fun and exciting musical experience. Students will play and learn many different styles of music.

Students will have the opportunity to make new friends from schools across Swindon and the surrounding area.

To join Swindon Young Musicians, you pay a subscription fee, which enables the member to visit and attend as many group activities that the timetable allows. As a subscription club, you pay to become a member and therefore the cost is **not** based on attendance. As a result, you can also agree to allow us to claim gift aid. More more information about applying gift aid to your membership subscription please visit our website or talk to a member of staff.

Weekly rehearsals are focused and enjoyable. They provide wonderful performance opportunities covering extensive repertoire.

■ Saturday rehearsals

Winds bands; String groups; Guitar & Ukulele groups; Recorder group; Woodwind group; Saxophone group; Clarinet group; Jazz improvisation group; Steel Pan band; general music (theory) sessions; Choirs.

For more information, e-application forms, times and rehearsal dates please visit our website www.smscio.org

■ Tuesday rehearsals

Rock Pod (Rock & pop bands); Rock school

For more information, e-application forms, times and rehearsal dates please visit our website www.smscio.org

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Contact: Lynn Hawkins

T: 07395887191

E: lhawkins@smscio.co.uk

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