

Rendcomb College Music Department

Individual Music Lessons

This document gives information about the College's provision for individual music lessons, including the allocation of students to teachers, the timetabling of lessons, the recording and monitoring of attendance, and the charges for lessons, instrumental hire, examination entry, sheet music and incidental items.

The Music Department offers individual instrumental lessons in most orchestral instruments, drum kit, guitar (acoustic and electric), piano, organ and the voice, and complements these with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Approximately 7,000 individual instrumental lessons are taught each academic year by a team of nineteen specialist music teachers.

Parents request lessons by completing an *Instrumental Tuition Request* (available for download from www.rendcombcollege.org.uk). The Director of Music (DoM) is solely responsible for allocating students to instrumental teachers. Where there is a choice of teacher, the following considerations may be taken into account:

- a request for a particular teacher;
- the student's and the teacher's musical interests;
- the teacher's spread of year groups, to ensure a continuity of student numbers through the academic year and as students leave the College; and
- the teacher's spread of student abilities, to ensure, where possible, that each teacher has a range of talent to work with.

Timetabling

Individual music lessons start in the second week of the Michaelmas Term and continue without interruption throughout the academic year, and from one year to the next, unless notice to cease or suspend lessons is received in writing by the DoM (see the *Instrumental Tuition Request* for the full Terms and Conditions). The Visiting Music Teachers (VMTs) organise their own timetables and aim to deliver no fewer than 30, and no more than 33, lessons spread evenly over the course of an academic year. The timetabling of lessons is complex: for most students, lessons rotate weekly and there are many constraints that need to be considered. When timetabling instrumental lessons VMTs should:

- consult the student to ensure that the impact of missed academic lessons is spread evenly across the curriculum, noting that students are not allowed to miss more than one period of a double academic lesson in any one week or of a subject in any one half term;
- consult the school calendar and, insofar as is practicable, not timetable a lesson at the same time as a trip or any other published school commitment; and
- arrange lessons on different days, if at all possible, for students who learn two or more instruments.

VMTs are required to submit their timetables to the DoM by 09:00 on Thursday morning for lessons the following week. All students should be accounted for and any planned absence by a VMT, or lesson that cannot be delivered owing to a student's conflicting College commitments, should be clearly marked. On Thursday afternoon, the timetable for the following week is displayed on the department notice board, in the Junior School and outside the Dining Hall, and emailed to the Houses and uploaded to the Intranet. It is anticipated that from February 2010 parents will be able to view the timetable over the Internet via the College website.

It should be borne in mind that there are times when a timetable must be changed to resolve a clash. For example, the DoM liaises with the Head of Learning Support on a weekly basis to ensure that individual music lessons do not clash with Learning Support lessons that also rotate on a weekly basis. Therefore, to avoid confusion and disappointment, students should not be told that a lesson time is guaranteed: the published timetable is the definitive working document for students and staff. Any subsequent changes must be arranged with the DoM and recorded on the department database, as this information is used to produce bills for parents and to calculate payments to VMTs. A student must not arrange to swap a lesson with another student without

first consulting the DoM. At least 24 hours' notice is required to facilitate this. Swaps will only be made in exceptional circumstances. No charge is made for lessons that cannot be delivered, but in all other circumstances lessons are charged for if an instrumental teacher is present to give a lesson at the published time and the students fails to attend within the first ten minutes of the published time.

The contract for the provision of instrumental lessons is between the College and the student's parent(s). To avoid setting an unworkable precedent, the VMT is not permitted to waive the notice period or make any other significant change without the prior agreement of the DoM.

Senior School

The majority of lessons are taught on weekdays during the school day, but lessons for boarders may be timetabled after school hours by arrangement with the DoM. Saturday mornings may also be timetabled, but it should be borne in mind that Exeats and holidays limit the number of days available for teaching and, therefore, may compromise the contractual obligation to provide no fewer than 30, and no more than 33, lessons per academic year. Lessons are usually taught in the department, but the Reading Room and Dulverton Hall may also be used.

The standard instrumental lesson length is 40 minutes, but students studying at Grade 6 standard or above may request longer lessons. Lessons for students in Forms 1 – 5 are rotated on a weekly basis. A small number of students have a reduced academic timetable and for these students instrumental lessons are fixed in study periods whenever possible. Students are required to seek permission to miss an academic lesson, or an activity, and must give at least 24 hours' notice to be released. Staff are within their right not to give permission for a student to miss an academic lesson if advance notice has not been requested, particularly if a new topic is being introduced or an assessment is taking place. As stated in the Pupil Handbook, students are expected to make up missed work and to do prep that is set in their absence. Sixth Form students receive tuition outside the academic timetable or in study periods.

In the Senior School, instrumental lessons must coincide with the following timetable:

Lesson 1	08:35 – 09:15
Lesson 2	09:15 – 09:55
Lesson 3	09:55 – 10:35 *
Break	10:30 – 11:00
Lesson 4	11:00 – 11:40
Lesson 5	11:40 – 12:20
Lesson 6	12:20 – 13:00 *
Lunch	12:55 – 14:15
	13:30 – 14:10 (for lunchtime lessons)
Lesson 7	14:15 – 14:55
Lesson 8	14:55 – 15:35 *
Break	15:30 – 15:50
Activities	15:50 – 16:50
[Lesson9]	15:50 – 16:30 (for lessons during activity time)

* It should be noted that instrumental lessons run five minutes into the following break

Students select after school activities at the beginning of each term. Instrumental lessons should not be arranged during Activities unless the student has confirmed his/her availability. Students in Forms 1-5 are not permitted to return to their House during Activities. Therefore, students must be supervised in the department until 16:50.

Instrumental lessons can be timetabled at the following times, but should not be fixed on a weekly basis:

Headmaster's Assembly	Monday	Period 1
Chapel (Forms 1 – 4)	Wednesday	Period 1
Chapel (Forms 5 – 6U)	Friday	Period 1

Students involved in Games and team practices are not available for instrumental lessons at the following times:

Senior Teams	Monday from 15:50 to 16:50
Junior Teams	Tuesday from 15:50 to 16:50
Games (Forms 1 – 4)	Thursday from 14:15 to 15:30 *
Games (Forms 5, 6L and 6U)	Wednesday from 14:15 – 15:30 *
All students	Saturday from 12:20 *

* Students involved in away matches (as published in Clock Hall) may leave earlier and return later

Students are not available for lessons during Tutor Time on Tuesdays Period 1.

Instrumental lessons should not be timetabled at the following times during the academic year:

Forms 1 – 4	Internal examination week in the Summer Term
Form 5	Mock examination week in the Lent term
6L	Public examination modules in the Lent Term
6U	Any time after the Leavers' Service

Students in public examination years (Form 5 and the Sixth Form) are expected to give notice if they wish to stop or suspend lessons during the examination period.

Junior School

Lessons are taught on weekdays during the school day. The standard lesson length for students in J5 and J6 is 40 minutes. For students in lower years, with the agreement of the DoM and VMT, lessons are arranged to suit. All lessons are rotated on a weekly basis and may not be timetabled at the same time as Games or PE. VMTs should be aware that opportunities for instrumental lessons are limited during the internal examination week in the Summer Term.

When available, lessons should be timetabled in the Junior School Music and Drama Room or the Reading Room. All other lessons should take place in the department. Vehicle movement before 09:00 and after 15:30 is a significant hazard and these times should be avoided whenever possible.

Students in the Otters and J3 must be escorted to and from the department, which takes place during the time allocated for the lesson.

Student Attendance

Students are expected to attend lessons at the published time and make full use of the provision offered by the department, paid for by parents or supported by College awards and bursaries. All staff should persist in encouraging students to share this expectation.

If a student fails to attend a lesson, VMTs should wait for at least ten minutes before trying to establish the whereabouts of the student by:

- checking the daily absentee register posted on the notice board in the department
- telephoning the Medical Centre (ext. 329)

If the student cannot be accounted for, the academic lesson timetable on the music notice board should be consulted. Students in Art, DT or classroom Music lessons should be retrieved, but given the remote location of the department there is no expectation that VMTs should retrieve students from any other academic lesson.

Student attendance or absence should be recorded on the VMT's register, which should be given to the DoM at the end of each working day. This information is transferred to the departmental database for billing and monitoring purposes:

- **Present (P)**
Student arrived at the lesson within the first five minutes of the published lesson time
- **Late (L)**
Student arrived at the lesson after five minutes had elapsed
- **Unknown (U)**
Student is at school and fails to attend the lesson
- **Trip (T)**
Student is unavailable owing to a conflicting event listed in the College calendar, and the lesson could not be timetabled at any other time in that teaching week
- **Medical Centre (M)**
Student is at school in the Medical Centre
- **Absent (A)**
Student is not at school, as opposed to **Unknown**

Parents are not charged for lessons recorded as a **Trip**, but VMTs receive full payment.

VMTs should inform the DoM of persistent absence or poor punctuality.

A cumulative attendance register is posted on the College Intranet to allow all staff to check pupil attendance and to ensure that students can always be accounted for.

Charges

The lesson and instrumental hire rates are reviewed annually and are available from the Bursary. For the academic year 2009-10, a 40-minute lesson is £20.70 and instrumental hire (subject to availability) is £40.00 per term. All charges, including lessons, sheet music, examination entry, study materials, instrumental hire and consumables, are billed termly in arrears.

This policy was last updated in December 2009.