



CLAIRES COURT
SENIOR BOYS

2024/2025

Instrumental Tuition

GUIDE



Instrumental

Tuition

At Claires Court we have a long-standing tradition of encouraging pupils to learn an instrument, and strive to ensure that our provision is of the highest quality. As such, our lessons are delivered by professionals from our committed team of visiting peripatetic staff, all of whom come to us with a wealth of performing and teaching experience.

What instrument(s) could my son learn through school?

We offer individual half-hour lessons on the following wide range of instruments:

Singing (all styles)

Violin/viola

Trumpet

Acoustic guitar

Bass guitar

Piano (classical)

Cello

Trombone

Electric guitar

Drums

Piano (jazz/rock & pop)

Flute (classical/jazz)

Tuba

Saxophone (classical/jazz)

Percussion

If your son has expressed an interest in playing an instrument not on the list, please contact Mr Wolstencroft, Head of Music, directly with your enquiry: niw@clairescourt.net

Hire of instruments

Ideally, while expense should not be a major influence on the decision to learn any instrument, purchase costs can be a factor at times. Hiring an instrument may well be preferable in the short term, with some companies running a 'hire to buy' scheme. Further to this, many outlets will offer a discount to schools, so please contact us for advice if you decide to make a purchase.

What about grade exams?

Pupils have the opportunity to work towards graded music exams offered by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity School of Music (including Trinity Rock & Pop), or RockschooL. We find that, by doing so, pupils benefit from working towards such goals, as well as enjoying a real sense of achievement in their success. It is also worth noting that UCAS points are available for attainment at higher levels (Grades 6+).

What is an appropriate amount of practice?

Most people would agree that there is little point in playing an instrument if it is left in its case from one lesson to the next! We would suggest that musical progress is best supported through encouraging a positive attitude to learning and commitment to a regular practice routine, with the idea that deliberate and mindful practice 'little and often' is preferable to hours spent just going through the motions. That said, an approximate guide per day may be: Beginners: 5-10 minutes; Grades 1-3: 20 minutes; Grades 4-5: 30 minutes; Grades 6+: 1 hour plus.

Maintaining an open dialogue with instrumental teachers can also be key to maximising the effectiveness of this provision.

Will I still be charged for a lesson if my son is absent?

Students are expected to attend all lessons and to check their scheduled lesson time on the noticeboard in advance. Instrumental teachers will also share a timetable with parents/guardians via email. Peripatetic teachers are entitled to charge for scheduled lessons and are under no obligation to make up lessons missed by students. This is also in the case of scheduled lessons missed through short-term illness. The school does inform teachers of trips and activities involving whole year groups, but if parents are aware of an additional school activity, then they should contact the teacher directly to notify them. Where possible, peripatetic teachers will attempt to make up for the missed lesson at some point over the course of the term, or issue a refund for the missed lesson(s) as appropriate.

Would I need to give notice for lessons to cease?

When lessons begin, a contract is signed with the instrumental teacher, setting out their terms, conditions and obligations. While we would recommend checking individual contracts for the most accurate information regarding notice periods, it is usually expected that a term's notice be given in writing if lessons are to stop.

Performance Opportunities

Our musicians enjoy considerable opportunities to share their work in performance. In addition to more informal platforms in class time and within the school's events programme (such as House/year-group assemblies, Music assemblies, fireworks nights, and the school fête), termly concerts offer a more formal context in which members of the wider school community are welcomed into the audience.

Co-curricular *Activities*

Claire's Court offers a diverse range of co-curricular activities designed to provide opportunities for all, regardless of prior experience; those receiving lessons on an instrument and those who are simply keen to explore and involve themselves can all get involved. The following activities are currently available:

**CC Choristers
(before school)**

A vocal group primarily for boys in years 7-8

**Male Voice Choir
(before school)**

A vocal group primarily for boys in years 9-11

**Senior Boys' Voices
(before and after school)**

An ambitious mixed-voice ensemble for boys in years 7-11, singing in a range of styles

**Mixed Ensemble
(before school)**

This versatile instrumental ensemble explores music across a variety of genres, combining with a group from Senior Girls for concerts and shows

**Guitar Ensemble
(lunchtime)**

For guitarists with some prior experience

**Rockschool
(after school)**

A musical 'mixed bag', combining keyboard, guitar and drum skills and giving students the opportunity to join with others in a band

**IT in Music
(after school)**

Students explore recording, mixing and mastering techniques using Logic Pro software

**Music Matters
(after school)**

Supporting Music Scholars and those taking the subject at GCSE with a mix of theory, aural application, performance practice and composition



Frequently Asked *Questions*

How long are lessons?

Lessons are normally 30 minutes long, though arrangements may be made for younger pupils to have a 20-minute lesson if appropriate. It is expected that each term will consist of 10 lessons, amounting to 30 lessons per year.

When do lessons take place?

Instrumental/vocal lessons run on a rotation during the timetabled school day wherever possible. This helps to ensure that students do not miss the same lesson each week, and is generally a highly effective arrangement. Steps may be taken to ensure that there are some fixed lessons in lunchtimes, before school, or in free periods for students in Years 10-13.

How much do they cost?

Lesson charges are set individually by visiting staff. As a guide, they are usually charged at between £18-25 per 30-minute lesson.

How are lessons paid for?

Peripatetic teachers send out invoices at the start of each term to parents/guardians. Payment should be made directly to the teacher.



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