Application to Begin Extra-Curricular Music Lessons

Please complete the information below and sign overleaf, and send a copy of the first two pages of this document to music@stcatherines.info.

Student's Forename:

Student's Surname:

Student's Year and Form:

Parent's/Guardian's Telephone Number:

Parent's/Guardian's Email Address:

Instrumental Lesson(s) Requested *(please tick)*

☐ Voice	☐ Flute	☐ French horn	☐ Classical Guitar
☐ Piano	☐ Recorder	☐ Tenor horn	☐ Acoustic Guitar
☐ Organ	☐ Oboe	☐ Trumpet	☐ Electric Guitar
☐ Violin	☐ Clarinet	☐ Trombone	☐ Bass Guitar
☐ Viola	☐ Alto Saxophone	☐ Euphonium	☐ Ukulele
☐ Cello	☐ Tenor Saxophone	☐ Tuba	☐ Music Theory*
☐ Double Bass	☐ Bassoon	☐ Drum Kit	
☐ Harp		☐ Tuned Percussion	☐ Other:

* Please note that Music Theory group lessons up to Grade 5 are offered free of charge at fixed times throughout the week. You should only use this form to apply for Music Theory lessons if you would prefer paid one-to-one Music Theory tuition for your daughter/ward.

Please state your daughter's/ward's approximate current standard (e.g. 'Grade 3' or 'beginner') of each instrument for which you are applying.

Instrument Hire

☐ Some instruments may be available for hire. If you require the hire of an instrument, please tick this box, and the relevant Head of Section will contact you to discuss this. Please note that no guarantee can be made that an instrument will be available.

Music Theory

☐ If Grade 5 Theory (Associated Board) has been taken and passed outside St Catherine's, please tick this box and attach a copy of the certificate with your application.

Commencement of Lessons

I would like my daughter/ward to take music lessons beginning:

☐ Autumn Term ☐ Spring Term ☐ Summer Term ☐ as soon as possible

Notes

1. *Please refer to the current list of school fees on the school website for the amount charged for lessons. (https://www.stcatherines.info/admissions/fees) All music lessons are charged in advance.*

2. *To guarantee that lessons will begin in September, applications should be received by 1st May. Applications are warmly welcomed throughout the year, although please note that occasionally a short waiting list may be in operation if demand is high.*

I acknowledge that in the Prep School, and in the Senior School Years U3 to L6 inclusive, that if my daughter only learns one instrument, lessons will take place on a rota system. This means that she will miss a normal class academic lesson each week on a rotational basis to receive instrumental tuition. Should she learn any additional instruments, these lessons will be on a fixed basis.

I accept that the taking of lessons in the Prep School transfers automatically to the Senior School, unless the required notice is given (see below). I understand that if discontinuation of lessons is required, **a full term's notice in writing must be received by the Director of Music by the first day of that term,** otherwise a full term's fees for the following term will be due in lieu of insufficient notice. Discontinuation of lessons takes place only at the end of terms.

Before signing this form parents should read the *Notes for Parents' Guidance for Individual Music Lessons* below, and should sign only if in agreement. Please sign and print your name to show that you have read and agree with these terms and conditions.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: Date:

Print Name:

St Catherine's School

Notes For Parents' Guidance For Individual Music Lessons

At St Catherine's we set great store by individual music lessons. The benefits to students and the School itself are considerable, and the lessons provide skills and engagement that can last a lifetime. Alumnae often testify to this when they return to visit later in life. Students gain further by being able to play in our many ensembles. We will do our best, therefore, but we also need *your* support and understanding of how the lessons run. The following notes are intended as a reference document to answer some of the more general queries parents often have. Apology is made for the

length of the document, but the matters are quite complex, so we do ask that you take time to familiarise yourself with the contents here. NB "Instrument" and "playing" should also be taken as referring to "singing".
Queries or matters arising should be addressed to the Director of Music (DoM) rather than to the Business Centre or music teacher concerned (except in the case of billing issues where the teacher invoices you directly – please see below).

1. Applications

Applications for individual lessons should be made online to the DoM via the above application form. You are advised to keep a copy for your records. Please indicate clearly in which term you wish the lessons to commence. For lessons to begin in September, applications should be received by 1st May. Applications are warmly welcomed throughout the year, although please note that occasionally a short waiting list may be in operation if demand is high. Parents/guardians will be notified if their application is on a waiting list.

Shared lessons may be taken in some instruments (although this is not always recommended as progress can be slower) and are charged at half-rate. Parents/guardians may also request a double lesson (recommended for Grade 6 and above). Double lessons can also be requested for existing tuition (rather than a new application) by writing to the DoM. Heads of Section may also contact parents/guardians to recommend double lessons, where appropriate. Please note that a full term's notice is required to reduce from double lessons to single lessons.

The noticeboards in the Senior School (outside the Music Office) and in the Prep School (in the corridor outside the downstairs practice room) should be consulted regularly by students for details of music lesson times. A number of teachers also email Senior School students and Prep School parents directly to communicate timetables. When starting new lessons, the teacher (or Head of Section) will email the parents directly to introduce themselves, copying in the student via their school email address in the case of a Senior School application.

Please note that if **Grade 5 Associated Board Theory** has been passed outside St Catherine's, a copy of the certificate should be submitted with the application for music lessons.

2. Transfers

When a student having music lessons in the LIII year (Year 6) of the Prep School transfers to the Senior School, it is assumed that she will continue these unless the required term's notice is given. This will be with the same teacher under normal circumstances.

3. Allocation of Teacher

We regard all our music teachers as being of equal status and therefore allocate freely. A request for a particular teacher may be made, but there can be no guarantee that that teacher will be available or the request possible to grant. A change of teacher is usually only considered in extreme circumstances, and after discussion with the DoM. If a teacher leaves the School, the School will appoint a new teacher to take his/her place. The School will inform parents if a teacher is going to leave, and it is assumed that lessons will continue with the new teacher, unless you inform us to the contrary as soon as you hear that the teacher is leaving.

Our long experience shows that the best progress is made by students at this level when they have only one teacher per instrument, so that there is no confusion between different teaching styles. We therefore ask that, where instrumental lessons are taken in School with one of our teachers, no lessons on that instrument take place with any other teacher outside School. The DoM would be pleased to hear from any parent/guardian who wishes to request an exception to this for their daughter so that the potential impacts can be understood and discussed fully.

4. Number of Lessons

30 lessons will be given during the academic year. Lessons are charged as 10 lessons per term, irrespective of the *actual* number of weeks; the lessons given per term will most likely divide into 12 weeks in the longer Autumn Term, 10 weeks in the Spring Term and 8 weeks in the Summer Term. **At the end of the Summer Term** any shortfall in the lessons that should be due will be credited.

The exception to the above is for U5 and U6. In the Summer Term, because of Public Examination Leave and general change of timetable owing to GCSE and A Level exams, a full number of lessons will still be attempted but only 25 can really be assured. Students are expected to make special arrangements with their teachers during this time to fit in with their exam timetable. Teachers will endeavour to give 30 lessons unless there is written confirmation from parents at the start of the Spring Term asking for 25 lessons. (More under Paragraph 7 below.)

If either the teacher or the parents would like a student to receive more than the statutory 30 lessons, a written request (or other signed authorisation) must be sent from the parents to the teacher, copied to the DoM, who will pass it on to the Business Manager for approval. All extra lessons will then be billed on the final invoice of the year.

In the Autumn Term, instrumental lessons usually begin on the first Monday of term for all year groups except U3, whose lessons begin on the second Monday of term. In the Spring and Summer Terms, lessons begin at the same time as normal academic lessons.

5. Billing for lessons

The termly fees for individual lessons can be found by following the Fees Information link available on the School Website. (https://www.stcatherines.info/admissions/fees) All lessons are charged in advance with the fees being due by the first day of each term.

a) **Where the Music Teacher is employed by the School then the School charges for lessons.** The charge will appear on the school bill.

b) **Where the Music Teacher is self-employed then the Teacher charges for lessons.** The teacher will directly invoice parents for music lessons, and all enquiries regarding payment, number of lessons, etc, should be made directly to the teacher concerned. Copies of any correspondence, however, (particularly discontinuation) should also be sent to the DoM.

c) **Music Scholars and Award Holders:** for all Award Holders or Scholars entitled to free music lessons then these will be shown as a credit on the school bill. If those lessons are with a self-employed teacher, parents will still need to pay the teacher directly.

6. Absences

Where a student is absent from a lesson (this includes through illness) and the teacher is present, the lesson is regarded as having taken place *unless* seven days' notice has been given to the teacher. If this notice has been given, the lesson is 'made up' or a credit is given. A student (or her parents, particularly in the case of Prep School) must give this notice even when an event involving her appears on the school calendar, or when she is required for a specific assessment. It must not be assumed that the teacher is aware she will be involved. If the student is given less than a week's notice by the School that she is needed for an activity, and this results in absence, parents either are not charged for that lesson or it is made up by the teacher at the School's expense.

When a student in Senior School is absent from an instrumental lesson on two occasions within a term for what are judged to be weak reasons, the teacher will contact parents/guardians to inform them. If she is absent on three or more occasions for what are judged to be weak reasons, the DoM, in consultation with the tutor, will contact parents/guardians in writing.

When the School has its summer internal examination period, music lessons are suspended. **In the mock examination periods, however, students in L5-U6 must make special arrangements with teachers to fit in with their exam timetable – lessons are not automatically suspended.**

Music lessons should not be missed for class assessments. In the Senior School, students should ensure that they have given at least one week's notice to their class teacher to request absence for a music lesson (see Paragraph 8 below); assessments can be taken during House Study when they have been missed for a music lesson. In the Prep School, the form teacher will make alternative arrangements for any assessment.

Should a student be injured and unable to play her instrument (this includes planned dental work), or should she have left her instrument at home, she should still attend her timetabled music lessons, since general musicianship skills such as aural and theory can be very usefully covered.

7. Discontinuation

A full term's notice in writing must be given to the DoM by the first Friday of that term, otherwise fees for the term following will also be due. Communication via an email sent to music@stcatherines.info is preferred. An email of acknowledgement will be sent; if you do not receive this please contact us. If a further term is due because of short notice, it is assumed the lessons *will* occur; however, 'fees in lieu' is possible and parents may write confirming lessons are not actually required. It should, however, be noted that with regard to new applications, it is expected that once lessons have begun, they will run for two terms at least – otherwise it would be necessary to write a letter of

discontinuation at the same time as the application! It is also important to note that, especially when taking up a new instrument, a good period of time has to be given to learning it before making any hasty decision to stop based on quick initial responses. Occasionally a replacement student from a waiting list may be able to fill the vacancy left by a discontinuation, which means that 'fees in lieu' are not required. This is a rare occurrence and cannot be guaranteed.

If a student wishes to discontinue for her final GCSE or A Level examination term, the normal notice **must** be given; it should not be assumed that she will automatically stop at the end of the Spring Term. Where lessons continue, specific arrangements for them must also be made with the teacher during the GCSE/A Level period. Temporary discontinuation for a term is not recognised; a full discontinuation must be made and a new application for lessons then submitted. We will try to allocate the same teacher but this cannot be guaranteed.

8. Rota/Fixed Lessons

It must be understood and accepted that, for students in the Prep School up to and including the L6, lessons will be on a rota system, whereby a student will miss a different academic lesson each week for the music lesson according to a set pattern. It is otherwise impossible to fit in all the music lessons to be taught. Parents sometimes have anxiety about this, but it has not been the experience, here at St Catherine's or nationally, that standards are harmed through this system, or that students suffer academically. Students are, however, expected to 'catch up' work covered in the class lesson, and do any prep set - it is not an excuse to delay or avoid study! The student's Form Teacher is always happy to advise on how best to achieve this. Only **one** rota per student is allowed, however; if more than one instrument is studied the other individual lessons will be at a fixed, non-class time. **Fixed lessons for students learning only one instrument are not available other than in the U6 year.**

In the **Senior School** a student must give her class teacher at least **one week's notice** that she will be missing the class lesson, otherwise the class teacher is entitled to refuse the request and the lesson will be forfeit. The Form Teacher will explain how this notice should be given using an electronic diary request. A student will be given her timetable in advance by her music teacher and she should check this regularly (see Paragraph 1) though there may have to be changes because of other events, either for herself or because of the knock-on effect from other students' changes. New girls will have the system explained by their Form Teachers. Students are encouraged to set alerts for their music lessons on their school-managed iPads. Where genuine difficulties arise (i.e. not simply a student's disorganisation), the question of rota should be discussed with the DoM.

During a music lesson in the **Prep School** the following week's time is written by the teacher into the pupil's notebook. On the day of a music lesson, students must inform their class teacher at morning registration of the lesson time.

In both schools, individual music lesson times are displayed on the designated notice boards. (See Paragraph 1)

9. Boarders' Practice

At the start of each term, boarders in U3, L4 and U4 are asked to identify when they are free of commitments so that they may be allocated a regular practice time for each instrument. Boarders in L5-U6 are considered responsible enough to make their own arrangements.

10. Sheet Music

Teachers normally obtain any music required without reference to parents/guardians, unless the cost is unusually high. The charge for sheet music appears on the end of term account. If, however, music arrives towards the end of a term, it may well not be charged until the following term. Day girls may be asked to buy some music themselves, and information about how and where to do this will of course be provided by the teacher.

Students in choirs or ensembles are responsible for any music issued. If this music is lost, the appropriate charge for replacement (if necessary a full set of parts) will be made.

A girl holding a Music Award (see below) has music free of charge for that instrument.

11. Hire of Instruments

The School holds certain instruments available for hire, the termly charge for which appears on the account. (Please refer to the 'Fees' section on the school website: https://www.stcatherines.info/admissions/fees.) Many parents welcome the opportunity for their daughters to begin lessons without the (often high) cost of buying or using a rental scheme. However, parents are urged to see hiring as a temporary measure and to buy an instrument as soon as possible. Ownership encourages a real sense of instrument affinity, boosts progress and frees an instrument for others to hire.

12. Insurance

School Instruments – Students are responsible for a school instrument's continued good condition. Normal wear and tear repairs are taken care of by the Music Department but damage through carelessness or accident is the responsibility of the parents. It is suggested that parents' personal insurance should be checked to cover this eventuality. A School instrument may be taken abroad only with the explicit written permission of the DoM and on the above understanding.

Own Instruments – The School insurance policy **does not** cover a student's own instrument brought onto School premises, even in the instrument locker, and therefore your own insurance policy should cover this. It is always a good idea to make a note of make, model and serial number.

13. Instruments at School and Lockers

When a Senior School student brings to School, or keeps at School, an instrument (whether her own or the School's), it **must be kept in a designated locker** when not in use. No undertaking for the instrument's safety is given otherwise. The Music Department allocates specific instrument lockers, and a student should see the PA to the Director of Music if she needs to request a locker. We aim to provide all Senior School students who have instrumental lessons in School, or take part in ensembles, with a single or shared locker for the safe storage of her instrument(s), regardless of whether or not the instrument belongs to her or the School. An initial padlock will be provided by the School but subsequent replacements owing to loss will be charged for. The Music Department also owns a master key.

Storage is provided for instruments in the Prep School by the Director of Prep School Music.

14. Reeds, Strings, Small Ancillary Items

When provided by the teacher, and whether for a student's own or for a school instrument, these are charged to the termly account.

15. Choirs and Ensembles

Students are strongly encouraged to take part in these when an appropriate standard is reached. Some are reluctant to do this; however, the benefits of playing under specific direction and with others has an inestimable benefit on progress and ability. It is, however, expected that full and regular commitment will be given to these activities once undertaken.

Girls learning outside School are warmly encouraged to join a suitable ensemble or choir, and indeed to take a full part in the Music Department's programme of concert and other events. A copy of the Music Calendar can be found in the Calendar section of the school website: https://www.stcatherines.info/calendar.

16. Music Examinations (Associated Board and Trinity)

Students are normally entered for practical examinations by mutual agreement between themselves and their teachers when their standard is judged to be high enough to yield a sense of success and progress. Parental permission will be sought from the teacher before making the entry, and confirmation of the entry will be sent to the parent by the DoM. The cost of the examination entry appears on the end of term account. We reserve the right **not** to make an entry, even at parents' or student's request, if the teacher considers it ill advised. A negative exam experience can set a student back significantly and the teachers are the experts who can best gauge this and make the decision. Students having lessons at School are not encouraged to take the examination elsewhere or in different periods.

Students learning instruments outside School are most welcome to take their examinations at School; an accompanist is provided free of charge. The charge for the examination entry will appear on the end of term account. **Written details** (sent to the PA to the Director of Music) should include: Instrument and Grade entered; Examination Board; teacher's name; and Grade 5 Theory Certificate if taking ABRSM Grade 6 practical or higher. Practical examinations sessions take place towards the end of each term in November, March and June.

If a student is unable to take an examination through illness or injury, **a doctor's certificate covering the day of the examination must be provided immediately**. A portion of the examination fee might then be recoverable, at the Board's discretion. There is no refund for any other absence. If a student seems likely to fail the examination, the teacher may discuss with parents/guardians whether she should withdraw, but the final decision is with the parents.

Theory classes up to Grade 5 and Aural classes for all grades are provided free of charge at extra-curricular times. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these **well before the examination is taken**. Music lessons, especially at the higher grades, are frequently not long enough to cover everything in depth, and class aural or theory is a great

benefit (and frequently a relief that others are in the same boat!). Individual paid Music Theory lessons are also available on request, where more personalised and in-depth tuition is required than is offered in the free Music Theory classes.

For instrumental examinations, **accompanists** are provided if the teacher does not do this, plus rehearsals, free of charge. The number and length of rehearsals will be dependent on the grade and the student's individual ability.

It is not **essential** that a student take music examinations. If she and her parents prefer learning without that pressure, this is quite acceptable. 'Pop in and Play' sessions and Informal Concerts are other examples of goals that can be worked towards for a student who wishes to challenge herself without the pressure of an examination.

17. Concerts

There is a large number of performing opportunities for the girls, from House Informal Concerts to the large-scale school events. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to participate in relevant ensembles. Further details are available from the DoM. Girls learning outside School are warmly encouraged to take part in school events, and parents are always welcome to attend as well – your support means a lot to your daughters. A copy of the Music Calendar can be found in the Calendar section of the school website: https://www.stcatherines.info/calendar.

18. GCSE/A Level Music Examinations

Instrumental teachers are often quite involved in preparing pupils for the Performance Modules of these examinations. For GCSE, solo and ensemble playing **roughly** equivalent to at least Grade 4 should secure a good mark in the Performing Section but the grade is not mandatory. For the A Level specification, Grade 7 should be regarded as the minimum standard for the Performance Module, although Grade 8 is strongly encouraged. There is no advantage in performing Diploma standard repertoire.

19. Scholarships

The School ordinarily offers two Music Scholarships annually, one for 11+ entry, the other for Sixth Form, each for up to 20% of the school fees. Free tuition, free sheet music and free examination entry for one instrument is also included. There is also the *Jennifer Bate Memorial Organ Scholarship* in conjunction with Guildford Cathedral for advanced organ students. Full details and application forms can be found on the school website: https://www.stcatherines.info/admissions/bursaries-and-scholarships.

20. Music Awards

A Music Award provides free tuition, free sheet music and free examination entry for the specific instrument that is the subject of the Award. Various Awards are available for less common instruments, for rapid progress and advanced players, for singing, and for organ. A summary of the Awards, full details and application form can be found on the school website: https://www.stcatherines.info/admissions/bursaries-and-scholarships.

21. Parental Contact

Instrumental teachers provide written reports throughout the year, generally at the same time as the usual school reports (i.e. in a term when there is no Parents' Evening for the year group). Teachers are encouraged to keep in regular contact with parents so that details of progress can be noted.

These notes are provided in good faith, but are subject to change. Parents of girls taking music lessons will be informed should these notes be updated.



Mr Matthew Greenfield
Director of Music

September 2025