

Timaru School of Music - Parent & Caregiver Guide

Welcome Message

Kia ora and a warm welcome to the Timaru School of Music (TSM)

We are delighted you are joining our community. Here is a brief introduction to the school: Who we are and What we do

The Timaru School of Music is an affordable, Ministry of Education-funded, out-of-hours music programme. Our lessons are held after school from Monday to Wednesday at designated teaching spaces in Waimataitai School. We provide instrumental lessons for primary school-aged children in woodwind, brass, recorder, violin, guitar, and ukulele.

Students follow a structured musical journey through short, 20-minute group lessons to ensure music education is accessible and rewarding.

We believe music is for everyone. Our programme is designed to help students develop musical skills and build confidence in a supportive environment. We are committed to growing student participation and enjoyment of learning music in our South Canterbury community. The benefit of consistent practice, while taking time, will show over a longer period.

Your child will participate in weekly group lessons and is expected to practice at least three times a week. We encourage ensemble playing. Participation in our two annual school concerts is expected. (mid-year at the end of Term 2 and end-of-year at the end of Term 4).

We foster a welcoming environment through ensemble playing, public performance opportunities, and combining our ensembles with the Youth Orchestra of South Canterbury for the end-of-year concert.

Ngā mihi nui,

Tim Bower

Director

Timaru School of Music

About Timaru School of Music

A Brief Overview

What are out of hours music lessons?

- Government funded
- Informed by the New Zealand Curriculum
- Often group lessons
- Timetable tries to fit everyone in
- Short lessons
- Prepare students for music lessons at high school

Timaru School of Music has been providing affordable, out-of-hours music education to children in Timaru since the 1960s. Through a Ministry-funded programme, students have the opportunity to learn an instrument, develop musical skills, and participate in a supportive community of young musicians.

Based at Waimataitai School, the programme offers a structured pathway from introductory music learning through to group lessons, ensemble playing, and wider performance opportunities. Our goal is to make music education accessible, enjoyable, and rewarding for every student.

Whether your child is picking up an instrument for the first time or continuing their musical journey, Timaru School of Music provides a welcoming environment where they can learn, grow, and build confidence through music.

The Music Pathway

At Timaru School of Music, students follow a structured pathway that helps them build skills, confidence, and a lifelong enjoyment of music.

1. Introduction to Music

A fun foundation class where students explore rhythm, musical concepts, and a range of instruments. Most students begin their journey here.

2. Group Instrument Lessons

Students learn their chosen instrument in small groups, developing technique, musical understanding, and performance skills.

3. Ensemble Playing

As students grow in confidence, they may be invited to join an ensemble. This provides additional learning and performance opportunities at no extra cost.

4. Progression & Growth

Students continue developing their skills through lessons, ensembles, concerts, and other musical opportunities within the wider community.

Please note: Some older or experienced students may move directly into group lessons if appropriate.

Instruments Available

Timaru School of Music offers a range of instruments across several categories, allowing students to explore different musical styles and find the instrument that best suits their interests.

Please note that lesson availability is determined by tutor availability and teaching schedules. Our tutors teach specific instruments on certain days and times, so placement may depend on both instrument choice and available lesson spaces. For example, trumpet lessons may only be available on a particular afternoon. Current lesson days and times can be found on our website. Flute, clarinet and saxophone lessons are not for beginners.

Instrument hire is available for many instruments. You can hire an instrument from us as part of the enrolment process.

Strings

- Violin **hire available (various sizes)**

Brass

- Trumpet **hire available**
- Trombone **hire available**

Woodwind

- Recorder **no hire**
- Flute **hire available**
- Clarinet **hire available**
- Saxophone **limited hire available**

Guitars & Ukulele

- Acoustic Guitar **limited hire available (various sizes)**
- Ukulele **no hire**

Piano & Drums - *Piano and drum lessons are not part of the Timaru School of Music programme. Families seeking tuition for these instruments may wish to explore local private teachers.*

Lesson Structure & Expectations

To get the most out of music lessons, students are encouraged to participate regularly, practise consistently, and engage with the wider Timaru School of Music community.

Learning Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Attend lessons regularly.
- Practise at least three times per week outside of lessons.
- Bring a positive attitude and willingness to learn.
- Participate in concerts throughout the year, either as a performer or as a supportive audience member.

Regular practice is one of the most important factors in building musical skills and confidence.

Families are expected to:

- Notify the tutor if they cannot attend lessons
- Make payments by the end of each term (if paying in installments)

What Happens During a Lesson?

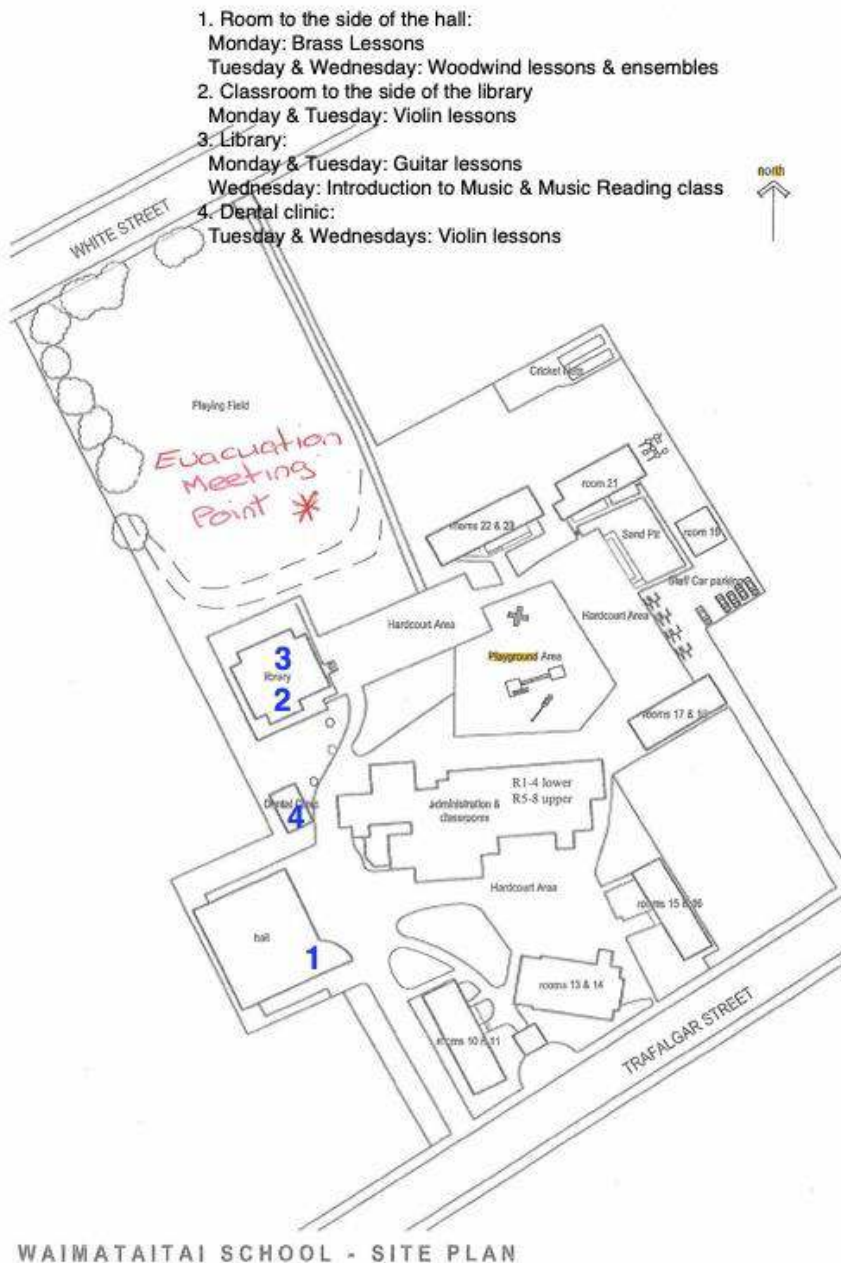
While every lesson is slightly different, a typical lesson may include:

- Tuning and preparing the instrument.
- Playing previously learned pieces.
- Learning new skills and techniques.
- Setting goals and practice activities for the week ahead.
- Encouragement and motivation to continue progressing.

Lesson Times & Locations

What room will my child be learning in?

This depends on the lesson and instrument your child has been allocated. Details will be provided once placement is confirmed.



What time is the lesson?

Students are allocated a specific lesson day and time based on their instrument, tutor availability, and lesson spaces.

Fees & Costs

The annual costs may include:

- \$60 Administration Fee
- Lesson Book(s) (if required)
- Instrument Hire: \$100 per year or \$25 per term

Invoices are issued each term and are due by the end of that term.

Payment is by bank transfer only.

School Holidays

Are lessons held during the school holidays?

No. Timaru School of Music follows the school term calendar.

The programme provides up to 36 weeks of lessons per year, which is slightly shorter than the standard school year.

Key Dates – 2026

Please note that Timaru School of Music follows its own lesson schedule, which may differ slightly from the standard school term dates.

Term 2

20 April – 1 July 2026 (11 weeks)

Mid-Year Concert

Students are encouraged to participate in the Mid-Year Concert performances.

Rehearsals	Concerts
Monday, 22nd June	Monday, 29th June
Tuesday, 23rd June	Tuesday, 30th June
Wednesday, 24th June	Wednesday, 1st July

Introduction to Music students do not perform but are encouraged to attend and support other students.

Term 3

20 July – 23 September 2026 (10 weeks)

Regular lessons continue throughout the term.

Term 4

12 October – 18 November 2026 (6 weeks)

End-of-Year Concerts

Rehearsals	Concerts
Monday, 9th Nov	Monday, 16th Nov
Tuesday, 10th Nov	Tuesday, 17th Nov
Wednesday, 11th Nov	Wednesday, 18th Nov

Further details regarding rehearsal times and concert schedules will be provided during the term.

Please keep these dates in mind when planning family commitments and activities throughout the year.

Concerts & Performance Opportunities

Music is about more than lessons and practice — it's about sharing your skills and enjoying music with others.

As students grow in confidence, they may have opportunities to:

- Join an ensemble and learn the skills of playing music together.
- Perform in Timaru School of Music concerts throughout the year.
- Take part in visits and performances at local primary schools.
- Perform in a combined concert alongside the Youth Orchestra of South Canterbury.

These experiences help students build confidence, develop performance skills, and become part of the wider music community.

Getting Started with the Timaru School of Music

Before applying, we encourage you to spend a little time exploring the options available and talking with your child about their interests.

Before You Apply

Talk with Your Child

Discuss the different instruments available and what your child might enjoy learning. Choosing an instrument they are excited about can make a big difference to their musical journey.

Review Lesson Availability

Lesson times are linked to tutor availability and specific instruments. We recommend reviewing the lesson timetable on our website and considering how lessons will fit alongside your family's existing commitments.

Read the Parent & Caregiver Guide

Take some time to review the information in this guide so you understand how the programme works, what to expect, and the commitments involved.

Consider Instrument Hire

Many instruments are available for hire. If you're unsure what may be required, the guide on this website can help you through the options before enrolling.

Ready to Get Started?

Once you've reviewed the information and discussed the options with your child, you're ready to submit an application through our website.

We look forward to welcoming your family to Timaru School of Music.

Stay Connected

Throughout the year, lesson schedules, concert dates, rehearsal times, and other important information may change from time to time. We encourage all families to regularly check the Timaru School of Music website and social media channels for the latest updates and announcements.

Resources for Students & Caregivers

The Timaru School of Music website includes a growing collection of resources to support learning and practice at home.

Resources may include:

- Practice notes and guidance
- Instrument-specific resources
- Backing tracks
- Video tutorials
- Theory resources
- Performance materials
- Important documents and downloads

We encourage students and caregivers to make use of these resources throughout the year to support their musical journey.

Thank you for being part of the Timaru School of Music community. We look forward to helping your child discover, learn, and enjoy music for many years to come.