

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning  
Strings  
Handbook

2023-2024

# Wheaton Christian Grammar School

## Beginning Strings Handbook

2023/2024 School Year

Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome to the 2023/2024 Beginning Strings Program at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. My name is Mrs. Emily Mittlestaedt and I look forward to being your conductor and teacher this year. In this handbook, you will find all the policies and procedures in order to make your orchestral experience positive, problem free and great fun.

### **Parents**

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter the opportunity to be in orchestra this year. They will have the opportunity to experience the joy of making music and mastering new skills. It is essential that we partner together to encourage each student to reach their potential through effective practice. I believe that students who use effective practice techniques become more enthused about playing music and progress more quickly. Let's work together on this!

Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Students and parents must sign the form and return it by **Tuesday, August 29th**.

I am looking forward to having a wonderful year together, glorifying the Lord through it all. Please feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Emily Mittlestaedt

630.668.1385 ext. 262

[emittlestaedt@wheatonchristian.org](mailto:emittlestaedt@wheatonchristian.org)

## Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules reduce the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurt the entire orchestra.

1. Enter the orchestra room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
2. Quickly get your instrument and music and take your seat.
3. Concert attention will be observed when the director steps on the podium and no further talking will be permitted.
4. Students will not play other students' instruments.
5. Orchestra members will have the following at every rehearsal:
  - a. INSTRUMENT (with necessary accessories)
  - b. BINDER WITH ALL MUSIC
  - c. PENCIL (you supply your own)
6. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
7. Instruments **MUST** be stored in instrument lockers when not being played at school.  
**DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT IN HALLWAYS.**
8. Practicing is very important. More is accomplished in rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule.
9. Students who do not have their instrument or music for rehearsals or sectionals will have points deducted from their grade.
10. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in rehearsal. (water is OK)
11. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
12. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

## Grades/Points

Grades are based on an average of assignments, preparedness in Class and Sectionals, and Concerts.

## Beneficial Experiences

**Concerts/Recitals** – Students are encouraged to attend concerts or recitals featuring their instrument. Concerts and recitals can be very inspirational.

**Private Lessons** – Every instrumentalist should consider taking private lessons on his/her instrument. Although not a requirement, private lessons can be extremely beneficial.

## Sectionals

All students in Beginning Strings have a scheduled weekly sectional during the regular school day. Since academic classes will be missed for sectionals, **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK! It is critical that every orchestra student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of our orchestra's success.**

## Practice

All students are required to practice at home. A minimum of 100 minutes per week is required. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 20 minutes, 5 days a week, or 25 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 100 minutes at one time. No practice logs are required but I strongly suggest that students record each day's practice time for personal accountability. Quality of student practice will be evaluated through assignments and in-class assessment.

## Instrument Care and Maintenance

All students must have instruments in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This year, Quinlan and Fabish will visit our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs.

## Rehearsal Schedule

Beginning Strings will rehearse once a week on Tuesdays, from 11:05-11:35am. Always be on time to rehearsals.

## Class Materials/Curriculum

Each student will be issued a new folder with copies of the music the orchestra will be playing. It is the student's responsibility to take good care of this folder and have it present at every rehearsal and sectional. Music and folders that are lost are subject to replacement fees. All Beginning Orchestra students will be working out of a method book entitled *Sound Innovations for String Orchestra*, Book 1.

## Concert Uniforms

The concert dress code for Beginning Strings is as follows:

**Girls:** Black blouse, black skirt (see student handbook for appropriate length) or dress pants, black shoes.

**Boys:** Black, collared dress shirt, black dress pants, black belt, black socks, black shoes (NO gym shoes).

## Concerts and Important Dates

Concerts are mandatory and are to be viewed as a final exam.

Christmas Concert.....Thursday, December 7th, 2023  
Spring Concert.....Thursday, May 9th, 2023

# Beginning Strings Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Beginning Strings. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2023/2024 school year to the WCGS Beginning Strings.

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Student's Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

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Instrument

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Student's Signature

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Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign, and return to Mrs. Mittlestaedt by Tuesday, August 29th.**