NMPAT

Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust

Inspire • Nurture • Excel

Dear Family

I am delighted that you have decided to give your child the opportunity to take brass lessons this year.

This letter is to welcome you to the world of brass playing, and to share some information that I hope will help you to support your child on their musical journey.

What you can expect in the lessons…

We will have 33 lessons across the academic year – if I am unable to teach, I will arrange an additional catch up visit to the school. A full list of teaching weeks and other useful information can be found on our website: www.nmpat.co.uk/brass

I will give your child a practice diary, which I will write in every week, to highlight what would be useful to play at home, or what they might like to think about before I see them again the following week. I will also use the diary to flag up resources that may help them play at home. There is space for you and your child to add comments too.

I will be lending your child an instrument to learn on. The loan of the instrument is free, but we need you to sign to say that you are looking after it while they are having lessons. I will be in touch with information about how to do that soon.

How you can support your child…

- Be excited and curious about what they are learning
- Be understanding that progress takes time
- Praise your child for the efforts they are putting in

It would be beneficial if you could look at their diary and talk about what happened in the lesson each week, ideally when it's fresh in their memory. To start with, you can expect your child to be able to talk about how to make or change a sound, or talk about some of the musical games we might play.

Playing at home between lessons will have a really big impact on how quickly students progress, but this can be a tricky part of the process for many students. This could be for any one of a number of reasons:

- They don't like being on their own when practicing
- They may be nervous of being overheard when practicing
- They feel they need their teacher there to help them

We don't want practicing to cause any tension at home. It's worth remembering that it's possible to think yourself better by imagining the process you need to go through to make a sound or play a piece. Then, your brain will be better able to do for real, next time you try.

If you can, support your child to identify a regular day and time to practice - when they are not too tired to do so - aiming for 3 times a week, between 10-20 minutes each time, would enable great progress to be made.

Other useful information…

NMPAT Saturday Centres are a fantastic opportunity for children to meet and play music with other students. This would give opportunities to develop musical skills, supplement tuition, and embed their learning faster. Saturday Centres have venues across the county and are open to anyone, regardless of experience. Your child is entitled to one entire term completely free. Find out more at: www.nmpat.co.uk/centres

St Giles Music, in Northampton, have very knowledgeable and helpful staff and, if you take your NMPAT practice diary, you will receive a small discount on any purchases – e.g. music / tutor books: www.stgilesmusic.co.uk
Ebay is also often a useful source for second hand music books, as is Amazon.

When children reach a certain level of playing, there will be the opportunity to work towards gradings / exams and I will give further details when appropriate.

If at any point you wish to increase the length of the lesson, or discuss any other ways of supplementing their learning, please get in touch via the NMPAT Office.