

Instrumental and vocal tuition in schools

Redbridge Music Service provides a wide range of instrumental and vocal tuition in schools throughout the borough. Schools throughout Redbridge have the choice as to which of these services they purchase.

In addition to instrumental and vocal tuition, schools may also purchase:

- School ensemble coaching
- Indian Music
- African Music
- South American Music

For specific information about instruments and services available at your school please contact the school directly.

Why learn a musical instrument?

There are many reasons why children should be encouraged to learn a musical instrument. Learning helps pupils develop the following qualities:

- self-confidence
- self-respect
- self-reliance
- self-discipline
- learning skills
- imagination and creativity
- co-operation
- commitment
- loyalty
- communication skills
- memory skills
- team and social skills
- co-ordination skills
- concentration skills

Many reports have been conducted both in this country and abroad and it has been proved that playing a musical instrument benefits other areas of the curriculum. The benefits go way beyond musical skills and pupils can engage in a lifelong learning activity.

How much does instrumental tuition cost?

Your child's school will be able to tell you the cost of instrumental tuition.

Where do I get an instrument?

Instruments (except piano, keyboard and percussion) can be hired from the Instrument Centre at the John Savage Centre, providing you or your child are studying with us. Redbridge Music Service employs two fully trained technicians who undertake instrument repairs and check new and refurbished instruments prior to collection. Hire costs £5 per month, which is taken by Direct Debit.

Instruments (except piano and keyboard) can also be purchased VAT free provided pupils

undergo tuition through Redbridge Music Service.

How will I be invoiced?

All of our payments are now taken using a monthly Direct Debit. If you are taking lessons in one of the schools in the Borough, you may receive an additional invoice from the school.

How will my child be assessed?

Redbridge Music Service, in collaboration with schools, has its own examination system for assessing pupils. These examinations are called 'stage' examinations and they usually take place at the John Savage Centre. Pupils may be entered for public examinations once they have achieved an intermediate level and will be required to pay the appropriate fee. 'Stage' examinations are free to all pupils undergoing tuition through Redbridge Music Service. Please note that percussion pupils are entered for external Guildhall percussion examinations when they have achieved the appropriate standard.

How can I monitor my child's progress?

Pupils are issued with a practice book at a cost of £2.50 per book. Pupils are set three personalised learning objectives each year; these are listed in the pupil's practice book. It is expected that parents will sign the relevant page each week to verify the amount of practice done by the pupil. Homework is set by the teacher in the practice book and pupils are encouraged to log their daily practice. Pupils receive an annual written report which will go out during the summer term.

What opportunities are available for my child to perform?

Many schools provide opportunities for children to perform together. The Music Service provides a number of instrumental festivals including brass, string, woodwind, recorder, piano, singing and guitar. The purpose of these festivals is to give pupils the opportunity to rehearse and perform together at a central venue. Once pupils reach an appropriate standard they are invited to join a club level group that rehearses weekly during term time at the John Savage Centre.

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Typical termly hire charges are as follows:

Flute/clarinet £20

Oboe £40

Violin £20

Cello £40

Guitar £20

Trumpet £20

Trombone £20

Baritone/horn in Eb £20

How will I be invoiced?

Your child's school will invoice you for instrumental tuition termly. If your child has an instrument on hire from the Music Service Instrument Centre you will receive a termly hire invoice from the London Borough of Redbridge. □ When the last payment has been made the Music Service will 'gift' you the instrument.

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Which instrument should I learn?

Which instrument a pupil would like to play is an extremely important part of deciding which is the right instrument for them. A determined pupil will overcome all kinds of obstacles. However, the choice of instrument may also be affected by physical suitability and the availability of lessons within the school (see below).

The appropriate visiting instrumental teacher at your school will be able to help with the choice of instrument and offer expert advice regarding the physical suitability of the pupil to the instrument.

To find out more about all of the instruments that are available through Redbridge Music Service see the Instrument Centre page . You can find out what kind of groups the instruments can be played in, lists of music to listen to, names of famous players, etc.

There are many instruments to choose from:

The Piano (Keyboard)

A very versatile instrument, the piano is used in jazz bands, rock and pop groups and as a solo instrument. The piano is also used to accompany any instrument. Keyboards are capable of producing many sounds and are used mainly by rock and pop groups.

The Guitar

Like the piano the guitar does not require accompaniment by other instruments. Classical musicians use acoustic guitars and electric guitars are used by rock and pop bands.

The Recorder

The recorder is an ideal instrument for children to start on and are very cheap to purchase.

The Flute

The flute has a beautiful tone and can be heard clearly over an orchestra or wind band because it is capable of playing very high. It is a refined instrument and flute choirs are now becoming very popular.

The Clarinet

The clarinet has a very mellow tone and is played in wind bands, orchestras and jazz groups. Many clarinetists learn the saxophone when they have reached a good standard.

The Saxophone

The saxophone has a very silky sound and is played by jazz, classical, pop and soul musicians. It is a very popular instrument and features in jazz bands, wind bands and saxophone ensembles.

The Oboe

The oboe is probably one of the most difficult and rewarding instruments to play. It has a beautiful tone in the hands of an experienced player and is performed in wind bands and orchestras. The oboe is a double reed instrument and has a very reedy tone when played by beginners.

The Bassoon

The bassoon is the largest and deepest sounding woodwind instrument. It is often considered to be the comedian of the orchestra because of its distinctive sound. The bassoon is played in wind bands, orchestras and wind ensembles.

The Violin

The violin has a beautiful sound and some of the World's most wonderful melodies have been written for it. The violin leads the orchestra and string quartets use two violins. Some groups such as The Corrs use electric violins.

The Viola

The viola is a larger version of the violin and has a slightly richer, deeper sound than the violin. It is used in the orchestra and in string quartets and is occasionally used as a solo instrument.

The Cello

The cello has an enormous range of notes from deep notes in the low register to passionate singing notes in the upper register. It is used in orchestras and string quartets and has an enormous solo repertoire like the violin.

The Double Bass

The double bass is the largest instrument in the string family and makes a deep resonant sound. It is used in orchestras and jazz groups.

The Harp

The harp is often used in orchestras but is an excellent solo instrument. It is also used for accompanying choirs.

The Trumpet

The trumpet can have a very penetrating sound but can also sound very lyrical. It is a very versatile instrument and can be used in wind bands, orchestras, jazz bands and brass ensembles. The trumpet is an excellent choice for fanfares and playing at ceremonial occasions.

The Cornet

The cornet appears to be shorter than the trumpet however the tube length is the same. It has a more mellow tone quality and is preferred by brass bands.

The French Horn


The French horn is a very heroic instrument and has a very beautiful sound quality. It is used in orchestras, wind bands and chamber groups.

The Tenor Horn

The tenor horn has a different shape to the French horn and is used in brass bands. It has a mellow sound quality and is easier to play than the French horn.

The Trombone

The trombone has a slide rather than valves and is capable of producing special effects such as glissandi (sliding from one note to another). It is the most versatile brass instrument as it can be played in orchestras, wind bands, brass bands, jazz orchestras and reggae groups.



The **Double Bass** (or **Electric Bass**) is a stringed instrument that is played with the hands and feet. It is a member of the **string family** and is used in a wide range of musical styles, including **rock, pop, jazz, and funk**. The instrument is typically played with a **pick** (also known as a **plectrum**) and is often used to provide a **low-end** or **backbone** for a band. The **Double Bass** is also used in **orchestras** and **big bands**. The instrument is made of **wood** and has **four strings**. The **Double Bass** is a **stringed instrument** that is played with the hands and feet. It is a member of the **string family** and is used in a wide range of musical styles, including **rock, pop, jazz, and funk**. The instrument is typically played with a **pick** (also known as a **plectrum**) and is often used to provide a **low-end** or **backbone** for a band. The **Double Bass** is also used in **orchestras** and **big bands**. The instrument is made of **wood** and has **four strings**.