Milkwood Music Program



“When the human being hears music, they have a sense of wellbeing, because these tones harmonize with what they have experienced in the world of their spiritual home.”

~ Rudolf Steiner

Steiner Music Curriculum

Rudolf Steiner described music as 'the very heart of nature'.

Music Education is engaged in for its inherently joyful and life-affirming qualities. The most important aspect of music education is for the teacher to understand each child's musical path and to attempt to give it recognition as something precious to be nurtured.

Music takes a central position in Steiner education, studied both as a discrete discipline and most importantly as a vital part of the pedagogy. In broad terms, Steiner Education aims to harmonise the physical and spiritual aspects of the child. Music supports this aim across the curriculum by offering a way of understanding the dynamic connections between the growing human being and his or her stage in the development of consciousness. The Steiner Music Teacher has a good knowledge of the Steiner Main Lesson curriculum as this informs many of the decisions regarding music choice and instructional practices. Likewise, the Class Teacher should bear in mind that music as well as being part of everyday life in a Steiner Classroom is an art in its own right.

Listening, creating and performing music are all integral aspects of a balanced music education. Through the students' involvement in sequential and age-appropriate activities, they develop a refined ability to experience and eventually understand music from many different cultures, historical periods and places.

Music education is a rich and valuable experience in its own right and is known to have a positive influence on the development of fine and gross motor skills, emotional intelligence as well as cognitive and interpersonal capacities. Steiner's insistence on the artistic approach to teaching, means that music has a special place in education. For instance, Steiner's insistence that reading and writing should come from drawing, relates to the sense of movement that students activate when drawing curves and straight lines. The sense of movement is closely connected with the musical sense as it deals with the aesthetics of rhythm, tension and relaxation. As the children move either in space or in their imaginations when learning the letters, so do they experience a musical quality. This positive relationship is replicated in many other disciplines.

Whilst music undoubtedly provides opportunities for personal skill development and performance achievement, it is also a social art that can build bridges between individuals and societies. Music is also the art that, according to Steiner, is closest to the 'will of the world' the unseen forces that shape physical existence and it is perhaps these aspects that makes it so vital a part of an effective education.

Music Curriculum Goals and Skills

In addition to the overarching aims of the Australian Steiner Curriculum: The Arts, the following knowledge, understanding and skills are developed in students:

- The ability to communicate with others in musical contexts (ensemble playing).
- The ability to sing and play instrumental music for enjoyment and self-expression.
- The ability to create original music as a way of communicating feelings and ideas.
- The ability to respect and make aesthetic judgments about music in different cultural and historical contexts using appropriate meta-language.
- A life-long love for a wide range of musical activities.
- An understanding of the role music can play in sustaining good health.

Students skills in singing, recorder, movement and simple rhythm/ percussion work in Class 1-2, before specialized string instrument tuition is introduced from Class 3. Children from Class 3 receive weekly private instrumental tuition and are members of the school choir and string ensemble. They experience the process of practicing over many years in order to achieve a musical goal.



Milkwood's Specialist Music Program

Instrument Studies
Milkwood students from Class 3 to 7 receive specialist tuition in the violin, viola or cello.
Children receive eight lessons/term with an expectation of daily home practice.
Families are required to hire or purchase instruments and method books. As the lesson course is individualized to each child's learning style and personal goals, instructions for which music books to purchase is given through direct contact between the parent and teacher.

Choir and String Ensemble
Milkwood students from Class 3 to 7 participate in weekly choir and string ensemble lessons.
These groups perform regularly at school festival and public events.
Opportunities to engage with teaching artists, Indigenous Knowledge, music masterclasses and collaborations with arts organizations enrich our program.



Teachers



Tara Murphy is the Concertmaster and Education/ Outreach officer for the Darwin Symphony Orchestra. Tara is a graduate of the Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem and The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. She has been the recipient of the Allied Chamber Music Scholarship, the Graham Wood Silver Jubilee Award for Chamber Music, and a three-time winner of Echo Investment Chamber Music Prize. Previous positions have included Concertmaster of the Australian International Opera Company, Concertmaster of the Argyle Ensemble as well as violinist in the PATMA piano quintet that regularly toured China, and the Sartory String Quartet for Musica Viva in Schools. tara.murphy@cdu.edu.au



Netanela Mizrahi holds a Bachelor of Arts (Music, Yolngu Studies), Bachelor of Education, Masters of Music Therapy, and Steiner Teacher Training through Sydney Rudolf Steiner College. Netanela is the Darwin Symphony Orchestra's Principal Second Violin. Her commissioned theatre scores include *Burat the Brave (2013), Fedelma (2014)*, *Yorimoto (2016), Mr Takahashi (2017)* and *A Smoke Social (2018).* In 2019 she was commissioned by the Arafura Music Collective to write *Love and Dreaming* with Guwanbal Gurriwiwi, and by the Darwin Symphony Orchestra to create a work for Guwanbal, choir and full orchestra in 2020. Following her work with survivors of torture and trauma in Immigration Detention Centres, remote Aboriginal communities, with Indigenous survivors of attempted genocide and the stolen generation, in schools and palliative care, Netanela was awarded a Churchill fellowship to study the impact of music interventions in communities that experience significant trauma (USA and Northern Ireland, 2017). In 2020, Netanela received a national Australian Music Centre Art Music Award for Excellence in Music Education. principal@milkwood.nt.edu.au



Michael Bardon, cellist holds degrees from the Musichochschule Luebeck and Johannes Gutenberg Universitaet Mainz in Germany, the University of Newcastle in Australia and gained professional orchestral training as an academy graduate of the Essen Philharmonic Orchestra in Germany. His principal teachers include Professors Diethelm Jonas, Nick Deutsch and Anthea Scott-Mitchell, leading to a unique skill set. Michael holds Master's degrees in both cello and oboe performance. He has performed widely as solo, chamber and orchestral musician including engagement in the Essen Philharmonic, Frankfurt Opera, Sinfonietta Baltica, Orchester M18, Sydney Philharmonia, The Orchestra Project and the Willoughby Symphony. An experienced teacher, Michael is dedicated to assisting students on all instruments to reach their potential and worked in academic leadership as Program Leader of Classical Performance at the Australian Institute of Music from 2017 – 2020. Commencing 2021 he joined the Darwin Symphony as Principal Cellist.



Nakita Nia Staines is a primary and secondary teacher who specialises in Music. Nakita commenced her studies at Monash University with a double master's in education majoring in Music, violin and singing. Nakita is currently working as a string instrument tutor at Milkwood Steiner School. Nakita is also a member of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra and has been playing the violin for twenty-two years.

Purchasing Instruments and Resources

Families of class 3-7 children are responsible for sourcing an instrument for their child.
If purchasing a new or second-hand instrument, we recommend the Gliga brand, and strongly recommend avoiding cheaper instruments.

String instruments come in different sizes, and most children will progress between 3 sizes during their primary years. Please seek size advice from you child's teacher before sourcing an instrument.
A rough sizing guide may be viewed here: https://www.simplyforstrings.com.au/pages/size-guide

Some luthiers we trust include the following. Sometimes, they stock good second-hand instruments.

https://grantviolins.com.au https://www.violins.com.au https://www.simplyforstrings.com.au

To hire an instrument, we recommend

https://www.musicorp.com.au

If buying an instrument from gumtree or another student, we recommend asking your teacher to check it first. All instruments should come with a case, rosin and bow. Violins and violas also require a shoulder rest. It is normal for strings to break from time to time. Replacement strings may be purchased from the front office. Beginner cello students should purchase Cello time Joggers by Kathy and David Blackwell. Beginner violin and viola students will be advised of their method book after their initial lessons.

Home Practice Guide

When learning an instrument, a daily home practice is essential. It is rare for children to be able to do this without parent involvement. To begin with, the most important element is frequency, not duration. Playing something every day, even if only for a few minutes, establishes a routine. Once the routine is established, practice increases according to goals or time frames. By the end of their first year of study, most children will practice for at least 30 minutes/day. Some prefer to practice to a goal (eg. I will practice until I can play half my piece without stopping).

It is important to recognize that there will be times of resistance to this routine, and other times of ease. Learning a musical instrument requires a great deal of will, and is a strong example of developing a child's capacity for delayed gratification.
Children will need a designated practice space, including a music stand in order to practice at home. A practice journal/communication book allows the teacher to pass on the week's practice focus, so that parents can support this.

Care of Instruments

String instruments are sensitive to heat and changes in dryness/humidity. Never leave an instrument or case in direct sunlight. Never leave it in a car. Store your instrument in a cool, dry place. Cellos should be kept on their sides, not their backs. Violins in their cases, back down. At school, instruments should be placed under children's bags, and never remain at school overnight.