

Burwood Girls High School

Centre of Excellence
Burwood Ensemble Program



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BEP MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK 2025

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Dear Burwood GHS Community,

Welcome to the Burwood Ensemble Program. We are very proud of the BEP and know that as a part of our music family at Burwood GHS, your time here will be educational, musically fulfilling as well as a lot of fun!

Membership in the Ensemble Program is joining a multi-disciplinary activity which benefits the whole person, with decades of academic research showing that learning to perform music and participating in music ensemble activities profoundly benefits brain development, improves academic success, develops literacy and numeracy skills, significantly improves engagement, short and long term memory, self-discipline, mindfulness, physical dexterity, emotional understanding and empathy. In the BEP we look both at music AND the whole student to support them during the journey through high school and beyond. This is also an activity that is enjoyable both socially and personally.

With these benefits students have a certain level of responsibility.

- To a commitment to the **full** year, attending all rehearsals and performances,
- To taking weekly private lessons on their instrument,
- To planning other activities so no clashes with our rehearsals and performances.
- To communicating with the BEP office **FIRST** if a clash occurs, (it is bound to happen occasionally) so a solution can be negotiated.
- These easy undertakings will result in happy students!

The program is large, catering to around 140 students in recent years. There are core ensembles and smaller chamber ensembles, totalling 10 groups in 2024. In addition to school concerts, the program organises community performances, ceremonial performances, tours, instrumental tuition, a Burwood GHS music camp and encourages participation in Arts Unit activities.

The information on the following pages covers the operation and organisation of the BEP. If you have any questions, please contact the BEP office via email or on 9747 3355.

I look forward to meeting new students and parents plus welcoming our returning musicians and families soon.

Kind regards,



Andy Del Riccio

2025 BEP STAFF

Andy Del Riccio, Program Director

andrew.delriccio@det.nsw.edu.au

Mary Bonaddio, Administrator (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday)

mary.bonaddio@det.nsw.edu.au

Core Ensembles and Directors

Junior Concert Band: Clare Fox

Concert Band: Andy Del Riccio

Senior Concert Band: Simon Bartlett

Big Band: Michael Brady

Binyang Strings: Nan Heo

Vivaldi Strings: Andy Del Riccio

Margaret Sutherland Chamber Orchestra:

John Ockwell

Small Ensembles and Directors

Fluteloops: Catherine Kinsella

Brass Ensemble: Andy Del Riccio

Drumline/Percussion Ensemble: Alistair

Wallis

Rock Band(s): Michael Brady

Cello Choir: Miles Horler

Musettes: Genevieve Brown

Core Ensembles

All wind, brass, string, bass guitar and percussion players **must** play in one of the Core Ensembles. Guitar and piano players (not normally in band or orchestra) should strongly consider playing another instrument in an ensemble as well.

BAND STREAM

Junior Concert Band (JCB) Tuesdays 3:00 - 4:00pm

Is a band for players starting a wind, brass or percussion instrument or taking on a second one. It is an *accelerated* program that sees all the members graduate to the Concert Band by the end of term 3.

Concert Band (CB) Wednesday 3:30 – 5:00pm

Is for Year 7 and more established wind, brass or percussion players. The focus is to develop the skills and concepts necessary for mature ensemble playing, marching and enjoying making music. During Term 1 the band may do marching practice with the Senior Concert Band on Thursdays after school. Marching is fun and when taking part in ANZAC events a very rewarding and moving experience.

Senior Concert Band (SCB) Thursdays 3:30 – 5:00pm

Is a flagship ensemble whose members are some of the most senior and experienced musicians in the school. Students join through audition or invitation. The SCB focuses on the classic symphonic wind ensemble repertoire as well as entertainment and ceremonial music. It marches for the Sydney ANZAC Day parade each year and enters competitions when possible.

Big Band (BB) Tuesday Study period & recess

Is a jazz ensemble in the form of a traditional big band. It provides an excellent forum for advanced players to develop jazz style playing: both written and improvised. Membership of

this flagship ensemble is conditional in playing in a Core Concert Band and is open to senior ensemble players or by invitation.

STRINGS STREAM

Binyang Strings (BS) Thursday 7:30-8:30 am

Is an ensemble for students starting a string instrument. It is an *accelerated* program which sees all members graduate to Vivaldi Strings towards the end of term 3. Binyang was chosen by the players in 2021 and is the indigenous name for one of our locally celebrated birds: the Australian White Ibis.

Vivaldi Strings (VS) Wednesday 7:30-8:40 am

Created in 2020, Vivaldi Strings is a dynamic, intermediate ensemble for advancing players. It performs both popular and traditional repertoire.

Margaret Sutherland Chamber Orchestra (MSCO) Thursday 7:30-8:40 am

is for advanced performers, exploring challenging repertoire and technique. This ensemble will also expand at times to become a chamber orchestra with the addition of senior wind players.

Thursdays Lunch time

Musettes is a small, but diverse choir which sings a range of music: from Art songs, to show and popular music.

Small Ensembles

Musettes, Clarinet Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble/Drum Line, Cello Choir, Rock Band and Fluteloops

In addition to our core ensembles, small groups are formed to play at various events and extend players' skills. To be a member of a small ensemble, students **MUST** play in a core ensemble, with the exception of vocalists, piano and guitar players. **Bass guitar** players join one of the core concert bands or string ensembles (playing double bass is highly encouraged) Invitations to join the Small Ensembles will be announced early in Term 1, so keep an eye out for roll-call notices, in Sentral and Google Classroom.

Additional chamber groups may be formed as needed: students are encouraged to form their own small groups for performance opportunities at school. Please see the BEP director if you have an idea for any small group and you will get the support to make it happen!

Your time in the BEP

Joining the BEP

- To join the BEP, parents/carers need to follow this link:
- [2025 New Member Enrolment Form](#) and complete the BEP enrolment form as soon as possible.
- Re-enrolling members click here: [2025 Re-enrolment Form \(existing members\)](#)
- Rehearsals start week 2 of term 1.

Eligibility

- **Students must be enrolled at Burwood Girls High School.**
- **All members of the BEP MUST be taking weekly lessons on their instrument in order to participate.**
- **All members must commit to the full school year** (3 terms for yr12).

Instruments

BEP instruments are as follows:

WOODWIND	BRASS	PERCUSSION	STRINGS	OTHER
Flute	Trumpet	Students study the following	Violin	Voice
Oboe	French horn	Timpani	Viola	Piano
Clarinet	Trombone	Drum Kit	Cello	Guitar
Bassoon	Euphonium	Auxiliary Percussion	Double Bass	Bass Guitar
Alto, tenor & baritone Saxophone	Tuba	Keyboard Percussion		Theory / Musicianship
				Composition

Beginner players should consider what they wish to play and are encouraged to look online (such as YouTube) at instrument demonstrations. Instruments are available on preferences (first in, best dressed) and program needs. Rare instruments such as low brass, viola, bass, and low saxophones may be eligible for free instrument hire in their first year of learning as an encouragement. Players of large instruments are provided with two instruments where possible - one for home and one for school - to assist with moving their instrument about.

Piano, Guitar, Voice, Theory and Composition

Due to the instrumentation of most ensembles, only Big Band and Rock Band have potential places for these instruments. Guitarists can play in Rock Band or form their own band: the BEP will assist in this. Theory and composition lessons are for students interested in these areas of music or are preparing high level AMEB exams.

Ensemble Selection / Placement / Auditions

Yr 7 students who already play an instrument will initially be placed in Concert Band and Vivaldi Strings. Beginners will be placed in Junior Concert Band or Binyang Strings.

Ensemble Progression

Players in Junior Concert Band and Binyang Strings automatically progress to the next ensemble at the end of term 3 or as appropriate. Other players may request to be considered for a different ensemble or be asked to change for the benefit of both student

and ensemble. If a student strongly feels they are in the wrong ensemble, they or their parents MUST bring this to the attention of the BEP director as soon as possible.

Leaving the BEP

- Membership of the BEP is on an annual basis and for the whole school year.
- All players are expected to be committed to the program for the full year, maintaining full attendance.
- With prior consultation, the BEP Director may, in exceptional circumstances allow a student to be released from their commitment. There are no exceptions to this pathway.
- Membership fees are non-refundable.

Parental Support

Parent involvement and support is very welcome at all BEP events. There is a list of 'parent helpers' maintained by the BEP Administrator. Parents/Carers can let the program know they are willing to help by clicking the checkbox in the enrolment form. Please let the BEP office know if you have any particular skills or contacts you could donate to assist with logistics or fund-raising. As an extra-curricular program this support is critical in maintaining the high standards the BEP is known for. Support as the audience at concerts is also crucial, please make every effort to support all the Burwood GHS daughters!

Fees

The Ensemble Program operating costs rely upon annual membership fees*. This covers employing staff such as conductors, BEP Office staff, purchasing of music scores, instruments and equipment, repairs, music stands, folders, etc. Membership fees do not cover individual tuition costs, instrument hire, BEP annual camp, BEP tours, or external activities such as Arts Unit activities.

The fee structure is:

Full Membership. Full Membership covers participation in any of the ensembles a student is eligible for. They can *also* be part of any of the other small ensembles. There is a full membership discount for younger siblings. Year 12 students pay a $\frac{3}{4}$ rate as they graduate at the end of term 3.

Part Program Membership is only available to pianists, singers or guitarists ONLY to access lessons. They should be involved in one small group.

Please note:

1. Membership fees are billed through SchoolBytes and appear on the school account. As fees cover budgeted annual costs, they are non-refundable.
2. All fees are paid either via the Online Payment Portal, or the Burwood GHS Front Office in person.
3. Students will not be able to participate in tours/camps/public performances if fees are outstanding.
4. Instrumental hire, if required, is a separate fee. The hiring fees are also billed to your school account.
5. Instrumental tuition fees are separate and are billed by the individual tutor.

6. Parents must contact the BEP if they feel there is an error in billing. Unpaid fees remain on the school account.

2025 Fees

Ensemble membership	\$500 p/a
Younger sibling discount	\$375 p/a
Year 12 membership	\$375 p/a
Part Program Membership	\$250 p/a
Camps / Intrastate Tours (est.)	\$350-450 approx.

****In cases of hardship, parents/guardians may apply confidentially to the Principal or Program Director in writing for a payment plan or other considerations.***

Attendance

Attendance at **ALL** rehearsals and performances is a condition of membership. Players must be punctual, ready to play at the start time and have a pencil with them at ALL rehearsals.

Attendance at Rehearsals

No other activities or appointments are made which clash with rehearsals. This includes leaving rehearsals early. Click [Weekly Rehearsal Schedule](#) for the rehearsal timetable. Communication between BEP staff, conductors, students and parents/guardians is via email, Google Classroom, Sentral notices. The school website also has a page for the BEP with general information and links to important documents.

Rolls are marked like school classes, are a legal school document with absences followed up. Please communicate by email in advance for known absences. In most cases, disruptions by exams, excursions and other school commitments will be known well in advance. Parents are contacted if a member is absent from a rehearsal to provide an explanation.

For unavoidable clashes, the **first step** is to contact the BEP Director to negotiate a reasonable outcome.

A member's position in the program may be re-considered if attendance/attitude/behaviour is not satisfactory.

Music and Practice Parts

Music is kept in black performance folders that are stored in the Music storeroom in marked pigeon holes. These folders live at school and only go to rehearsals, onsite lessons and performances.

Practice parts are distributed electronically via Google Classroom. All members of an ensemble must practise their parts, take them to their music lessons and be properly prepared for each rehearsal.

If there is an issue with accessing Google Classroom students must contact the BEP Director as soon as practicable.

Performances

Annual Concerts

Attendance at ALL performances is mandatory. There are 4 major in-school term concerts during the year. There may be up to two tours: at the end of Term 1 (Senior ensembles) and week 3 of Term 4 (Intermediate ensembles). Other performances and activities also occur from time to time. As much advance notice as possible is given. The dates and times are in the [BEP Calendar](#) and Sentral: please ensure they are noted and kept clear so there are no clashes.

Term 1

Autumn Concert

This is held late in term 1 - for 2025 there may be 2 concerts: one for bands and one for strings with guest performers.

Term 2

Inner West Schools Music Festival

This is proposed to be held on a weekend late in Term 1 and is a major fund-raiser for the program. It is a huge day with ensembles from schools all over the inner west. All BEP members perform and are asked to assist with the running of the day.

Term 3

Big Night Out:

This is a major fund-raiser – a showcase of the talents of all the girls in the program in Term 3. Cabaret-style seating and BYO nibbles and drinks make this a fun night out for all. It is also a celebration of our yr12 players. It is their last formal (and sometimes emotional) concert in the program!

Term 4

A Little Night Music: Our end-of-year concert brings together ensembles to present the very best of what we have achieved through the year. With a sprinkling of end of year cheer and even some caroling, this is a relaxed and enjoyable way to round off the year of music-making.

Uniform

The program wears two uniforms: normal school uniforms are worn during school hours. Performances outside of school hours or off-site require the BEP uniform. This is:

- black tailored trousers or slacks. (joggers, tights, corgi trousers, etc are not permitted)
- black socks and polished black school shoes
- BEP black dress shirt (available from Lowes Burwood)
- BEP black jacket for the cold. (available from Lowes Burwood)

For outdoors, there is an additional BEP hat, available through the BEP office. PE uniform is worn when travelling on tour.

All members are required to own the official Black BEP uniform and wear it for performances outside of school / school hours. We have a small 2nd hand uniform shop in the BEP office with good quality clean uniforms that have simply been outgrown too quickly! Feel free to contact the BEP Administrator

Burwood Girls High School Performance Consents

Burwood GHS uses **SchoolBytes** for all performance notifications, delivered via email. As Consents are a technical requirement they are not an opportunity to decline to play at any performance. At times an expression of interest (EOI) form is sent out for additional performances. Please respond promptly to consents or EOI requests. All questions go to the BEP office.

Students are under the supervision of the ensemble's conductor, the BEP director or other DoE staff at all performances. Unless otherwise stated on the permission note, the players need to make their own arrangements for travel to and from the activities. Parents will need to supervise their daughter's transport arrangements.

Any costs associated with a performance will be clearly communicated and added to the student's school account.

Annual Music Camp

This newer initiative has huge benefits for the program. It is held very early in Term 1 and provides all members with a unique opportunity to get a head start to the year's music making. It also allows for placement into ensembles. It is a fun-filled, intensive 2-3 days of rehearsals, workshops and a final concert. It is also a wonderful way for new members to meet other students, make new friends and work together and get to know their conductors and tutors.

As it is early in the school year it is important that membership enrolment is finalised as quickly as possible and then consent for the camp given straight away. Re-enrolling members will be asked to declare their expression of interest during term 4 in the previous year.

The 2024 camp saw many year 7 students experience some important firsts in their lives - being away from home overnight, getting to know both their peers and older high school students, see music for the first time and perform it a few days later and enjoy the camaraderie of the BEP.

The 2025 camp will be held from February 18-20 at Crusaders Conference Centre in Galston, about 1 hour's drive from the school. Pricing will be available when known and EOI/Consents distributed.

Instruments

Instrument Hire

The BEP has a limited stock of instruments for hire to students who are ensemble members. Please indicate in the online enrolment form if you wish to hire an instrument for the year.

- The annual fee for instrument hire in 2025 is \$230 p/a.
- This fee may be waived for students who take up an instrument which the BEP is in need of.
- For very large instruments, the BEP will endeavour to provide 2 instruments: one for home practice and another for school use.
- Fees are used to replace instruments at the end of their service life and add instruments which are needed for the development of the program.

Care

- Students (and ultimately parents / carers) are responsible for care and maintenance of hired instruments.
- The student's name, a parental contact phone number and the school's name **MUST** be clearly visible on a luggage tag on the instrument.
- By hiring an instrument, parents / carers agree to have the instrument professionally serviced annually and will provide a copy of the receipt to the BEP office by the end of term 4.
- If instruments are not serviced, the hire may be cancelled and the cost of servicing added to the student's school account.
- For ALL issues with hire instruments, please contact the BEP Director ASAP.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of reputable instrument technicians.

Buying an instrument

It is proven that ownership of an instrument heightens student engagement and progress. It also means hire instruments can be redistributed to younger players as they start.

Before making a purchase, seek advice from your daughter's instrumental teacher or the BEP office! Advice on buying an instrument is paramount! Music stores operate to make a profit: this may not align with your best interests.

Instrument storage at school

The BEP music storeroom is shared with elective music students for storing instruments during the school day. It is critical students place their instrument on shelves or out of the way so as to avoid creating trip hazards. **These instruments must have clear, legible name tags on them with student name, a contact mobile and school's name. Untagged instruments will be removed from the storeroom.** The storeroom is for daily storage only or for large instruments used at school. **Students are not to leave instruments overnight.**

Learning to play

Private Instrumental Tuition

All BEP members are required to have weekly lessons on their instrument. These lessons may take place at Burwood GHS or from an outside teacher: it is recommended to take lessons at school where the BEP team can provide a more comprehensive support for each student's needs.

Private instrumental/vocal lessons at school are normally 30 minutes in length, occurring weekly on a rotating basis and paid directly to the tutor. The recommended cost is \$50 per lesson (+GST, if required). Tutors set their own fees, but follow industry guidelines, such as the Music Teacher Association of NSW. Please consult with the individual tutor as to their rates and conditions.

BEP Tutors for 2025:

Violin/Viola: Nan Heo,
Eda Talu
Cello: Miles Horler
Flute: Catherine Kinsella
Oboe: Mark Bruwell
Clarinet/Saxophone: Clare Fox
Bassoon: Tiger Chou

Trumpet: Pierre Scala
Low Brass: Dale Vail
Guitar: Michael Brady
Double Bass Bass Guitar: Mark Szeto
Voice: Genevieve Brown
Percussion/Drums: Alistair Wallis
Piano: Greg Dobbs
Composition: Miles Horler

All our tutors are professional musicians and educators. While they are committed to the School Ensemble Program and their teaching supports both their student's musical development, they are not employed by the school, so invoice directly to parents/guardians. They will communicate any additional conditions in addition to BEP policies. The BEP oversees and maintains attendance records of the private lessons, so if there are any concerns at any stage about a student's tuition, contact the BEP director.

Timetables

Tutors publish the term's lesson timetable in advance in an online Google Spreadsheet that is shared with parents and students registered email. Fixed lunch/ recess or out of school lesson times can be requested, however are subject to availability. Priority for out of class lessons to senior students, starting with year 12. Students are required to regularly check their times; in case of late changes tutors will communicate by phone or email before the day of the lesson.

Instrumental lessons run between 7:30 am and 5.30 pm apart from Roll Call which is 8.40 – 9 am and sport on Tuesdays. Times/days are based primarily on the tutor's availability. Lessons will rotate fortnightly so that no student misses the same school class regularly. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the tutor is aware if they are in danger of missing the same school class too often.

The student's 'passport' out of class is their electronic timetable. They must bookmark their timetable on their laptop and must be prepared to show the timetable to their class teacher. If they cannot, the classroom teacher may not let the student out of class. The timetable also serves as a lesson register which is maintained by the tutor and serves as the official, legal roll of attendance.

Attendance policy

- **Lessons are a commitment for the year.** Tutors aim for at least 8 lessons each term to ensure your daughter's successful progress. Most terms will include 10 lessons.
- **Requests to change a lesson time** must be at least 48 hours before the lesson is scheduled. Lesson times cannot be changed on the day, unless the student sees the tutor in person **and** change is agreed to by the tutor.
- **If a tutor cannot attend a lesson**, parents/carers will be notified by change to the timetable and phone or email with as much notice as possible. The lesson will either be made up at a later date in that term, the fee credited to your account or refunded.
- **If a student cannot attend a lesson.** For sickness or illness only, parents/carers must notify their tutor by phone or email giving at least 24 hours notice. For all other matters, a minimum of 48 hours notice is required. Insufficient or no notification (for any reason, including illness, forgetfulness or school event) results in that lesson charged. Proper notification will result in the lesson being made up at a later convenient date or credited to the next term.
- **Any whole-school events or exams/assessment tasks that are on the school calendar should be discussed with your tutor in advance.** Students are excused from Assembly to attend lessons and it is always the student's responsibility to show their classroom teacher their timetable and ask to go to their music lesson. Classroom teachers are supportive of your daughter's attendance at music lessons and they will release a student to attend a scheduled lesson upon seeing their timetable.

Payment for lessons

- Parents will be invoiced by the instrumental tutor directly each term and need to be paid in advance, by the tutor's due date. Lessons may be cancelled if fees are not paid on time.
- With mutual agreement between parents and tutors, two lessons may be given in a week, if necessary, in order to catch up on missed tuition.
- It is only possible to discontinue lessons in extenuating circumstances **after** discussion between parents, the BEP director and the tutor. Tutors work on the basis of committing to a full school year and students are expected to do likewise.
- The commitment to lessons and working with the tutor to develop as a musician helps maintain the student's continuing enjoyment and progress.

Daily Practice

- Much has been written about practice and how much is enough. A good rule of thumb is 30 minutes daily practice.
- Tutors will guide each student as to what is suitable for them as the amount varies with each student.

- Practice should be a mix of production and technical work, solo pieces and ensemble music as directed by the tutor.
- Even just a small amount of daily practice is better than one big chunk the night before a lesson!

Contact and Communication

BEP director	Andy Del Riccio	andrew.delriccio@det.nsw.edu.au
BEP administrator	Mary Bonaddio	mary.bonaddio@det.nsw.edu.au
BEP calendar	BEP Calendar at a Glance 2025	
Email	burwoodg-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au	
Google Classroom	Student access only	
Sentral	https://burwoodg-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/student-and-parent-portal.html	
School Website	https://burwoodg-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/	
BEP home page on Burwood GHS site:	BEP home page	
Enrolment forms	2025 New Member Enrolment Form	
	2025 Re-enrolment Form	