



# Performing Arts

*James Gillespie's High School*

# Core Philosophy & Faculty Structure

- The Performing Arts faculty at JGHS encompasses **Music, Drama, and Media**. The school operates in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council, which is notably one of the few local authorities in Scotland that provides **fully free instrumental music tuition** within schools.
- The primary goal of this faculty is to ensure a fulfilling, inclusive, and creative environment that



# The Instrumental Lesson System

**Eligibility & Auditions:** Free tuition is explicitly designed to be accessible to all students, especially those who lacked access in primary school. S1 pupils are given a special introduction in August and invited to audition. However, students who already received lessons via the City of Edinburgh primary school framework **automatically continue their instruction** without needing to re-audition.

**Lesson Format:** Tuition takes place in small groups. It operates on a **weekly rotating 30 minute schedule** so students do not miss the

# The Instrumental Lesson System

**The "Private Lesson" Restriction:** By strict Council policy, students receiving free in-school tuition **are not permitted to take private external lessons on that same instrument.** This prevents dual instruction and ensures resources are distributed fairly. (Exceptions apply only to regional or national youth ensembles like NYOS, NYCOS, or RCS)

- **Instruments Offered:**

- **Free Council Tuition:** Piano, Brass, Woodwind, Upper Strings (Violin/Viola), Cello, Double Bass, Clarsach, Percussion, Guitar, and Voice.
- **Paid In-School Tuition:** Highland Bagpipes & Chanters alongside Pipe Band Drumming, are hosted

# Student & Parent Commitments


**The Green Lesson Card System:** For health, safety, and tracking purposes, students must write their lesson times on a physical **Green Card**. This card **must be signed by their regular subject teacher** before they are permitted to leave a classroom to attend music.

**The Attendance Referral Process:** Instructors track attendance tightly. If a student misses **3 lessons without a valid excuse**, a formal referral is sent to the Performing Arts Coordinator, who notifies parents. A student is allowed only two subsequent referrals before being **permanently removed** from the free instrumental system.

**Ensemble Requirement:** Joining and committing to a school performance group is an absolute

# Rehearsal Schedules & Ensembles

Weekly practice groups are broken down into specific times:

- **Wind Band:** Monday (1:00pm – 1:40pm)
  - **Clarsach Group:** Wednesday (1:00pm – 1:40pm)
  - **Junior Choir / Trad Group:** Tuesday (1:00pm – 1:40pm)
  - **Junior & Senior String Orchestras:** Tuesday (3:40pm – 4:40pm)
  - **Senior Choir:** Wednesday (3:40pm – 4:40pm)
  - **Guitar Orchestra / Chanter & Pipe Band:** Thursday (3:40pm – 4:40pm / 5:00pm)
  - **Rock Band:** Friday (1:55pm – 2:55pm)
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# Performance Opportunities & Annual Events

The school year features a massive lineup of diverse performance calendars designed to display these developing artistic skills:

- **Large-Scale Showcases:**

- **The Christmas Concert:** A massive signature school event hosted at the iconic **Usher Hall on Wednesday 16th December**.
- **The Spring Fling:** A major showcase tracking progress across ensembles, taking place in **March 2027**.

- **Department Specific Festivals:**

- **Diversecity:** Orchestrated specifically by the **Drama and Media department** at the very end of the school year in **June**. This acts as an expansive cross-discipline platform highlighting music, performance poetry, pupil-led films, and multimedia art.

- **Competitions & Specialized Events:**

- Regular smaller-scale community concerts, **MusicFest**, the high-energy **Battle of the Bands**, and the prestigious **Young Musician of the Year** competition.

- **IMS Events:**

- As students partaking in IMS lessons are automatically enrolled in a department group/ensemble, there are also many IMS events that students are expected to perform at e.g. Edinburgh Music Festival, Saroj Lal Awards.