



# Rockheights Middle School Music Program

1250 Highrock Ave. Esquimalt, BC V9A 4V7 Ph: (250) 384-7125

## Welcome Back to Music at Rockheights!

Wednesday, September 12, 2024

Dear Rockheights Family:

**Welcome back to Rockheights!** If you are returning to Rockheights, I hope that you will continue your musical studies! Being involved in a school music program is a great opportunity to make meaningful memories and friendships and to do something that is fun and challenging! [Studies show](#) that students who participate in their school music programs graduate and pursue post-secondary schooling in higher numbers than their non-participating peers do.

**When are the class times?** The full music program timetable can be viewed on our website at [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com). Students are welcome to try band, strings and choir, but it's very challenging to keep up with all three because of the amount of class time you will miss. Students are expected to make a full commitment by attending all of their music classes.

**When are the concerts?** There are a variety of performances throughout the year, but these are major concerts where **student participation is expected**:

- 7pm, Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (everyone)
- 7pm, Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (bands only)
- 7pm, Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (strings and choir only)

If you can't attend a concert, please speak with Ms. McDonell as soon as possible. There will be other events such as festivals and field trips announced later, including major performance events in term 2. In the meantime, check out the Events page of [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com)

**Is it the same uniform as last year?** Yes. If you have outgrown your t-shirt and need a new one, speak with Ms. McDonell about trading in your old t-shirt or buying a new one.

**Will we go on trips this year?** Yes. We travelled overnight to Vancouver last year, so the next overnight trip will be in the 2025-2026 school year. This year, we will embark on day-trips only. Trip dates are posted to [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com). Trips are optional and extra-curricular – more information about trips will be sent out as those opportunities arise.

**Can I borrow an instrument again?** You can rent, borrow or purchase an instrument. If costs present a challenge, don't worry. Every child can get an instrument for little to no cost. **No student will be denied an opportunity to participate in music because of costs.**

If your family is able to rent an instrument from a retailer, **I strongly suggest that you do that.** You will get a much better-quality instrument than if you borrow one from the school district. Learning a new instrument is challenging, and knowing that you have a quality instrument at the outset helps to resolve questions about what a problem might be (i.e. "is it me, or the instrument?") Repairs are also dealt with much more easily. There are two fantastic retailers in town who support our program very much.

[www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com)



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## Long and McQuade Musical Instruments

756 Hillside Avenue, Victoria  
(250) 384-3622  
[www.long-mcquade.com](http://www.long-mcquade.com)

## Tapestry Music

772 Bay St., Victoria  
(250) 590-0752  
[Tapestrymusic.com](http://Tapestrymusic.com)

**For band instruments,** Rockheights also owns some wind, brass and percussion instruments, which can be loaned out on a first-come, first-served basis. I ask families to please make a one-time donation, \$20 is suggested, for the year if you can. Your donations help to defray the costs of maintaining these instruments and allows future students to have the same opportunities. Please make cheques payable to "Rockheights Middle School" and write your student's name on the memo line. If you are sending cash, please put it in an envelope with the student's name on it. If you cannot donate \$20 now, please consider donating any amount later.

**For string instruments,** School District 61 owns violins, violas and cellos, which can be loaned out on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost to rent these instruments is \$150 for violins or violas, or \$200 for cellos, for the year. If your family needs financial assistance, these fees can be reduced or waived. Please get in touch with me if you need help with this.

More information about how to get these instruments will be distributed in class. **Please do not send money until you receive the information. Chris Logan, from Long and McQuade will be in the music room from 4:30-6:30pm on September 19<sup>th</sup>, Meet-The-Teacher Night,** to help parents with renting an instrument. **All students are asked to please have their instrument by the third week of September.**

***How much do I need to practice?*** Consistent practice and commitment to your group are necessary for success. There will be assignments to help you set goals for practicing. **Students should expect to practice for a minimum of one hour every week on their own time,** including at the start of class. Our most successful students practice for some time every day. The music rooms are often available at nutrition break and lunch for practicing. It's a great way to make friends and spend the time.

***How will I receive information from the program?*** I will send information home via email or paper letters. Please make sure your email addresses are up-to-date with the school. The best way to reach me is through email at [rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca) or by calling the school at (250) 384-7125. [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com) is the place to go to find all kinds of information about the music program, including the timetable and a copy of any letters that go home.

***How do I sign up?*** For any music class at Rockheights, just start attending the class. I will make sure you are on the class list and have everything you need. Please get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns [rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca). I look forward to working with you! I'm looking forward to making music with you again this year!

Warmly,  
Risa McDonell,  
Music Teacher, Rockheights Middle School

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