

St. Charles Catholic School 6-8 Band & Choral
Program
2026-2027 Handbook



St. Charles Catholic School
331 St. Charles Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
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Welcome/Welcome Back!

To another amazing year of music making in the SCCS band and choral programs!

I am greatly looking forward to working with your young musician and very excited for another year excellent music education.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments you might have with any information in this handbook or your child's musical education at St. Charles Catholic School. My contact information can be found below.

Thank you in advance for supporting your young musician as they begin or continue their band journey.

Best Regards,

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K-5 General Music & Orff
6-8 Concert Band and Choir
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Essential Learnings:

(Found in the Manitoba Curriculum Framework for Music Education 2015)

1. Making Music: Music Language and Performance Skills

The learner develops language and practices for making music. This refers to how you understand and apply the concepts and skills of Music making or your technical literacy.

Generally speaking, this would include these specific outcomes:

Articulation	Breath Control	Range Extension
Phrasing	Rhythm	Sight Reading
Alternate Fingerings	Balance and Blend	Musical Independence

2. Creating Music: Creative Expression in Music:

The learner generates, develops and communicates ideas for creating music. This refers to your interpretive ability and how you process the information you are given.

Generally speaking, this would include specific outcomes:

Phrasing	Musicianship	Interpretation
Balance and Blend	Risk Taking	Style

3. Connecting to Music: Understanding Music In Context:

The learner develops understandings about the significance of music by making connections to various times, places, social groups and cultures. This not only refers to how music reflects and influences culture and identity, but also pays homage to the historical and geographical context of music.

Generally speaking, this would include specific outcomes:

Who?	What?	When?
Where?		
Why?	Genre	Style
Tradition		
Meaning	Purpose	

4.Responding to music: Valuing the Music Experience

The learner uses critical reflection to inform music learning and to develop agency and identity. This refers to how you might reflect, analyze, and construct meaning in response to your own and others music making.

Generally speaking, this would include specific outcomes:

Self-evaluation	Discussion of Musical Experience
Appreciation	Interpretation
Listening	Effectiveness
Preference	Musical goal setting

All essential learnings, and their corresponding outcomes, will be addressed by Mrs. Gregorchuk through the various repertoire selections and method book technique builders throughout the year. Repertoire will be selected to provide a diverse exposure to different musical styles. The diversity of selected repertoire may include: overtures, marches, pop-arrangements, newly composed works, classical transcriptions, movie music and chorales. We will be approaching all repertoires using a comprehensive musicianship strategy embedded within a spiral curriculum. Therefore, all essential learnings, and their corresponding outcomes, will be addressed as they pertain to the repertoire (Comprehensive Musicianship) and each concept will build upon itself (Spiral Curriculum).

Required Supplies (For All Students)

Parents/guardians are asked to please ensure that students have the following supplies for band:

- ♪ A quality instrument in perfect working condition. The case needs to be clearly labelled (a luggage tag is ideal) with their first name, last name, and homeroom.
 - ♪ Percussionists can rent a “Bell Kit” from the music store or the school for home practice.
- ♪ Music folder and sheet music – these will be provided by SCCS; students need only take good care of them (see “Sheet Music”) and remember to bring them to every band rehearsal.
 - ♪ The band method books are “Standard of Excellence” (SOE) "Accent on Achievement" and "Essential Elements" This method book will be provided by the school.
 - ♪ If lost or severely damaged, it will be up to the parent or guardian to replace it.
- ♪ A PENCIL!!! Students must bring a pencil to **every** class.

Required Supplies (Woodwinds)

Flute

(Note: Some/most of these supplies are included with the rental of the instrument)

- ♪ Plastic or metal tuning rod
- ♪ Cotton handkerchief or silk swab

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet/Saxophone

(Note: Some/most of these supplies are included with the rental of the instrument)

- ♪ 10 Rico or Rico Royal reeds (beginners use strength 2.5)
- ♪ Cork grease
- ♪ Cloth or silk pull-through swab
- ♪ Reed guard (optional)

Students are to understand that if you are playing a reed instrument, that the quality and condition of your reed is of the utmost importance to making your sound. A chipped, cracked or mouldy reed is considered useless and should be disposed of immediately and replaced with a new reed.

Mrs. Gregorchuk prefers the use of Rico Royal Reeds and these will be available at the price of \$2 per reed. Reed players are expected to always have one reed in reserve to act as an emergency back up. A typical high quality reed, if taken care of properly, should last the entire year.... If not longer.

Required Supplies (Brass/Percussion)

Trumpet

(Note: Some/most of these supplies are included with the rental of the instrument)

- ♪ Valve oil & tuning slide grease
- ♪ Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- ♪ Cleaning snake (optional)

Trombone

(Note: Some/most of these supplies are included with the rental of the instrument)

- ♪ Slide cream & spray bottle
- ♪ Tuning slide grease
- ♪ Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- ♪ Cleaning snake (optional)

Percussion

- ♪ Bell Kit (rented from a music store)
- ♪ Snare Sticks

Required Supplies for Choir:

- ♪ Nothing but your voice

Instrument & Music Folder Storage

Students are welcome to leave their instrument in the downstairs music room on the shelf designated for their grade level during the school day, and on the evenings when they are unable to practice.

Instruments must be properly labelled with the student's Full Name and Homeroom if it is going to be stored in the music room at any time.

Generally, the band room will be open before school at 8:30 AM, and after school until 4:00 PM for students to drop-off or pick-up their instruments. If, for any reason, the music room is locked, students are asked not to leave their instruments unattended in the hallways.

Music Folders will be stored in the downstairs music room.

Responsibility for Damaged, Lost, or Stolen Instruments

If renting outside of the school:

The school is not responsible for any instruments rented by parents/guardians of the students in the band program. If an instrument is damaged, lost, or stolen it is the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to repair/replace that instrument.

Both Long & McQuade and St. John's Music offer insurance plans on their instruments that cover damage, loss, and theft.

If renting from SCCS:

The rental fee will cover a year's normal wear and tear, but the user's parent or guardian must pay for any damage beyond normal use necessitating repairs. The Band Director shall determine the extent of any excessive damage. If an instrument is lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to replace that instrument.

Instruments rented from the school can be insured under the family's home insurance.

Instrument Repairs

If you have questions about any type of repair or maintenance please see Mrs. Gregorchuk for an evaluation of your situation before taking your instrument to any kind of repair facility. Do not under any circumstances attempt to fix or repair your own instrument!!!

Method Books & Sheet Music

Students will be using either the Standard of Excellence, Accent on Achievement, or Essential Elements method book. Each student will receive a method book at the beginning of the year from Mrs. Gregorchuk. This method book will form the foundation of our technical training and theoretical understanding.

All Method books are supplied by Mrs. Gregorchuk.

Throughout the year, students will be rehearsing and performing a variety of pieces from the SCCS sheet music library.

Whether students are provided with photocopies or original (non-photocopied) sheet music, that music is the property of SCCS, must be treated with care, and must be returned upon request.

More specific to care, students must avoid bending or ripping the sheet music, and must ensure that any markings are made exclusively with pencil. Before handing-back the sheet music, pencil markings need to be erased, minor bends need to be straightened, and minor rips need to be repaired with clear scotch tape.

Although SCCS will cover the cost of replacing sheet music due to normal wear and tear, parents/guardians will incur the replacement cost of original sheet music that is abused or misplaced due to negligence on the part of the student.

Leather Music Folders

Students in Grade 7 will be provided with new leather folders at the beginning of the school year. They will continue to use this folder until the end of Gr. 8. If the folder is damaged, students have the option of patching the folder with black duct tape, purchasing a new folder through the school for \$35.00, or using a disposable Long & Mcquade music folder.

Concerts

Concerts are a very formal event for everyone involved. These events are the band equivalent of a final exam and we treat them very seriously. As part of their assessment, all students **must** be present at the final rehearsal before a concert.

We take great care to plan our concert dates in advance. You will be told the Christmas and Spring Concert dates during the first few weeks of class along with all other performance dates and times. These dates will be posted on the band/choir website for your convenience.

Attendance is mandatory at concerts. In the extreme circumstance that a student cannot attend a concert, Mrs. Gregorchuk must be notified and an alternate test date may be arranged where the student will be asked to play all of their performance pieces in front of Mrs. Gregorchuk.

Assessment

Formative and Summative Assessment:

Formative Assessment is defined as the day-to-day feedback that the students receive from Mrs. Gregorchuk that helps guide them through each task and

Summative Assessment will be thought of as anything that we do during class time that is recorded in Mrs. Gregorchuk's grade book.

Formative Assessment is designed to make sure that students understand where they are with each of the "Learning Outcomes" and what they might have yet to do to perfect that task. Mrs. Gregorchuk will give this type of assessment through verbal and non-verbal cues and gestures, to the band and its individual members. On each summative report and self-evaluation, students will receive some form of written assessment that will guide them towards a perfection of the task at hand or a reassurance that: they have met, are on their way to meeting or in some cases have exceeded, this goal.

Students will receive **Summative Assessment** on a regular basis through playing tests and will be further assessed during class-time on: Active Listening, Attention to Conductor and Contribution to Ensemble. Summative Assessment will be designed around a rubric that can be found on the web site so that everyone involved will know what specific outcome(s) is/are being evaluated and in what way that specific mark will be determined. For an in-depth explanation of "Learning Outcomes" refer to page one of this course outline and for an even more detailed explanation of what exactly we are looking for during the Summative Assessment process, please see the Self-evaluation guide on the main page of our website, as every aspect of classroom evaluation is broken down there for your consideration.

ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN:

A student's mark will be calculated on the following percentage breakdown based around the Essential Learnings (and their corresponding outcomes) as defined by the Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes for Arts Education.

MUSIC MAKING: MUSICAL LANGUAGE AND PERFORMANCE SKILLS - roughly about 50% of our course content.

Performances are marked out of 100

Playing tests are marked out of 100. (Sample Rubric on website)

Playing quizzes are marked out of 50. (Sample Rubric on website)

As mentioned in the essential learnings section at the beginning of this document "music language and performance skills" refers to how students understand and apply the concepts and skills of music making or their technical literacy. This would include concepts such as: Articulation, Breath Control, Phrasing, Range Extension, Alternate Fingerings, Rhythm, Sight-Reading, Musical Independence and Balance and Blend.

Playing tests for band will consist entirely of excerpts and studies from the repertoire and/or method book. These evaluations will take place once each term and will be done independently via recording, to be submitted using Drop Box, OR students can arrange to play their test for Mrs. Gregorchuk in-person.

Mrs. Gregorchuk will place a rubric on the website that details the assessment expectations. Once finished, the results of these assessments will be placed in each student's portfolio. If any student is unhappy with his or her mark they are permitted to take an infinite number of re-tries at no penalty, outside of class time, within the allotted marking period until they are satisfied that their best is recorded.

Playing quizzes are similar but will consist of one excerpt from the repertoire or method book. These assessments will be done in class, at random.

CREATING MUSIC: Creative Expression in Music - Roughly about 20% of our course content.

Each Sectional is marked out of 20

As mentioned in section two at the top of the course outline, “creative expression in music” refers to the student’s interpretive ability and how he or she may process the information that they are given. This would include concepts such as: Phrasing, Musicianship, Interpretation, Balance and Blend, Risk Taking and Style.

Each student will be expected to meet three times during each term with their section members (eg. everyone who plays flute is part of the flute section) to work on the aforementioned concepts.

In order to receive marks towards a student’s summative evaluation, the sectional must be a minimum of 15 minutes and students must be present for the whole time. Sectionals can be scheduled in the music room during lunch periods, and after school from 3:25-4:00. Mrs. Gregorchuk will be in the room to supervise but will only join a sectional if invited.

RESPONDING TO MUSIC: Valuing the Musical Experience -

Roughly about 25% of our course content.

Each Written Reflection is marked out of 100. (Sample Rubric on website). There are three per term

As mentioned in section four at the top of the course outline, “valuing the musical experience,” refers to how students might reflect, analyze, and construct meaning in response to their own and others music making. This would include concepts such as: Discussion of Musical Experience, Appreciation, Listening, Effectiveness, Interpretation, Preference, and Musical goal setting.

As a result, students will have input into their own summative assessment through Written Reflections. Students are to read the “How to complete a successful Written Reflection” document posted on the website and respond accordingly.

All completed Written Reflections will be read by Mrs. Gregorchuk and filed in each student’s portfolio. These portfolios are available to the students outside of class time in the band room. All students are expected to re-read their previous Written Reflection before beginning their next. All Written Reflections remain in the student’s portfolio until the end of Grade 8. Upon graduation or departure from the band program, students can request to keep their portfolio.

CONNECTING TO MUSIC: Music in Context - Roughly about less than 5% of our course content.

This not only refers to how music reflects and influences culture and identity, but also pays homage to the historical and geographical context of music. During class, from time to time, there is a need to get into the details of the history of a piece of music or some other musical analysis that has to do with the 5 w's, tradition, purpose, meaning or style. Here we often, like in a traditional classroom, take note of the discussion and its deeper meaning.

These moments are recorded in the grade book through: oral testing, quizzes and written assignments.

Although they do not make up the majority of our course, they are important and will be included in student's final mark.

Late Assignments & Re-doing Assignments

Assignments: in most cases our testing and assignments are based in Mastery Learning. In other words, each test is a skill we want each student to have. As a result, Mrs. Gregorchuk will allow multiple re-tests until the concept is mastered. So, although you may not be happy with your test mark, you have the remainder of the term to re-do this task until you feel that you have truly done your best.

Extra Help (Private/Group Lessons)

Although learning an instrument is certainly a lot of fun, it can also be challenging. With this in mind, students are always welcome and encouraged to speak to Mrs. Gregorchuk to arrange a private or small-group lesson at a mutually agreeable time.

Switching Instruments (Specialty Instrument Auditions)

Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Saxophone, French horn and percussion are all considered to be “specialty instruments” and are auditioned.

They are called specialty instruments because their level of difficulty and their soloistic nature demand that they be paired with students who are musically able,

hard-working, highly focused, and confident in their abilities. At some point during the year, all beginning band students will have the opportunity to put their names forward for consideration in terms of switching to one of the specialty instruments mentioned above.

The following factors will be considered to determine which students are selected to transition to these specialty instruments:

- ♫ Level of proficiency on current band instrument & level of comfort in terms of playing individually
- ♫ Level of focus during band rehearsals and level of interest and enthusiasm towards band

Switching Instruments (All Other Instruments)

Depending on the circumstances, students may be able to switch to any of the instruments that were initially started in beginning band (flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone.)

This is something that is typically done only with students who are experiencing physical discomfort as a result of playing their instrument, or with students who are working hard, yet experiencing very little success.

All instrument changes need to be approved in advance by Mrs. Gregorchuk

Enrichment (Other Opportunities)

There are many ways in which your young musician can challenge themselves outside of our daily band rehearsals.

They can:

- ♫ Take private lessons with a professional that plays their instrument
 - ♫ Please ask Mrs. Gregorchuk for information regarding lessons through the school PML program
- ♫ Prepare an audition for the Manitoba Provincial Junior Honor Band
 - ♫ Mrs. Gregorchuk and/or your private teacher can help with this
- ♫ Work on solo sheet music (purchase, request from Mrs. Gregorchuk or download)

- ♪ Work on small ensemble music with some friends (request from Mrs. Gregorchuk)
- ♪ Tutor a less experienced student

Music Room Rules

- ♪ Be on-time and fully prepared (see “Required Supplies”)
- ♪ Only bring water into the band room; no other food, non-water drinks, candy (gum), etc. are allowed
- ♪ Wait your turn to talk and/or play your instrument
- ♪ Play only your instrument, and nobody else’s – this includes the percussion instruments
- ♪ Put things (instruments, folders, garbage) where they belong at the end of rehearsals

Practice

Mrs. Gregorchuk understands that students and their families have busy and fulfilling lives outside of class time and that practicing an instrument can be difficult to fit in.

As a result, the music room will be open every lunch hour, and afternoons from 3:25-4:00 for students to practice at school.