

GRACE NOTES HOMESCHOOL CONSERVATORY, INC.

Parent/Student Handbook

Age

Grace Notes has programs for all home school students between the ages of 6 to 18. Parents may also play along with the ensembles, at no charge other than the \$60 registration fee.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class regularly, be on time for rehearsals and performances. Students missing more than two classes within a concert period or missing a class prior to a performance may have their seating changed or be denied permission to perform.

Bad Weather Policy

Due to the great distances some of our families travel, we have to have a conservative bad weather policy. If Gwinnett Public Schools are closed for bad weather, we are closed as well. We do not make up these days.

Bandtastic

Bandtastic is a one day educational band event for homeschool students and private school students. Bandtastic is held on a Saturday in either late February or early March each year. Student musicians attending Bandtastic will be treated to a day of both sectional music instruction and concert band music instruction. Bandtastic ends with the student musicians performing a concert for family and friends. This is of benefit to many small groups who, because of unbalanced instrumentation, might not be able to perform more complex music. It also allows us to fellowship with other musicians around the state. The \$25 fee includes the coveted Bandtastic t-shirt, lunch, snacks, instruction, and concert.

Benefits of being involved in Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory:

- Learning to play an instrument or to sing
- Discipline
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Organization skills
- Responsibility
- Leadership skills
- Music and rhythm
- Ear training

Performance abilities
Heightened learning abilities
Attentiveness
Using strengths and building up weaknesses
Learning how to handle winning and losing

Capitol Day

Each year the GA Legislature declares a day in early February to be "Georgia Home Education Day." Booths are set up in the atrium so that homeschoolers can get more information about what others are doing in the state. Many homeschooled families take the opportunity to also visit with their legislator, tour the Capitol, and tour the Capitol Museum. More information about Capitol Day may be found at the [HEIR](#) website.

Character

Grace Notes has student guidelines that every student is expected to follow. As we wish to do all to the glory of God, we require all our students to exhibit the following minimal personal virtues:

Kindness
Punctuality in attendance and work
Truthfulness
Courtesy and respect toward others
Modesty in dress
Diligence in effort and attention
Respect for and obedience to those in authority

Concert Dress Guidelines

Chorus, Beg. Band, and Strings: black pants (boys and girls, black dress (chorus only) or mid-calf black skirt (girls), white tuxedo shirt, black bow tie, dark shoes. Girls' hair accessories should be black or white.

Intermediate Band or Strings: black pants (boys or girls), (black pants or mid-calf black skirt (girls), white tuxedo shirt, black bow tie and cummerbund, dark shoes. Girls' hair accessories should be black or white.

Advanced and Elite Bands, and String ensembles: black pants (boys or girls)/black pants or mid-calf black skirt (girls), white tuxedo shirt, red bow tie and black cummerbund, dark shoes. Girls' hair accessories should be black or white.

Recorder Students: White shirt, black pants/skirt, black bow tie, dark shoes.
Girls' hair accessories should be black or white.

We will for uniform items (shirt, ties, cummerbunds) during the first month of classes each semester. *Tuxedo shirts - \$12.95 (men's, women's, and child's sizes available) bow ties - \$1.95 cummerbunds - \$5.95.* Prices are set by the store and are subject to change without notice.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to behave in a respectful, obedient fashion while participating in Grace Notes activities, at the church or at performing venues. Any abuse of the meeting facilities could cause us to lose this privilege; therefore, abuse of the facilities and disrespectful conduct or attitude is grounds for immediate dismissal without refund. Our desire is to be pleasing to the Lord and not a stumbling block to each other.

This code of conduct will be enforced before, during, and after rehearsals and concerts anywhere on the property in which any ensemble practices.

The following behavior will result in immediate disciplinary action:

- Foul language or unwholesome talk (Eph. 4:29)
- Roughhousing
- Disruptive behavior during rehearsals
- Disrespect for those in authority
- All other inappropriate behavior as deemed by the director

Damage done to the facility or its equipment will be the financial responsibility of the people involved in causing the damage.

We encourage and expect the following behavior from our members:

1. Participants shall arrive at least 10-15 minutes early for class.
2. Participants (OTHER THAN STRINGS STUDENTS) should leave all instrument cases in the waiting room and line up outside the classroom with their instrument, stand, and music, no later than 5 minutes prior to class.
3. STRING students should unpack their instruments in the String classroom.
4. Participants arriving more than 5 minutes late to class will not be allowed to enter, so as not to disrupt the class in progress.
5. Participants shall be responsive and obedient in obeying the Director so that his work will be a joy for all involved.
6. Participants shall be quiet and attentive to the Director, showing respect toward everyone.
7. Participants shall arrive and depart with all their belongings. The student shall be responsible for arriving at all practices and performances with all required music, instruments, and equipment.
8. Participants shall carefully maintain the instrument and music he/she plays.

Communication

The President, Secretary, Treasurer, and all Chairpersons of Grace Notes will be happy to assist you at any time with questions you may have. If you have any questions, at any time, please send an email to gracenotesinfo@gmail.com or visit the website at www.gracenoteschsc.com

Daily Practice

Daily Practice is required of all students. Beginning Band/Orchestra students will be required to practice at least 5 days a week, 15 minutes a day, gradually increasing to the minimum 30 minutes a day after two weeks. All other band/orchestra students will be required to practice for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. "Practice time" refers to work on music exercises and pieces assigned for Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory only, not for any music you may be working on for other groups. If a student does not practice sufficiently to learn the assigned music, he may have his seating changed, be placed in a lower band or denied the privilege to play in a concert.

Dress Code

"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." - Philippians 4:5

Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory is, first and foremost, a Christian organization. Our first focus is to honor and glorify Christ in all we do—both in our making of music, our behavior as we meet corporately to rehearse or perform, and our outward appearance. Therefore, we insist upon modesty in personal attire when attending Grace Notes rehearsals. Everyone (including family members of students) must come properly dressed to rehearsals and concerts. Your children will be dismissed from a practice or a performance if not dressed properly. Midriff tops, boxers that show, overly revealing clothes, and any other matters of dress or appearance that may distract other students or detract from a modest appearance are not allowed. Because we rehearse in a church, we do not allow hoods, hats, etc., to be worn during class or in the building, as a gesture of respect to this house of worship.

Facility Care

The atmosphere of our music program must be one of order, discipline, and cooperation. No running or roughhousing will be permitted. Please remember we are guests at First Baptist of Lilburn. Let's work together to leave the building in the same condition as we found it. No hall wandering is permitted by parents or students. A waiting room is provided for your convenience.

Fees

A Student Registration Fee of \$60 is due with the Registration Form. The Registration Fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.

The Tuition Fees are due in full the first day of class. However, they may be paid in full upon enrollment or may be paid by using the following payment plan: 50% of Class Fees paid by the first class in September; the remaining 50% of Class Fees paid by the first class in January. Marching Band Fees are due at the beginning of Marching Band season in March. If there are special circumstances that may cause your payment to be late, please call ahead and make arrangements. To keep the program affordable for all, families with 3 or more students enrolled in the **same class** will only be charged for two tuition fees for that class. (See the [*Registration Form*](#) for more information).

A Late Fee of \$10 per month will be charged for Tuition Fees not paid in full by the due date. Unpaid Tuition Fees may cause your child to be dropped from the class or prevent participation in a concert. Again, if there are special circumstances that may cause your payment to be late, please call ahead and make arrangements.

Group Pictures

Group and Individual Pictures will be taken during the Band year. A private photographer will come to our site to take these pictures, and orders for these will be taken in advance, with payment due on Picture Day. Students will wear concert dress for pictures. One or more Parent Volunteers will be needed to coordinate arrangements with the photographer, convey information to the parents regarding Picture Day, collect payments, and distribute finished photographs. Pictures are not mandatory, but we would like to have all students in the group picture.

Instrument Care

Students should never play or handle another student's instrument, case, or accessories. Instruments and cases should not be left where people will be walking in the waiting room. Students other than the drummers should never touch the percussion equipment. Parents are financially responsible for repairs to and upkeep of instruments loaned to their child by the band.

Instruments

All beginner band and orchestra students must attend an instrument fitting before Fall rehearsals begins. As a rule, each family is responsible for providing their instruments. Orchestra students will need a violin, viola, cello or bass.

Percussion students must provide a snare for beginner band, but will have free use of many other instruments, as the music requires. All percussion students must have at least a year of experience playing a piano or other instrument in order to play percussion in the beginner band.

We do recommend that you ask friends, neighbors, church associates and others if they have any instruments they aren't using. Many of our members have generously been given instruments that are unused. Don't *borrow* an instrument from a friend or family member as you may have to spend a good bit of money for repairs or replacement parts; if they want to give it to you, say "Thanks" and then repair 'your' instrument. If you leave Grace Notes for some reason, please consider donating your 'gift' instrument, so that others may receive the same blessing you have received.

Lost and Found

We have a lost and found with items gathered weekly. In order to build responsibility in our students, we charge a \$.50 per item in order to redeem it. Items will be available for one month following the date left, after such time items will be sold or donated. PLEASE put your name on everything!! All coats, backpacks, stands and music books look the same! We do not assume the responsibility of keeping up with your things.

Music and Copyright Policy

Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory, Inc. complies with copyright laws and follows the publisher's requirements for music use by the members of our ensembles. Everyone participating (teachers, students, student's families, etc...) in any Grace Notes activity is required to govern themselves according to the law and according to the policies of Grace Notes. Music issued by Grace Notes remains the property of Grace Notes. No teacher, student or family members may keep or copy the music issued to them by Grace Notes in any form. All music must be returned to Grace Notes. Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory assumes no responsibility for actions of teachers, students or family members in violation of the above-mentioned laws. A \$5 fee will be charged per sheet of music not returned, as we will have to purchase that music once again.

Orientation

We truly know that the amount of information that you must assimilate in the beginning is enormous, but please try not to feel overwhelmed! We will be holding an Orientation Meeting in the WAITING ROOM during each of the class times on the first day of classes in the Fall, and at that time our Officers will go over our Vision for Grace Notes,

our Parent/Student Handbook, our Schedule, practice requirements, equipment and uniform information, and... VOLUNTEER opportunities! We'll also try to answer any questions you may have. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we adventure together into where the Lord is leading us!

Parent Participation

Parents can participate in Grace Notes programs for only the \$60 registration fee and not have to pay tuition at any time. We have many parents who play with their student in band or orchestra, as well as sing in the chorus. It's amazing how it helps build family unity when both parent and child are learning to play an instrument. Students find that they are on a level playing field and can compete with their parent, perhaps for the first time! Seeing their parents being diligent in practice encourages diligence in the student. Students sitting near the parent actually appreciate their support and encouragement. It works for our students, our families and our programs. It's a good thing all around.

Parental Supervision

WE ARE NOT A DROP-OFF SERVICE!

Every student or child must be supervised by an adult at all times. There will be a waiting room available for you and your children to use. There are to be no children running around the hallways at any time. Many of our parents use this time to encourage each other, and the little ones love to play.

If you leave your student at Grace Notes, *you must arrange for another parent to be in charge of your student until you return* --and your student must know that "Mrs. Soandso is responsible for you."

There are offices in the church open and working while we are there. Please remember this, and proceed quietly to and from classes.

Leave the parking spaces closest to the door for the directors. They have materials to bring in and need those spaces.

Children who are not participating in classes (i.e., siblings), and children who are Grace Notes members not currently in rehearsal but waiting for another sibling to finish their rehearsal, must remain in the waiting room. Neither Grace Notes NOR First Baptist of Lilburn will be held responsible in case of any injuries. Please supervise your children and make sure they remain in the waiting area when not attending their rehearsal.

We must respect any and all church materials and equipment by not writing on white boards or using markers or papers. Any rooms that not specifically designated as band rooms are off-limits. This includes the sanctuary.

Students driving themselves to Grace Notes classes are expected to monitor their own behavior appropriately.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are NOT a required but are encouraged. A student who receives individual instruction will usually progress better than those who do not. Many local stores and private individuals offer private lessons. Some of our Directors also provide private music lessons at separate times and locations from the rehearsal site. Please see them for more information.

Problems

If your student is having problems, please know that we very much desire to see your student succeed. Please let one of the Directors, Room Monitors, or Officers know if your child is having some difficulty in either their group rehearsals or personal practicing. Problems such as instrument adjustment, wrong book, and confusion over reading music typically are easily remedied. More difficult issues occur if students don't regularly practice as they have been instructed. Also, any behavioral issues should be brought to the administrators. We are always ready to listen, and we will work together to seek a solution.

Roster

A roster will be distributed early in each Grace Notes year to help you find a carpool, and to communicate with other Grace Notes members and officers.

Section Leaders

A section leader is the first chair or principal player of a given section. It is an honor to be section leader, as it means you have worked hard to be the very best on your instrument. This is rewarded with the status of section leader, but also carries certain responsibilities. More detailed information will be provided to section leaders in their groups.

Stringsational

Stringsational is a one-day educational music event for homeschool string students and private school students. Stringsational is held on a Saturday in either late February or early March each year. Student musicians attending Stringsational will be treated to a day of both sectional music instruction and orchestral music instruction. Stringsational ends with the student musicians performing a concert for family and friends. This is of benefit to many small groups who, because of unbalanced instrumentation, might not be able to perform more complex music. It also allows us to fellowship with other musicians

around the state. The \$25 fee includes a t-shirt, lunch, snacks, instruction, and concert. You can find more information each year about on the website.

[Student Requirements](#)

Beginning band and orchestra students must be nine years old, unless they have had previous private lessons. Recorder class is open to students 6 and above. All students are required to practice at home to keep up with our weekly instruction. All students will need to provide a folding wire stand which they must also bring to rehearsals, as well as a 1" black binder for concert music, clear plastic 3-hole sheet protectors to place sheet music in, a practice book (to be announced), and "concert dress." Experienced students needing to be placed in a class should come prepared to audition with our directors prior to the beginning of the season, at the designated times which will be listed on our website.

[Volunteers, Volunteers, and Volunteers!!!](#)

An organization as large as Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory, Inc. cannot function if EVERYONE involved does not work equally to make it a success. In other words, we *cannot do this alone---we need ALL of you!*

Due to the number of students involved and a desire to keep the cost of the band programs reasonable, we find it necessary to require all families to be involved in the operation of the band program. Approximately 10 hours per family/per year is all that is needed to operate the band in an efficient manner. A detailed list of jobs and times will be available at instrument fittings, the Orientation meeting, auditions, and at the Information Table during the month of September. Please sign up as soon as possible. We need all families to respond early to have the whole year scheduled. If you are too busy to help, you will be charged \$150 per year to be of help in a different way. Please be sure to indicate this by checking the appropriate box on the Enrollment Form.

[Withdrawal Policies](#)

Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory, Inc. bases its annual budget on the number of students enrolled in the program. Therefore, parents are obligated to pay for their children for the entire school year. Exceptions to this policy include: ***Death of a parent, Moving more than 30 miles from band location, Parent becoming unemployed.***

NO exceptions are given for the following reasons:

Child is re-enrolled in public or private school

Child is tired of the program

Child has too many other activities

Please prayerfully consider this commitment. You will be liable for the full year once the program has begun. We must assure that our programs can continue fairly.

Zeal

There had to be a "z". We strive to instill a ZEAL for music in our students!

Music is such a precious gift from God, and He made each of us as living, breathing "instruments" to His glory. Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory, Inc. seeks to infuse students with a true love and appreciation of this gift, and an excitement in being able to participate in God's creative act. We encourage excellence in striving to express our talents through music, rendering all our efforts "as unto the Lord".

Grace Notes Homeschool Conservatory, Inc. holds to the truth that all people are created in the image of God. Therefore, we do not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color or national origin. All students are precious to us and will receive just treatment and equal opportunity for advancement.