



Performing Arts Handbook 2026



SAMUEL
MARSDEN
COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	3
Dance	4
Kapa Haka	4
Debating and public speaking	5
Drama	5
Speech and Drama	6
School productions	6
Music	7
Technical production	10
Private music lessons	11
Itinerant music teachers	12
Performing Arts Awards Evening	13
Marsden Performing Arts Curriculum Vitae	14
Who to contact	15



Introduction

At Samuel Marsden Collegiate School, we proudly nurture a vibrant performing arts culture, offering students the opportunity to discover their talents, grow in confidence, and participate in a rich variety of creative activities.

What to consider when signing up

1. **Commitment is key.** When you register for a performing arts activity, you are expected to commit fully and attend all rehearsals, practices and events. If you cannot confidently meet this commitment, **please do not sign up.**
2. **Plan your week.** We strongly recommend drawing up a weekly timetable to identify your available time for extra activities. Keep in mind your academic workload, any extra responsibilities you may carry, and any existing commitments outside school.
3. **If unsure, ask first.** Please check with the Director of Performing Arts *before* you sign up, so you are clear about what is required.
4. **Discuss with your parents/caregivers** before signing up for an activity.
5. **Audition results.** After any auditions, group and cast lists will be posted on the [Performing Arts Noticeboard](#). Further information will be shared as needed.
6. **Need help? Get in touch.** Please do not hesitate to contact Director of Performing Arts [Miss Sarah Wilson](#) by email at sarah.wilson@marsden.school.nz

How to register

- Please complete the performing arts registration forms online at <https://community.marsden.school.nz/#performingartsnoticeboard> if you wish to take part in any of the musical, drama or debating activities offered this year.
- Itinerant music lessons have an additional online form which can be found on page 11 of this booklet.
- Information about the school production will be provided separately.

Celebrating success and participation

We love celebrating the incredible talents, dedication and achievements of our students. If you/your child has achieved something special in their chosen field, whether inside or outside of school, please let us know so we can acknowledge and celebrate their success.

You can share this information with us by emailing sarah.wilson@marsden.school.nz

Please note that Marsden may promote and recognise student achievements in school assemblies, newsletters, on our website and social media channels and media releases.

Dance

Wellington is the home of the Royal New Zealand Ballet, the New Zealand School of Dance and numerous other professional dance companies. A large percentage of Marsden students take dance classes outside of school and, depending on interest, there are options available within school as well.

Marsden may offer students the opportunity to partake in dance teams, focusing primarily on Hip Hop. Early in Term 3, these teams may choose to enter the regional Aerobics and Hip Hop dance competition held in Wellington and must be regularly committed to practices for this to happen.

Teams would be coached by senior students or an external coach, and opportunities for performance would be available. Depending on numbers, auditions will be held if required.

Should your child's team choose to enter the competition, the associated entry and costume costs will be disbursed to your account.

If the team wins the regional competition, they have the option of attending the National Championships. Costs involved may include flights and accommodation, depending on the location of the event.

Dance Academy on site

The Jennifer Evans Dance Academy is based in the Rua Chandler Studio for after school classes. Enquiries concerning ballet, jazz or tap are welcome by contacting Jennifer Evans on 027 635 0191 or j.evansdance@gmail.com or visiting jevansdance.com

Kapa Haka

Kapa Haka at Marsden offers students a vibrant opportunity to embrace Māori culture, build confidence and connect through the beauty of waiata.

Kapa Haka is open to all students, regardless of their ethnicity or experience, who welcome the opportunity to learn songs from other cultures. Students learn a variety of waiata and action songs, as well as tī rākau and poi.

Kapa Haka meets one lunchtime a week to practise, and often performs for school events.





Debating and public speaking

Marsden offers a number of debating teams:

- Premier A and Premier B teams, Senior Certificate
- Junior Premier and Junior Certificate teams
- Year 7 and 8 teams who debate in school

Students need to register their interest through the online registration form. Trials will be held at the start of Term 1 to allocate students to teams. Once selected, students will participate in a minimum of five debates and up to a maximum of eight. If the team cannot attend a scheduled debate, they will default to the opposition, as alternative dates cannot be arranged.

Junior Certificate teams debate on Wednesdays after school. Teams will debate both at Marsden and at other venues and transport will be arranged accordingly. Junior Premier will debate on Tuesday afternoons at various Wellington school locations.

Senior teams usually debate on Tuesday evenings for Senior Premier A and B teams and Thursdays after school for the Senior Certificate teams. These are adjudicated by university students. Students in these teams will need to arrange their own transport.

Debating teams will be coached by staff members, parents, senior students or external coaches. Please note that we can only offer teams if we have sufficient coaches and adjudicators to support them. If you would like to assist as a debating coach or an adjudicator, please contact sarah.wilson@marsden.school.nz

The Stockley Cup Public Speaking Competition is also an opportunity for students and allows us to enter one junior and one senior student. For more information, see www.wsu.co.nz/

Drama

Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival

Since the 1990s, Marsden has been involved in this annual Shakespearean Festival held in Wellington. Students have the option to perform in a piece directed by an adult (duration 15 minutes) or to perform their own student directed piece (duration 5 minutes). Pieces may be adapted in any way the students see fit, but must retain the original language of the play.

The competition usually takes place in the last week of Term 1 at Wellington East Girls' College, with top performers from the regional events heading to a National Festival later in the year.

Junior House Performing Arts

Students in Years 7–10 can take part in a House Performing Arts afternoon in Term 4.



All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women
merely players."

William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Act II, scene vii)



Speech and Drama

Speech and Drama is run by trained teachers from outside the school. Details are available at <https://www.marsden.school.nz/our-schools/cocurricular/arts/speech-and-drama>

Please contact Bridie Gray via email at bridie.gray@dramaclub.co.nz for more information.



School productions

Every second year, Marsden stages a musical production. Marsden has a fine tradition with the quality of its musical productions. Recent shows include *Freaky Friday*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *High School Musical* and *Chicago*. Students are selected through acting, singing and dancing auditions. Boys from various Wellington schools have joined our casts in previous years. Wherever possible, we use students to form the band or orchestra and our backstage, hair and makeup, lighting and front of house teams are all made up of Marsden students.

Music

Music at Marsden has a long and proud tradition. From handbells to choirs, there is something here for everyone. Our Director of Music, [Mrs Marian Campbell](#), oversees the various musical groups, assisted by staff and student leaders.

Note that some groups have an additional charge, as external professionals run these practices.



Altissime

Led by: Mr Shawn Michael Condon, Mrs Marian Campbell and student leaders

Open to: Years 10–13, by audition

Rehearsals: Tuesdays 3.30–5.30pm and Fridays 7.30–8.30am in the Auditorium

This is Marsden's flagship choir. Students perform at school church services, The Big Sing in June, the Showcase Concert, Old Girls' Day, the Carol Service, and numerous other events. In 2023, Altissime won a Gold award at the National Big Sing Finale.

Larks Choir

Led by: Ms Annabelle Cheetham

Open to: Years 7–9 students

Rehearsals: Fridays 7.45am in the Music Room

Students perform a range of styles and sing in parts. They are part of the Showcase Concert in June, The Kids Sing in November, the Carol Service in December and other events throughout the year, including concerts at local rest homes.

Ad Summa Chorale

Led by: Year 13 students

Open to: Years 9–13

Rehearsals: Friday lunchtime in the Auditorium

This is an all-comers choir and students perform at the Big Sing in June, the Showcase Concert, the Carol Service, and other events throughout the year.

Marsden Symphony Orchestra

Led by: Mrs Marian Campbell and student leaders

Open to: Entry by audition with Mrs Campbell

Rehearsals: Wednesday lunchtime in the Auditorium

Requirements: Students should have been learning their instrument for at least 2 years, or be at Grade 3 or higher. The orchestra performs on special occasions, at school services, the Showcase Concert, Old Girls' Day and Prize Giving.



String Orchestra

Led by: Ms Glenda Craven and student leaders

Open to: Any bowed string players with at least one year's experience

Rehearsals: Tuesday lunchtime in the Auditorium

String Orchestra is a string training orchestra, which supports the Symphony Orchestra. The Strings perform at Showcase Concert and Prize Giving.

Flute Ensemble

Led by: Student leaders

Open to: All flautists

Rehearsals: Mondays at morning tea in the Music Room

Requirements: Own flute and at least 6 months of lessons.

Rock Band

Led by: Mr Darryn Sigley and student leaders

Open to: Years 7–13

Rehearsals: Thursdays 1.10pm in the Lilburn Room

Requirements: Own instrument and a love of rock music.

Handbells

Led by: Student leaders

Open to: Years 10–13

Rehearsals: Thursday lunchtime in the Lilburn Room. Leaders will organise groups according to skill level.

The Handbells group performs at the Showcase Concert, Old Girls' Day and Carol Service.

Piano Ensemble

Led by: Student leaders

Open to: Years 7–13

Rehearsals: Tuesday lunchtime in the Lilburn Room.

Requirements: No experience necessary.

Guitar Group

Led by: Student leaders

Open to: Years 7–13

Rehearsals: Wednesday lunchtime in the Music Room

No experience necessary and guitars are available for use.



Swainson Memorial Music Competition

At the end of Term 1, Marsden holds the Swainson Memorial Music Competition; a wonderful event showcasing the musical talents of our Year 7–13 students.

The prize is awarded each year in memory of Frances Betty Swainson, a former pupil (1922–1926) who died in March 1974. The prize was endowed to mark the School's centenary in 1978 and is awarded for excellence in musical public performance on any instrument or voice. This popular competition is held in conjunction with the Nell Clere Scholarship. The Nell Clere Scholarship is a monetary award to allow the recipient in Years 7–12 to continue her music tuition. Audience members are welcome at the concert. Application forms will be made available early in Term 1 through the school newsletter.

External competitions

Each year there are various musical competitions on offer and students are encouraged to enter. See the relevant itinerant teacher for further information.

The Composer in Residence Programme

The Composer in Residence Programme was introduced in 2003. During the year, the chosen composer spends time mentoring Year 10–13 music students, giving an address in Assembly and composing a piece of music for the school.

Itinerant Teachers

Marsden employs a number of instrumental and vocal music teachers, most of whom play or sing regularly in professional Wellington music groups.

Lesson timetables are posted in advance on the Music Noticeboard in the back music corridor, and take place during the school day. All students are expected to consult the timetables or emails from their tutors regularly. Students are expected to take part in group activities suggested by the Director of Music or their tutors. Each term there is an informal evening concert for the itinerant tutors to showcase their students. Please check the calendar for dates.

Students wishing to take a music lesson should complete the online form at <https://www.marsden.school.nz/our-schools/cocurricular/arts/private-music-tuition>

Technical production

Lighting Workshops

From time to time, students will have the opportunity to attend a lighting workshop, run at school by industry professionals. They will learn how to plan and rig a lighting design and learn to use the lighting board.

Students trained in the lighting system can then form the lighting crew for school productions, special assemblies, and other events as required.

Behind the Scenes

Senior students with an interest in costuming, set design and stage management are encouraged to sign up for productions where they can lead a team of their peers and develop their own creative ideas to support the storyline. Interested students should contact Miss Sarah Wilson at sarah.wilson@marsden.school.nz



Private music lessons

We have a wonderful team of committed itinerant music teachers available to students from Year 3 onwards (or at the discretion of the Director of Music after consultation). Private music lessons provide tailored, one-on-one instruction across a wide range of instruments, including piano, violin, guitar, voice, and more. Lessons are held during school hours on a rotating timetable, ensuring students can pursue their musical passions alongside their academic studies. Our dedicated tutors are experts in their fields, fostering a supportive and inspiring learning environment where each student can thrive musically.

The online form for private music lessons can be found [here](#). Please do not hesitate to contact Director of Music, [Mrs Marian Campbell](#), if you have any questions about the teaching programme.

Regulations and Guidelines

1. Timetables are posted in advance on the Music Noticeboard in the music corridor. All students are expected to consult the timetables regularly and take their lessons at the appointed times.
2. Instruments are to be stored in the Music Resource Room located at the end of the small studios.
3. Students are expected to take part in group activities suggested by the Director of Music or their tutors. You will be notified and your support will be much appreciated.
4. Lessons are held during school time on a rotating timetable for students in Years 3–10; senior students often use study periods or lunchtimes.
5. Tutors will issue a report on students' progress once each year.

Cost of lessons and payment

Individual lessons are \$40 per half hour. In certain instances, some instruments can be taught in a group. Two students per lesson will cost \$21 for each student. Three students will cost \$15 for each student.

Once you are assigned to a teacher, they will share their contact details with you.

Please ensure that you pay directly to the teacher listed at the top of the account, not the school, by the method that suits you both best.

All invoices are to be paid in advance of commencement of any set of lessons. Please ensure that you have done this, or lessons will not be able to start.

Invoices for hiring instruments are handled through disbursements to school accounts.

Cancelling a lesson

If you know in advance that a lesson needs to be cancelled, please phone or text the teacher. This needs to be done at least 48 hours before the lesson in the case of a test or activity and, in the case of sickness, before 7am on the morning of the lesson. **Failure to do this will mean that the lesson will be charged for.**

Terminating tuition

A term of tuition, once commenced, must be completed or a full term's fees paid. Written notice of termination of lessons by parent/caregiver or teacher must be given a term in advance.

Please feel free to contact your child's music teacher at any time to discuss progress.

Itinerant music teachers

Ms Emma Barron (Violin)

Ms Karen Batten (Flute)

Ms Annabelle Cheetham (Voice)

Ms Grace Chen (Voice)

Mr Mark Cookson (Clarinet and Saxophone)

Ms Glenda Craven (Violin and Viola)

Ms Penny Miles (Bassoon)

Ms Barbara Paterson (Voice)

Ms Madeline Sakofsky (Oboe)

Ms Emma Sayers (Piano)

Mr Chris Selley (Brass)

Mr Darren Sigley (Drums)

Mr Tyson Smith (Guitar)

Dr Rachel Thomson (Piano)

Mr Brenton Veitch ('cello and Double Bass)

Ms Julia Walls (Piano)

Dr Kris Zuelicke (Piano and Harpsichord)



Performing Arts Awards Evening

This is held in the Auditorium early in Term 4 to recognise the achievements of students across the performing arts aspects of the school.

Colours, Certificates of High Achievement and Certificates of Service are awarded annually in recognition of performing arts achievements. There is also an award for Service Colours. This is an opportunity for us to acknowledge excellence, commitment and service and to thank those who volunteer their time to assist with culture at Marsden.

In addition to the above awards, there is also:

The Sophie Evans Cup for Performing Arts: This is awarded to a student who has excelled as an individual in her chosen activity, both within and outside of school.

The Orr-McFaulk Cup for Excellence in Debating: This cup is awarded for high achievement in debating as well as promoting involvement within the school.

The Harcourt McKenzie Cup for the Pursuit of a Career in the Stage and Screen Arts: This cup is to recognise and encourage students who show the potential for a career in the stage or screen arts, for example in production design, writing, digital animation, directing, producing, music composition, lighting, sound design, costuming.

The Old Girls' Cup for Cultural Involvement: This award reflects the contribution by a senior student to the Primary, Middle, Upper or Senior Schools in regards to cultural activities. It may be for performance or for assistance behind the scenes.

The Thurlby Cup: This award is presented on behalf of the Bowie family for achievement in cultural activities.

The Year 11 Speech Cup: This is awarded to a student in Year 11, based on an NCEA assessment completed earlier in the year.

The Dalgety-Evans Cup for Cultural Involvement: This is awarded to a student in Year 10 who is involved in a range of performing arts related activities, but has not received a Colours or High Achievement award.

Honours Bars: these are awarded to students who have been selected to represent their country, for example through performance with the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Choir.

Students are nominated by staff, based on the records kept of their involvement. They may also nominate themselves. Consideration is given to activities both in and out of school time, such as music examinations, selection into national youth choirs or orchestras etc.

An online nomination form will be made available early in Term 3.

Marsden Performing Arts Curriculum Vitae

Have you achieved at a high standard in performing arts activities this year? You might be eligible for an award.

A brief outline of each of the awards is given below.

We encourage self-nominations as you are the person who knows your achievements best.

After nominations have been received in Term 3, a committee meets to determine the final recipients.

Colours

Colours are awarded for excellence and outstanding achievement.

In most cases the student will have represented the School in the top group for two or more years and must be studying at Year 11 or above.

The student must have been continually committed to the group in both practices and competition and must always display good team spirit.

Junior Colours may also be awarded to students in Years 7–10.

For Colours in Music, a commitment to school music must be shown.

Recognition outside of school is required for Colours to be awarded. This may include but is not limited to selection by audition into a regional music group or local production, or the winning of a prize or placing in an externally run competition.

Service Colours

Service Colours are awarded to students who have made an outstanding contribution to the performing arts programme. This may be over one or more years during their time at Marsden.



Certificates of High Achievement

Certificates of High Achievement are awarded to students who have reached a high standard in their chosen activity but who have not fulfilled all the criteria for Colours to be awarded.

Honours Bars

Honours Bars are awarded to any student in Years 7–13 who is selected in a New Zealand, age group, or development programme that competes or performs in an international event.

Involvement in a New Zealand event that does not actually perform may not earn an Honours Bar.

Who to contact

For any queries regarding activities, please contact:

Miss Sarah Wilson

Director of Performing Arts

(04) 476 8707 ext 844

sarah.wilson@marsden.school.nz

Mrs Marian Campbell

Director of Music

(04) 476 8707 ext 843

marian.campbell@marsden.school.nz

