

"Play The Game"

Ph: 5221 2780

Fax: 5224 2954

Email: [www.tate.street.ps.geelong@edumail.vic.gov.au](http://www.tate.street.ps.geelong@edumail.vic.gov.au)



Tate St.  
East Geelong  
3219

TATE ST PRIMARY SCHOOL

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### The Tate St. Music Program

To whom it may concern,

The Tate St. Music Program began in 2010 when we first hired our brilliant Music Teacher, Ms Dani Rocca, and since then it has gone from strength to strength. The Tate St. Music program currently involves a School Choir, a Marimba Band, a Ukelele Band and a Brass band on top of all of our grades accessing a 60-minute Music class each week. Our Brass instruments are on loan from the Salvation Army who also provide tutoring in the playing of the instruments. We also have attained the use of a brass instrument tutor, Mr John Collinson, through the Salvation Army and the 'Just Brass' and 'Song Room' initiatives. John works with students on Brass Band individual or small group tuition for an entire day every Tuesday each week. The students work in the Music Room in groupings e.g. 'Beginner Tenor Horn' or 'Intermediate Trombone' in 30 minutes sessions and their skills are improving spectacularly to the point whereby our Brass Band recently featured in a very positive article in the 'Geelong Advertiser' last year. We have also performed at a Citizenship Ceremony at the Geelong Town Hall and at the opening of the 'Wishing Tree' at 'Kmart' for the past two years. Our marimba band are currently on an intensive music camp at Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff this week and are performing at the Port Fairy Folk Festival later in May this year also, a first for Victorian Primary schools I believe.

The 'Song Room' have also begun another Music program at the school 'Rhyme, Rhythm and Song', whereby another Music Teacher, Ms Lucy Jones, works with the classroom teachers in the Literacy Block with a curriculum based on rhythm and singing activities natural to children. It provides a sound foundation of music principles and musical literacy while developing coordination and auditory perception as well as spatial, motor sensory and oral skills. The Classroom Teachers have recently reported how enthusiastically and spontaneously our students are breaking into song on buses, at lunchtimes etc.

A number of our students also access the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra through their 'Citybeats' initiative. 'Citybeats' is a free annual program that provides our students with an opportunity to make music. The focus is on percussion instruments and collaborative composition, the workshops are lead by music educator Gillian Howell and MSO musicians. Over four sessions throughout last year, Tate St. students played and improvised with a range of percussion instruments, providing them with new skills, confidence and a whole lot of fun!

The real point is that the students here at Tate St. are somewhat disadvantaged (Student family Occupation Density of 70.0) but they now have access to playing musical instruments and their emotional and social well-being is rising significantly. A recent report by Melbourne University professorial fellow Brian Caldwell in the 'Australian' newspaper suggests that "Teaching the performing arts in Primary Schools significantly boosts the results disadvantaged students achieve in

academic subjects." An independent evaluation indicated that in national literacy tests the proportion of Year 5 students meeting minimum standards in reading rose 90% compared to about 65% in non-arts schools.

We do recognise that the Music program is not the only single initiative that is improving results here at Tate St. We have introduced a Coach for our classroom teachers and a firmer discipline policy allows the teachers to be spending far more time actually teaching, rather than managing classroom issues. Staff turnover with a renewed, stronger commitment towards continuous improvement with a greater emphasis on shared leadership and professional learning teams have all definitely ensured that our student results are on the rise. Take note of the following figures:

- *The percentage of students (Teacher Judgement against the VELs' in Years Prep-6 combined) indicated that in 2011 23% of our students got an 'A' or 'B' for Reading. This has improved to 46% by 2012.*
- *The percentage of students (Teacher Judgement against the VELs' in Years Prep-6 combined) indicated that in 2011 15% of our students got an 'A' or 'B' for Writing. This has improved to 22% in 2012*
- *The percentage of students (Teacher Judgement against the VELs' in Years Prep-6 combined) indicated that in 2011 19% of our students got an 'A' or 'B' for Number. This has improved to 34% for 2012.*

Our 2011 NAPLAN results also indicate the following extraordinary results:

- *The Mean Scaled score for Grade 3 Reading improved 41.7 points compared to the State's 2.5 points.*
- *The Mean Scaled score for Grade 5 Reading improved 43.4 points compared to the State's 2.0 points.*
- *The Mean Scaled score for Grade 3 Number improved 27.0 points compared to the State's 2.0 points.*
- *The Mean Scaled score for Grade 3 Reading improved 60.7 points compared to the State's decrease of 3.1 points.*

We have no doubt at all that there is a connection between the Music program here at Tate St. and the dramatically improved results.

Our 2012 NAPLAN results indicated even more improvement. We set specific targets which attained the following results:

- *At Gr. 3 Reading 0% of our students are to achieve Bands 1 or 2. Result: 8% Improvement of 12% from 2010.*
- *At Gr. 3 Writing 0% of our students are to achieve Bands 1 or 2: Result 0% Improvement of 19% from 2010.*
- *At Gr. 3 Number 0% of our students are to achieve Bands 1 or 2: Result 0% Improvement of 33% from 2010.*
- *At Gr. 5 Reading 0% of our students are to achieve Bands 3 or 4: Result 19% Improvement of 31% from 2010.*
- *At Gr. 5 Writing 0% of our students are in Bands 3 or 4: Result 14% Improvement of 27% from 2010*
- *At Gr. 5 Number 0% of our students are in Bands 3 or 4: Result 9% Improvement of 43% from 2010*

Obviously, we are very excited by these results, but even more evidence exists if we study the Student Opinion Survey. All Grade 5 and 6 students in Victoria fill out this survey once per year as required by the DEECD. In 2012 it has been great to note that the students' opinion of the school has improved in 9 of the 11 surveyed areas with huge increases in areas such as 'Learning Confidence', 'Student Motivation', 'School Connectedness' and 'Classroom Behaviour'. I have no doubt that it is our students' involvement in programs such as Music which is contributing towards our overall school improvement.

Empirical evidence also exists indicating evidence of links between the 'Three Rs' and the arts. In 2010 the accounting firm 'PricewaterhouseCoopers' calculated that for every one Pound Sterling the UK Government invested in the 'Creative Partnerships' program, the country received over fifteen pounds sterling worth of returns in social benefits. We firmly believe that this Music initiative has definitely reflected these findings and will have a huge positive impact on the well-being of our students, their actual results and even our future enrolments. Our Prep enrolment for 2012 was 20 students up from 14 the year before and we believe that the Brass Band visits to the local kindergartens were directly responsible. With enrolments dropping at least 20 students a year in previous years, the Tate St. community believe that our school music program will be the lifeblood for this school in the future.

In both the US and Canada long-term studies have found improvements in academic results and social attitudes in reports published as far back as 1999. A global compendium compiled by Professor Anne Bamford called 'The WOW factor' comparing data and case studies in over 60 countries was published in 2006, adding weight to the argument that "engagement with the arts enhances learning and wellbeing in deep and diverse ways." At Tate St. we believe this to be very true and hope to continue our Music program for years to come including all of its elements - our Tate St. School Brass, Ukelele and Marimba bands and school choir, John Collinson and 'Just Brass' music tutoring, the 'Song Room' including Lucy Jones and 'Rhyme, Rhythm and Song', the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra excursions ('Citybeats') the Salvation Army' weekly tutoring - all of whom make magnificent contributions towards the growth in the educational, social, spiritual and self-disciplinary needs of our students.

Sincerely,

*Terry Scott*

Terry Scott  
Principal  
Tate St. PS  
Geelong Vic.

