

## **Learning to play a musical instrument:**

### **Improves academic skills.**

Music and maths are highly intertwined. By understanding beat, rhythm, and scales, children are learning how to divide, create fractions, and recognize patterns. It seems that music wires a child's brain to help them better understand other areas of maths. As children get older, they'll start reciting and tunes, calling on their short-term memory and eventually their long-term memory. Using a mnemonic device to do this is a method that can later be applied to other memory skills.

### **Develops physical skills.**

Brass and woodwind instruments help children develop coordination and motor skills. Woodwind instruments often demand different actions from your right and left hands simultaneously. It's like patting your head and rubbing your tummy at the same time. Instruments not only help develop ambidexterity, but they can also encourage children to become comfortable in naturally uncomfortable positions. Enhancing coordination and perfecting timing can prepare children for other hobbies, like dance and sports.

### **Cultivates social skills.**

Group classes require peer interaction and communication, which encourage teamwork. If a child is playing their instrument too loudly or speeding up too quickly, they will need to adjust. It's important for children to know and understand their individual part in a larger ensemble. Young musicians also benefit from social interaction at music rehearsals, performing at concert and practicing together with friends.

### **Refines discipline and patience.**

Learning an instrument teaches children about delayed gratification. The violin, for example, has a steep learning curve. Before you can make a single sound, you must first learn how to hold the violin, how to hold the bow, and where to place your feet. Playing an instrument teaches children to persevere through hours, months, and sometimes years of practice before they reach specific goals, such as performing with a band or memorising a solo piece. Private lessons and practicing at home require a very focused kind of attention for even 10 minutes at a time. Group lessons, in which students learn to play the same instruments in an ensemble, also improve patience, as children must wait their turn to play individually. And in waiting for their turns and listening to their classmates play, children learn to show their peers respect, to sit still and be quiet for designated periods.

### **A Boost to self-esteem.**

Lessons offer a forum where children can learn to accept and give constructive criticism. Turning negative feedback into positive change helps build self-confidence. Group lessons may help children understand that nobody, including themselves or their peers, is perfect, and that everyone has room for improvement. Presenting yourself in public is an important skill whether you become a professional musician or not. This skill is easily transferrable to public speaking, and once a child is advanced enough, they will possess musical skills that will help them stand out.