



Exploratory Music – Frequently Asked Questions

[What is Exploratory Music?](#)

[Why should my child get involved?](#)

[Who takes part in Kettering Music groups?](#)

[Which instrument will fit my child?](#)

[What is the cost?](#)

[Where do I purchase or rent an instrument?](#)

[What brand of instrument is required or recommended?](#)

[What about chorus and singing?](#)

[Can my child still participate in athletics?](#)

[What if we already own an instrument?](#)

[What instruments are offered in 6th grade band and orchestra?](#)

[My child wants to be in marching band, what instrument should they play?](#)

[My child wants to be in jazz band, what instrument should they play?](#)

[Can my child play the guitar, piano, drum set in 6th grade?](#)

[What about private lessons?](#)

What is Exploratory Music?

The Kettering City Schools offer a unique and exciting program to all interested 6th graders called Exploratory Music! This program takes place during the first 9 weeks of 6th grade. Exploratory music is scheduled during the school day and does not take students out of other classes or after school programs. Students are introduced to real band and orchestra instruments, taking part in a “hands on experience” that will help guide them to a successful music choice.

[back to top](#)

Why should my child get involved?

Music students have the opportunity to develop a life-long love of music and participate in well-known successful music programs that annually earn state and national awards. They find themselves in a second-to-none peer group and studies have found music students maintain higher grade point averages and score higher on standardized tests. According to several other studies, music programs develop traits like creativity, innovation, and teamwork that are prized by future employers and considered imperative to success in the global economy.

[back to top](#)

Who takes part in Kettering Music groups?

There are currently over 1,500 students involved in our middle and high school music programs. Many of these students are also involved in a variety of other school activities. There are music students playing football, basketball, cheerleading, bowling, acting in school plays, participating in student government, and this year's Fairmont Homecoming King and Queen were both music students. *Performing in a music group is cool in Kettering!*

[back to top](#)

Which instrument will fit my child?

At the conclusion of the exploratory program each student is interviewed and guided by their music teachers to the best musical fit for them. Student interest and musical aptitude are each considered in this mutual decision. There are limits on the number of students that can play certain instruments based on classroom space and the number of instruments available.

[back to top](#)

What is the cost?

There is no charge to participate in exploratory. However, following the initial 9-week exploratory program, students who choose to study an instrument in band or orchestra will have to purchase or rent an instrument. Qualifying low-income families may be directed to programs to help obtain a student instrument.

[back to top](#)

Where do I purchase or rent an instrument?

As exploratory ends you will receive information from the school regarding local music stores that offer rental and rent-to-own programs. Many stores also sell new and used instruments at various price points.

[back to top](#)

What brand of instrument is required or recommended?

There are no requirements other than the instrument should be in good working condition. However, our music teachers have expertise in recommending instruments that are best for young musicians. Oftentimes a poor quality instrument can frustrate a student and keep them from achieving their full potential.

[back to top](#)

What about chorus and singing?

Chorus programs begin in 7th grade in the Kettering schools. 6th grade is the only year students are permitted to begin an instrument. Many of the best Kettering student musicians play an instrument and sing. At this time it is not possible to participate in choir and play in band or orchestra in the middle school. However, it is possible at Fairmont High School where many students participate in both.

[back to top](#)

Can my child still participate in athletics?

Absolutely! Middle school and high school music classes operate like other academic classes. There are, of course, some evening concerts scheduled throughout the school year, but there are no after school rehearsals that would prohibit students from playing sports. At Fairmont High School participation in some extra-curricular music groups like marching band, pep band, jazz band, pit orchestra, show choir etc. does require after school rehearsals.

[back to top](#)

What if we already own an instrument?

If your family already has an instrument the music teachers would be happy to look at the instrument and advise you if it is suitable for band or orchestra or may need some repair or upgrading. The music staff can also help you find a qualified repair shop should the instrument need some work.

[back to top](#)

What instruments are offered in 6th grade band and orchestra?

Orchestra instruments that are offered to beginners:

Violin	Cello
Viola	Bass

Band instruments that are offered to beginners:

Woodwinds	Brass
Flute	Trumpet
Clarinet	Trombone
Alto Saxophone	Baritone

Percussion – Students play a variety of percussion instruments not just a drum

Special Band Instruments

The following instruments are offered beginning in 7th grade to students who show adequate progress on their first instrument. These special instruments are not recommended for our beginners. They have certain characteristics of size or complexity that make study by beginners difficult. They are also much more expensive than the beginning instruments that are offered and are provided by the school to those students chosen to play them. If your child is looking forward to one of these special instruments a suggested beginning instrument is listed in parentheses.

- Oboe (start on flute or clarinet)
- Bassoon (flute, clarinet)
- Tenor and Baritone Saxophone (alto saxophone)
- Horn (trumpet)
- Tuba (baritone or trombone)

[back to top](#)

My child wants to be in marching band, what instrument should they play?

Students who want to participate in marching band at Fairmont high school should choose a band instrument. All band instruments are listed above.

[back to top](#)

My child wants to be in jazz band, what instrument should they play?

Standard instruments for jazz band participation include:

Saxophone	Bass
Trumpet	Piano
Trombone	Guitar
Drum Set	

Please note that we do not offer drum set, piano, or guitar instruction in band or orchestra classes. Students who play these instruments in jazz band have usually taken lessons on these instruments. There are numerous private teachers in the area that teach these instruments. Many music students play these instruments as a second instrument to what they play in the band or orchestra.

[back to top](#)

Can my child play the guitar, piano, drum set in 6th grade?

These instruments are not offered in band or orchestra class. Most students who play these instruments in addition to a band or orchestra instruments take lessons from a local musician.

[back to top](#)

What about private lessons?

Private lessons are never required in our programs but are certainly encouraged. Private lessons can be great for students at any level, whether they are one of our best players that want to study advanced literature and techniques, or a player who is struggling and looking for extra help. There are many professional musicians that teach lessons right in our school buildings, some after school and some as a pull out program from band, orchestra, and choir classes.

[back to top](#)