

# Prospectus 2023

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**GEORGE VELLA**  
school of music

Kummissjoni Banda – October 2022

GĦAQDA MUŻIKALI MARIJA BAMBINA, BANDA VITTORJA | NAXXAR

A REGISTERED VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION – VO 0749

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# Foreword

From their inception, band clubs in Malta have been a means of providing free music education with the main aim of increasing the number of elements within the band. The emphasis was more likely to be on the quantity rather than on the quality which at the time was an important approach for the growth of such culture. For many years, this concept has worked, and many are the musicians who presently can boast of a musical career which kicked off from a local band club.

Nowadays, the general educational system has changed, and qualifications, certifications and accreditations have become central. We are also witnessing a constant rise in popularity of the vocational approach of teaching and learning. Such approach involves students learning through doing, thus targeting the current industrial needs. This system fits perfectly the environment provided by the schools of music within the local band clubs. Therefore, with a little reorganization and restructuring of the systems currently in use within band clubs, this can easily become the way forward which will allow students to be also formally certified.

Based on this idea, this prospectus gives an outline of the system that will be provided to the students at the "George Vella School of Music" within the *Għaqda Muzikali Marija Bambina, Banda Vittorja, Naxxar*. The objective of this system is to provide a holistic musical educational framework which will help students aim for quality. The formal course is six years long, providing a strong basis of musical rudiments with application, qualified tutors to teach both the practical and theoretical aspects, and an apprenticeship period, thus giving students a complete experience to learning music. Moreover, the structure will enable students to get certified through a recognized English music college – the Trinity College of Music. Most importantly, the structure also allows for students to continue their musical studies at higher level with the possibility of targeting a musical career.

This is all embedded within the traditional ideology of a local band club: fees are kept at a minimum for accessibility to all, free loan of instruments is still provided and above all the family-feeling will still reign over all those involved. We therefore invite you to join us to keep Maltese traditions alive by making good music together!

# 1. Course Overview

## 1.1 Introductory Courses

	Age	Course Content	Assessment
<b>Music Explorers</b>	7 – 9 years	Introduction to music notation and appreciation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Part 1 (January-June): 30-minute weekly group session with solfège tutor, covering rhythm and pitch through use of body percussion, percussion toys and “meet and greet” with the different instruments of a wind band.</li><li>- Part 2 (July-December): 20-minute weekly individual lesson with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.</li></ul>	Continuous assessment
<b>Introduction to Music</b>	10+ years	Theory of Music - Grade 1 Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 30-minute weekly group session with theory tutor</li><li>- Students are exempted from these sessions if they hold a Grade 1 certificate in Theory of Music of one of the recognised foreign examination boards.</li></ul> Introduction to the instrument of choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 20-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.</li></ul>	Continuous assessment  Final written assessment

## 1.2 Core Framework

Course Content		Notes
<b>Level 1</b> <b>Music Practice – Grade 1</b> 30-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.  <b>School Band</b> 45-minute weekly group session with tutor. The session will consist of ensemble work, solfeggio sessions and other practical activities. Through this ensemble, students are given their first experience of playing in a wind band through frequent rehearsals aimed at teaching students the attitude, behaviour, and techniques of playing with other fellow musicians. The school band will be involved in events organized by the school.	<b>Prerequisite</b> Completion of either one of the Introductory courses described above OR Grade 1 certificate in Theory of Music of one of the recognised foreign examination boards.  <b>Other Activities:</b> <b>Chamber Music Sessions</b> Students are also engaged in sessions with the school accompanist in preparation for examinations and concerts. This provides a training platform to performing chamber music.	
<b>Level 2</b> <b>Music Practice – Grade 2</b> 30-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.  <b>School Band</b> 45-minute weekly group session with tutor. The session will consist of ensemble work, solfeggio sessions and other practical activities.	<b>Prerequisite</b> Completion of either Level 1 OR Grade 1 certificate of one of the recognised foreign examination boards in the instrument of choice.  <b>Other Activities:</b> <b>Chamber Music Sessions</b>	
<b>Level 3</b> <b>Music Practice – Grade 3</b> 30-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.  <b>School Band</b> 1 hour weekly group session with tutor. The session will consist of ensemble work, solfeggio sessions and other practical activities.	<b>Prerequisite</b> Completion of either Level 2 OR Grade 2 certificate of one of the recognised foreign examination boards in the instrument of choice.  <b>Other Activities:</b> <b>Chamber Music Sessions</b>  <b>Youth Band - – Banda Żgħażaġh Vittorja</b> The Youth Band is made up of students at Level 3 upwards and alumni. Through this ensemble, students are given training in playing with a full wind band.	

<p><b>Level 4</b></p>	<p><b>Music Practice – Grade 4</b> 40-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.</p> <p><b>School Band</b> 1-hour weekly group session with tutor. The session will consist of ensemble work, solfeggio sessions and other practical activities.</p> <p><b>Banda Vittorja</b> Students at Level 4 are introduced to the official wind band of the society by joining the band during marches. Students are also required to attend band rehearsals as observers.</p>	<p><b>Prerequisite</b> Completion of either Level 3 OR Grade 3 certificate of one of the recognised foreign examination boards in the instrument of choice.</p> <p><b>Other Activities:</b> <b>Youth Band – Banda Żgħażaġh Vittorja</b></p> <p><b>Chamber Music Sessions</b></p>
<p><b>Level 5</b></p>	<p><b>Music Practice – Grade 5</b> 40-minute weekly individual session with the respective tutor of the instrument of choice.</p> <p><b>School Band</b> 1-hour weekly group session with tutor. The session will consist of ensemble work, solfeggio sessions and other practical activities.</p> <p><b>Banda Vittorja</b> Students at Level 5 become full members of the society's official wind band. Thus, they are required to attend marches and concerts as stipulated in the list of services issued at the beginning of the year. They are also required to attend all rehearsals in preparation for the concerts and other activities that might arise.</p>	<p><b>Prerequisite</b> Completion of either Level 4 OR Grade 4 certificate of one of the recognised foreign examination boards in the instrument of choice.</p> <p><b>Other Activities:</b> <b>Youth Band – Banda Żgħażaġh Vittorja</b></p> <p><b>Chamber Music Sessions</b></p>

Students may opt to continue their studies at higher levels at the *George Vella School of Music*. However, lesson fees will be at commercial rates.

## 1.2.1 Instrumental Classes

**Woodwind:** Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone

**Brass:** Trumpet, French Horn, Baritone, Euphonium, Trombone, Tuba

**Percussion:** Untuned and Tuned Percussion, Drumkit

# 2. School Calendar

<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 9<sup>th</sup>: Start of Scholastic Year 2023, First Term</li><li>• 21<sup>st</sup>: Awards Day</li></ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>: Easter Holidays</li><li>• 7<sup>th</sup>: Good Friday Procession (Level 4+)</li><li>• 17<sup>th</sup>: Start of Second Semester for Scholastic Year 2023</li></ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 29<sup>th</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June: Parents' Week</li></ul>
<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7<sup>th</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> September: Summer Holidays</li></ul>
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 11<sup>th</sup> September – Start of Third Term for Scholastic Year 2023</li></ul>
<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open Day</li></ul>
<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• End-of-year Assessments</li><li>• Youth Band Concert (Level 4+)</li></ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 17<sup>th</sup> December – End of scholastic year 2023</li></ul>

*Important:*

- *The above schedule is not final and events may be changed, removed or added.*
- *No lessons will be held on public holidays.*
- *There will be no lessons during the highlighted holidays. However, rehearsals, services and concerts can still take place*

# 3. Terms and Conditions

The "George Vella School of Music" is the school of music within the *Għaqda Mużikali Marija Bambina, Banda Vittorja, Naxxar*. The school provides high standard, holistic musical tuition, specializing in woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. Within this text the term "the school" will refer to the "George Vella School of Music". The term "student" or "students" will refer to a person or persons who have enrolled and are following/will be following the full course provided by the school as highlighted in *Course Overview* section.

## 3.1 Registration Procedure

Registration is open to all adults and children of any gender, nationality and musical level who would like to learn a band instrument and who comply by the following criteria:

- ✓ Be at least 7 years of age (i.e. born by the end of December 2016) or older
- ✓ Be a paying member of the named society. In the case of minors, at least one of the legal guardians must be a paying member of the society. Registration for Membership can be done at the time of application.

Registration can be carried out by applying online through our website on [www.gvsom.org](http://www.gvsom.org)

Given that the number of students in each instrumental class is limited, a waiting list will be created when that class exceeds its number of students.

Prospective students may be asked to sit for an audition.

## 3.2 Obligations

Students who make use of the main services of the school as highlighted in the *Course Overview* section agree to the following conditions:

- Students are not allowed to give their musical service to other musical entities before finishing Level 4.
- In return for the highly discounted price for the lessons covering the whole course, students and alumni who use or have made use of the services of the school are obliged to give their musical services to the *Għaqda Mużikali Marija Bambina, Banda Vittorja, Naxxar* without any financial return. They should also give priority to the named band over other musical commitments that the student or alumnus/alumna might have.

Prospective students who are not willing to fulfil these obligations should reconsider their decision to enrol in the school. Students who fail to abide by these obligations will be immediately suspended from the school.

### 3.3 School Procedures

A scholastic year starts from January and ends in December, with a total of not less than 30 weekly lessons annually, approximately carried out as highlighted in the *School Calendar* on page 6.

Each new student will begin the musical journey from one of the Introductory Courses depending on the student's age, unless equivalent certifications are presented at the time of application as highlighted in the prerequisites for each level.

#### 3.3.1 Attendance

Students are required to attend all sessions pertaining to the level being followed, as highlighted in the *Course Overview* section. No exceptions will be made. Attendance will be recorded.

*Automatic Dismissal* - Students who miss three consecutive practical sessions or school band sessions are considered to have resigned from the course, unless a blue certificate is presented for the missed dates.

*Attendance Percentage* - Students who do not attend at least 70% of the required lessons, rehearsals, band services and concerts will not be allowed to sit for the annual assessments at the end of the year, and therefore will not progress to the next level. Students who fail to attend the required percentage by the end of the year will not be allowed to register with the school the following scholastic year.

#### 3.3.2 Commitment to Study

All the students attending the school should show commitment towards their studies and the society under which the school operates. Students should prepare the requested work diligently and constantly to achieve the best results. A tutor may curtail the lesson if a student is found to not have prepared the assigned work diligently.

#### 3.3.3 Assessments

Students will have two kinds of assessments:

1. A continuous assessment – this will be carried out by both the instrument tutor and the school band director. These assessments aim at providing guidance on areas of improvement as well as highlight the achievements. These assessments will also have a weight on the final internal annual assessment.
2. An annual assessment which will be held towards the end of the scholastic year. The practical assessment will include scales or technical work, two accompanied pieces, a study and a sight-reading test. Practical annual assessments will only be held for students in Level 1 to Level 5.

Students following the *Introduction to Music* course or theory lessons (page 10) are required to sit for a final written exam covering the syllabus of the respective level.

## 3.4 School Fees and Sponsorships

### 3.4.1 Annual School fee

An annual fee of €100 is kindly requested from all students using the school's main services as highlighted in the *Course Overview* section. The fee should be settled within one week of registration.

The fee will cover the following services and expenses:

- ✓ All lessons and activity sessions as highlighted in the *Course Overview*.
- ✓ The organization of annual musical activities directly targeting students.
- ✓ The provision of an accompanist for preparation for the internal examinations, including two piano accompaniment rehearsals and accompaniment on the day of the practical internal examination.

The fee excludes:

- ✗ Books required during the scholastic year.
- ✗ Theory lessons, excluding the theory sessions provided to students following the *Introduction to Music* course
- ✗ Application fees and extra services (such as rehearsals with the piano accompanist) for external examinations.
- ✗ Instrument loan deposit.
- ✗ Workshops, masterclasses and other activities that might be organized during the year which are not highlighted in the *Course Overview*.
- ✗ The annual club membership fee.

The fee is important for the continuation provision of quality musical tuition. However, the school is aware that social circumstances can make it difficult to honour any financial contributions. Given so, following appropriate communication, a prospective student can be exempted from the school fee.

### 3.4.2 Loan of Instruments

The school provides the service of instrument-loaning to students as from the Introductory Courses such that students are given the opportunity to experiment and experience their chosen instrument before incurring the actual expense of a new instrument. Students might be asked to return the instrument back to the school by the end of Level 2, whereupon the student will be expected to buy his/her own instrument.

During the period of the instrument loan, the student is responsible for the care and frequent services of the loaned instrument. All expenses made by the student in relation to general upkeep and/or maintenance and/or repairs during the loan-period should be paid in full by the student.

At the commencement of the loaning period, the student should pay a €50 deposit which will be returned in full at the end of the loan if the instrument is in good condition. If the instrument requires any repairs, the deposit will be retained by the school to be used to pay for such.

### 3.4.3 Lessons in Theory of Music

Theory lessons are not compulsory except for students following the *Introduction to Music* course. However, the school provides lessons in theory of music to help students who would like to take up music in a more professional way.

Theory sessions will be delivered during weekly class sessions of 40 minutes and will follow the Trinity College of London syllabus. Theory lessons start in January and finish in October with an internal written, time-constraint assessment,

Students may opt to sit for the Trinity College London theory examinations held at the beginning of November. Such students will have extra lessons between the internal assessment and the actual external examination.

Students who wish to follow theory lessons should apply through the school website during the official registration period. The fee for this service is €50, and covers not less than 25 lessons. Students following the *Introduction to Music* course are exempt from this fee, as it is included in the annual fee.

Theory lessons are only provided to enrolled students at the George Vella School of Music. Classes are limited to not more than 5 students. Students will be accepted on a first come first served basis. However, priority will be given to students who have been attending theory classes regularly.

### 3.4.4 Sponsorships

One of the school's objectives is to push each of its students to the limit of their abilities to achieve the best out of their musical career. It will therefore award the student or students who would have strived and improved constantly throughout the year. A high mark in examinations does not automatically entail that the student will be awarded with a sponsorship, but rather commitment, effort and consistency will be the factors that will be taken into consideration. A committee made up of the tutors within the school will discuss and choose the student or students who should be awarded a sponsorship for the following year. Their decision is final and cannot be appealed. The committee may decide to not award the scholarship.

The sponsorship will consist of paid costs covering the annual school donation for the scholastic year in process. Other benefits in kind can also be included in the sponsorship. Students who would have opted to continue their studies at the school after finishing the whole course are not eligible to be granted a sponsorship within this scheme. However, from time-to-time new schemes may be introduced of which all students will be informed.

### 3.5 External Examinations

The school follows the syllabus provided by the Trinity College of London (TCL)<sup>1</sup>. Given so, the students who complete a given level can sit for the official grade provided by the highlighted college for the respective level in the November/December examination period held in Malta.

If a student would like to sit for the relevant external examinations provided by the TCL, the student should inform the respective tutor immediately. Students who choose to sit for these external examinations should pay the fees as requested by the college and supply the required personal information by a date that will be announced in due course.

Currently, examinations in practical subjects are being held in digital format. At the time of printing, digital examinations consist of a non-stop recording of the main pieces and scales and technical studies.

To give further support to students who choose to also sit for practical external examinations, the school will provide the Exam Support Package. This package will include the following:

GRADES	PACKAGE SERVICES	PRICE
GRADES 1 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 accompaniment sessions (in addition to the accompaniment sessions included in the annual school fee)</li><li>• Accompaniment during the recording of the digital examination</li></ul>	€50
GRADES 4 - 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 accompaniment sessions (in addition to accompaniment sessions included in the annual school fee)</li><li>• Accompaniment during the recording of the digital examination</li></ul>	€60

The *Exam Support Package* will be delivered by the school's official accompanist.

Students who opt to sit for external instrumental examinations should pay the relative fee for the Exam Support Package directly to the school's official accompanist during the first rehearsal. The Exam Support Package is not needed for theory examinations.

### 3.6 Health Guidelines and Procedures

The school will be following guidelines as issued by the Health Department. It is very important that students who are unwell do not attend lessons at the school premises. Online options will be provided if required.

### 3.7 Għaqda Nazzjonali Każini tal-Banda

Enrolled students of the George Vella School of Music are automatically registered with the Għaqda Nazzjonali Każini tal-Banda (GħKB) as official musicians. The GħKB is the entity that represents all band clubs in Malta.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.trinitycollege.com/>