**CLEETHORPES BAND**

**Instrument Care Guide**

**General Musical Instrument Care**

* Always keep your instrument in its case when not in use.
* Never put anything on top of your instrument, and never store anything on top of your instrument inside its case.
* Don’t leave your instrument unattended, whether inside or outside of its case.
* Keep your instrument clean of fingerprints and everyday dust and residue. Do this by wiping your instrument down with a clean, soft, non-treated cloth before storing.
* Never attempt to repair a band instrument or case at home. If a repair is needed inform the trustee responsible for instruments or another trustee member if they are not available.
* Avoid leaving an instrument where it can be easily knocked over or crushed, use an instrument stand or place it back into its case.

**Caring for Brass Instruments**

**Important:** Do not attempt to disassemble your instrument unless you have been shown how to remove and replace valves and caps. It is extremely easy to cross thread or damage them.

* Never let anyone play your instrument or use your mouthpiece unless it has been washed internally before and after.
* When placing your instrument back into its case, make sure it fits correctly. Do not force your case closed, as this means the instrument isn’t properly seated.
* Make sure your instrument is completely dry and sweat free prior to placing it in your case. Drain water after playing and wipe your instrument dry with a clean, soft cloth.
* Avoid eating, drinking sugary liquids or chewing gum immediately prior to playing your instrument.
* Wash hands before handling the instrument, some hand creams and body fluids i.e. sweat can cause damage to the instrument.
* Always remove your mouthpiece after playing. Regularly (weekly) clean your mouthpiece with warm water and mild soap.
* If your mouthpiece is dry apply a thin layer of valve oil to the bore to keep it from getting stuck.

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* If your mouthpiece does get stuck, use mouthpiece puller (available from the instrument store) to remove it. Never forcefully twist your mouthpiece.
* Bare brass sticks together when left unmoved for long periods of time so take time to move and grease all possible parts at least every couple of weeks observing their tuning positions.
* Unscrew valves, wipe clean and use a drop of valve oil to coat the entire valve. Apply oil to valve cap and bottom cap.
* Apply slide oil/lubricant to trombones at least once a week. Before application gently wipe the inner slide with a soft cloth.  Be careful if removing the outer slide (although this is often not necessary) as this needs replacing carefully or the inner parts could bend resulting in damage to the slide action.
* Use lanolin or similar oil/lubricant to lubricate tuning slides.
* Ensure that mutes have their padding/corks in place and fit correctly before use.

**Caring for Percussion Instruments**

* Ensure that the equipment is assembled and disassembled correctly and all nuts, washers etc are not likely to be mislaid.
* Use the correct stick or implements.
* Do not use broken or split sticks or other implements.
* Do not share sticks etc if possible and wipe them regularly to clean them.
* Do a visual check of the equipment before use and ensure all supports and fixings are in place. Hand cymbals and large gongs etc can do serious damage if care isn’t taken.
* Report any damage or repair issues to a trustee.
* Whistles etc. must be washed before and after use.
* Timpani covers should always be replaced after use and for transportation.
* Transportation cases should be used where provided.

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**Instrument Cleaning Instructions**

**Washing of Brass Instruments**

**Important:**

* Do not attempt to wash your instrument unless you have been shown how to remove and replace valves and caps. It is extremely easy to cross thread or damage them.
* Larger instruments like Tubas are extremely heavy especially when full of water so extra care should be taken when lifting and handling during washing. This should be undertaken by two people if possible.
* Do not use any sort of abrasive cleaners:
	+ Silver plated instruments – only use products designed for silver e.g. a silver polishing cloth (and don't wash the cloth!).
	+ Lacquered instruments – a clean soft cloth is normally sufficient but a light spray of a multi-surface cleaner e.g. Pledge can be used to remove grease marks

All instruments should be regularly (Monthly dependant on use) washed thoroughly to ensure there is no build-up of debris. Internal cleaning of instruments is essential to avoid becoming a breeding ground for micro-organisms which can lead to lung infections and other health issues.

Note: Refrain from washing your instrument 1 week before contests.

Care should be taken not to damage or mark the instrument or container being used e.g. enamel bath. A shower mat or towel comes in handy to line the container.

A selection of instrument brushes and cloths will be needed to clean your instrument - a toothbrush is also handy.

Suggested Technique:

1. Fill a suitable container with warm mild soapy water.
2. Remove the valves and place in order on a cloth or towel. The valves should be numbered but this is not always the case. Number 1 is normally the nearest to the mouthpiece and it is essential they go back in their correct order.
3. Remove the bottom valve caps and springs only if they are separate to the valves.
4. Remove the tuning slide and other slides and place carefully to one side.

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1. Immerse the instrument as far as possible into the warm soapy water and gently scrub the debris off with a soft brush or cloth. Larger instruments might be best cleaned in a shower or baby bath for example.
2. Use a specialised cleaning, pull-through brush to ensure the pipe from the mouthpiece section to the first valve is thoroughly clean. Do not force the brush or allow it to get stuck.
3. Where possible brush all other internal areas or partially fill the bell with water. Then agitate and rotate the instrument until you are satisfied that all areas are clean. Make sure you don’t have any foreign objects in the bell before you do this.
4. Rinse all areas internally and externally to ensure there are no traces of soap.
5. Place the instrument to one side and wash, rinse and dry the valves and caps individually and place them back in order on the towel. Do not strip the valves down. Do not scrape off any hard matter with anything metal or too abrasive but ensure any threads are clean.
6. Place the slides into the warm mild soapy water (use fresh if needed at any stage) ensuring there are no air pockets.
7. Dry the instrument and polish out any marks on silver plated instruments.
8. Wash, rinse and dry the slides taking care to clean the water key pads and drain holes. A soft toothbrush may be handy.
9. Replace the slides after applying a thin layer of slide grease ensuring the tuning positions are re-established.
10. Replace the bottom caps after applying a thin layer of grease on the threads. Then replace the springs and valves in order ensuring the guide lugs are seated correctly and the caps aren’t cross threaded. (Tip: place the cap so it is flat and then rotate gently anticlockwise until you feel a small click and the cap drops into the start of the thread. Then reverse to a clockwise motion and, as long as there’s no resistance, you should carry on until it is fully tightened.
11. Don’t forget to wash and brush through your mouthpiece.
12. Test the instrument to see if you have reassembled the instrument correctly and have no residual water left anywhere. Use the water keys and rotate as necessary. If the instrument doesn’t seem to be correct then inform the trustee responsible for instruments or ask an experienced player for assistance.