

ISSUE NO. 2

# The Music Box

Studio Handbook  
Sept 2017

[www.themusicboxgilwern.co.uk](http://www.themusicboxgilwern.co.uk)



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Pages 14 and onward contain important contractual information and policies about the safeguarding of children. You may keep the copy contained in this handbook, but please sign and return the enclosed copies before commencement of lessons.

## A Message From Nichola:

I think we will all agree that the last academic year was one of our busiest and most productive yet. The Pianoathon was a massive success, as were our Christmas and Easter recitals. Many of our students enjoyed participating in our Music Box Medals schemes, and we have many practice incentives lined up for the new school term.

Our new handbook sets out to clarify some of our policies, and to provide you with important information for this new academic year.

Thank you to all parents and students for your continued support. We hope to make the new school year a valuable and exciting one.

Nichola

# Lesson Charges: What are you paying for?

To put it simply, your monthly payment guarantees your allocated term time slot.

There are many hidden costs involved in running a private tuition studio. At The Music Box we provide quality instruments which require regular maintenance.

When you enroll at the studio and accept a regular lesson slot, we ask that you respect our payment policies.

Payment is due by the 1st of every month. There are no refunds offered for student cancellations during term time and no deductions should be made from invoices in relation to cancelled/missed lessons. If you need to cancel a lesson you should do this online by logging in to your My Music Staff account. Providing we have received at least 24 hours notice, you will be issued with a 'make up credit' which can be used to book a catch up lesson. Make up credits are limited to 2 per term and must be used by the end of each school term. Please regularly check the calendar for available slots as they are updated daily. Make up credits and catch up sessions can only be booked using the online system. We are unable to accept cancellations and bookings via text/email.

There will be no refunds or make up credits for group lessons or practice sessions as these are priced according to the number of participants. The same applies to 20/20/20 lessons.

If the tutor cancels we will issue an extra make up credit or a refund.

# 2017/18 Charges

30 Minute Lesson - £16

45 Minute Lesson - £24

60 Minute Lesson - £32

Please refer to the lesson duration guidelines below for those wishing to sit graded exams this year.

- Beginners and Grade 1 - 30 minutes
- Grades 2,3,4 - 45 Minutes
- Grades 5 and 6 - 60 Minutes
- Grades 7 and 8 - a minimum of 60 Minutes

Please pay your invoice by Bank transfer to:

Acc 03163628 Sort Code 09-01-50

To pay using Paypal, credit card or debit card, please log in to your My Music Staff account, or click the link on your emailed invoice. However, there is a small processing charge for this service.

# Studio Rules

## Inside The Studio

- Parents of young children (under 10 yrs), please do not leave the premises during the lesson.
- No food, drinks or gum are allowed in the studio.
- Please come to the studio at your appointed time.
- If there is a lesson in progress please wait quietly in the waiting area and do not run in the corridor.
- Please do not mark the walls with your feet.
- If it is raining, snowing or muddy, please wipe your feet on the entrance mat before entering the studio, and hang your coat on the coat rack prior to the lesson.
- In the interest of hygiene and limiting the spread of illness, please wash hands before the lesson.
- Please use the toilet BEFORE your lesson. The main hall is used daily and the toilets are to be used in cases of emergency only. There are public toilets next to the Beaufort. If you do use the toilet in the main hall, please ensure that children are accompanied by an adult and that the toilets are left clean and tidy. (There have been complaints by other hall customers).
- Please take rubbish away with you. We have no council refuse collection.

## Students' responsibilities and practice expectations:

- Please come to your lesson on time, well prepared, with any music you are currently working on.
- Daily practice is necessary and required. Failure to practice may result in termination of lessons.
- Complete your assigned homework every week.
- Act in a respectful manner during your lesson.
- Participation in studio recitals and concerts is mandatory.

## Parent Responsibilities:

- Your support is an extremely important factor in musical training. Children whose parents take an active role in their practice, tend to be more enthusiastic and productive.
- How well your child does directly relates to the quality of practice and attendance to lessons.
- Younger children especially need help with their practicing.
- You should provide access to a good quality instrument in the home. A good acoustic piano or 88 weighted key digital piano is required after no longer than 12 months of lessons.
- On the lesson day, please make sure that your child is well rested, has had a snack, and has short, clean finger nails. Long fingernails and acrylic/gel nails are not permitted as they inhibit the student's playing and change their hand position. False nails also damage the piano keys.
- The study of music is enjoyable and rewarding but requires hard work. Please be helpful, interested and supportive.
- Children who are sick should not attend their lesson. If your child has been home from school during the day please do not attend. If your child has a contagious illness such as fever, flu, sickness, diarrhea etc, please keep them home. You are welcome to email a video for appraisal or theory work to be marked during the missed lesson. Older children who are contagious but feel well enough to play the piano may request a skype lesson.
- Your child will require a method book and various sheet music. Please make sure that you discuss this with the teacher and that books are always brought to lessons. Photocopies are not acceptable.



# New This Year:

## 30 Piece Challenge!!

Piano teachers around the world are encouraging their students to take part in the '30 Piece Challenge'. The idea behind this is to encourage a repertoire-rich education that does not merely centre around an exam syllabus. By being exposed to a large quantity of music, children gain technical, musical and reading skills.

We are encouraging all students to take part in this challenge which begins in September, and will document their progress.

Those who complete their challenge will be given an award at the end of the year.

## Practice Sessions

We do require all students to have access to a piano within 12 months of starting lessons. In order to help those who do not yet have a piano, or those in need of some extra help, we are offering supervised practice sessions with our studio assistant, Jenny Lewis. These sessions are available to book online and will take place on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

# Music Box Medals

Graded exams are always encouraged. However, they are not a full curriculum. There is a lot more to studying music than graded exams, and I meet increasingly more piano teachers who are steering away from grades in favour of a more rounded and balanced curriculum. We will always continue to promote graded ABRSM and Trinity College exams, but we would like to ensure that all children are provided with a rich education that encourages dedication and perseverance; recognises hard work as well as academic achievement; and promotes collaborative work and musicianship skills.

We introduced this successful scheme last year, and hope to continue this during 2017/18.

Medals are awarded at the end of each term on completion of the following tasks:

- 1) Satisfactory completion of the required number of pieces for the Autumn (10). These may not necessarily be complicated pieces, but should demonstrate musicality and good preparation.
- 2) To overcome a personal obstacle, (to be agreed with tutor). This could be something technical, improving sight reading, learning scales etc.
- 3) Participation in a Christmas Concert.
- 4) Satisfactory completion of given homework.
- 5) Daily entries in an online practice diary.

Students who enroll mid way through the term may still participate in Music Box Medals. The required number of pieces will be worked out pro rata.

Details of levels 2 and 3 are available from your teacher.

# Bursaries and Scholarships

As members of the European Piano Teachers Association we are able to apply for small grants on behalf of students who demonstrate outstanding commitment and potential, but struggle to afford the cost of lessons. Funding is available through the John Bigg Scholarship fund for those who are currently at a Grade 5 level or above. If you would like an application form, please speak to your tutor. Applications should be submitted by 01/09/16

In addition to EPTA funding, we are also able to apply to the Starmer Jones Music Trust for small grants towards piano tuition and courses. Applications are being considered over the summer from particularly talented students who have demonstrated consistent commitment and would not otherwise afford the cost of lessons. If you would like your teacher to consider you for recommendation please email us a letter of intent, outlining your present circumstances.

# Exams

ABRSM exams take place 3 times per year at times specified by the examination board. Pupils are entered after teacher recommendation and are required to demonstrate a high level of commitment before their application will be considered. There has recently been a change in the ABRSM marking procedure, meaning that it is now even more difficult to get a good result!

When requesting an exam entry, parents and pupils must agree to a regular practice routine, to regularly attend lessons and to complete ALL given homework without exception. Exams are stressful for under prepared students.

During an exam your child will be tested on:

3 Pieces of music which need to be performed to a high standard.

A large number of scales, arpeggios and/or broken chords.

Aural (listening) tests

Sight reading (unprepared piece to be played at sight)

This requires consistent work, not only in the lead up to the exam but all year round, whether or not we are working on 'exam pieces'. It is the hard work that takes place BETWEEN exams that really pays off!!

In order to sit a Grade 6 exam, it is also necessary to have passed Grade 5 in Music Theory.

# Dates For Your Diary:

Students are required to attend lessons during term time only.

Autumn Term: Monday 4th Sept – Sun 29th Oct

Autumn Half Term: Mon 30th Oct – Sun 5th Nov

Autumn Term: Mon 6th Nov – Friday 22nd December

Christmas Holidays: Sat 23rd Dec – Sunday 7th Jan

Spring Term: Mon 8th Jan – Sun 18th Feb

Spring Half Term: Mon 19th Feb – Sun 25th Feb

Spring Term: Mon 26th Feb – Thurs 29th March

Easter Holidays: Friday 30th March – Sunday 15th April

Summer Term: Monday 16th April – Sun 27th May

Summer Half Term: Mon 28th May – Sun 3rd June

Summer Term: Mon 4th June – Tues 24th July

ABRSM Exam Deadlines

Autumn term exam entry – Friday 22nd September

Dates for 2018 to be announced.

Christmas Concert TBA

Spring Eisteddfod TBA

Summer Concert TBA

PARENT/GUARDIAN & PUPIL CONSENT FORM

Name of Teacher .....

As a member of the European Piano Teachers' Association UK, I abide by its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

I may need to guide the pupil's hand, arm or shoulder in order to teach good piano technique. Therefore, I am asking permission from both you and the pupil(s) in advance. The parent/guardian/carer is welcome to attend the lessons.

Please complete the following, sign and return before lessons begin:

Name of Child(ren).....

Date(s) of Birth .....

Parent/Guardian/Carer .....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Tel (day) ..... Tel (evening)

.....

Mobile ..... Email

.....

Do any of the pupils named here suffer from any medical conditions/allergies that the piano teacher should be aware of (including any current medication)?If so please specify.

.....

CONSENT(please read carefully)

I agree to the above-named child(ren) receiving lessons from.....

and for the teacher to use touch on occasion in order to encourage correct piano technique.

Signature

.....

(Parent/Guardian/Carer)

Date .....

CONSENT (please read carefully)

I agree to receiving lessons from

.....

and for the teacher to use touch on occasion in order to encourage correct piano technique.

Signature(s)

.....

.....(Pupil(s))

Date .....



## EPTA UK CODE OF CONDUCT & SAFEGUARDING POLICY (relevant sections)

The European Piano Teachers' Association UK Ltd (EPTA UK) is a limited company and a registered charity. Its aims are to promote excellence in piano teaching and performance, to bring teachers and performers together, and to raise standards within the profession. EPTA UK members should, therefore, adopt the highest standards of professional integrity in all their contacts with students, pupils, parents, colleagues and other professionals, at all times and in all places.

For all teachers, this means:

1. Recognizing a duty of care towards all students and pupils
2. Establishing a clear contract with students and pupils or their responsible adults
3. Ensuring that they and the premises from which they are working are equipped to a proper professional standard for their teaching
4. Maintaining courtesy, and respect in all their dealings with students and pupils, and never putting them, or allowing them to put you, in any situation which could be construed as compromising
5. Maintaining courtesy, and respect in all their dealings with parents and the schools in which they work
6. Avoiding exaggerated claims in advertising and only offering to teach those who approach them
7. If at the receiving end of unfair allegations, dishonest, harassing, bullying or abusive behaviour, getting in touch with the Administrator or Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP)

This policy and the associated procedures are specifically focused on children. For the purposes of this policy and the associated procedures, a child is someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. EPTA UK also acknowledges its obligations to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults (persons aged 18 or over who are, or may be, due to illness, mental or physical disability, unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation). EPTA UK expects its members to apply the same safeguarding principles and high standards of conduct in relation to the teaching of vulnerable adults as are expected in relation to the teaching of children. EPTA UK members seeking advice in relation to teaching vulnerable adults should contact the Designated Safeguarding Person.

1. EPTA UK is committed to practices which protect children from harm. In particular:

a. EPTA UK recognises that good child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with EPTA UK, including staff and members

b. EPTA UK has child protection procedures which should be adhered to by EPTA UK members and staff

c. All those applying to be a full member of EPTA UK will be informed of the charity's child protection policies and procedures, and be advised that concerns in relation to a member's professional misconduct with children will be acted on (see Disciplinary Procedures below)

2. While EPTA UK is committed to practices which protect children from harm, it is also committed to supporting members who become the subject of unfounded allegations in relation to professional conduct with children

3. It should be noted that it is necessary for EPTA UK to record information relating to any allegation or disclosure regarding possible misconduct with children, and EPTA UK may be required to report concerns to the authorities (see Disciplinary Procedures below)

## EPTA UK Safeguarding Code of Practice

Any physical contact with pupils can be potentially subject to misinterpretation or even malicious allegations. The best advice is to avoid touching your pupils and to develop strategies for teaching through demonstration and modelling. If a teacher feels that touching is essential to their pedagogic style, they are to obtain prior permission in writing from the parent and pupil, and will encourage a parent/guardian to attend the lessons. However, it is not appropriate to touch a child on the trunk of the body unless there is a justifiable reason (e.g. to administer first aid).

Teachers should not...

1. Take children alone in a car on journeys, however short, unless with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian, and then only in exceptional circumstances.
2. Make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Inappropriate remarks include innuendo, swearing, and the discussing of anyone's intimate relationships.
3. Communicate directly with children by email or text messages. Any such contact should only be with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian. If electronic communication is necessary, the best practice is to communicate via parents or guardians.
4. Communicate personally with children via Twitter, Facebook or other social media.
5. Behave in a way which could be construed as 'grooming' (for example giving a child money, presents or favours, or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards them).

This Contract is for Piano Tuition given

By.....

To.....

The Teacher will

- teach the student according to a mutually drafted progress plan
- give regular spoken or written reports of the student's progress
- be punctual in beginning and ending lessons
- provide an appropriate teaching environment for students coming to the teacher for lessons.

The Student (with parental support) will

- do the set homework
- be punctual and bring the necessary books to lessons
- not give performances or enter for exams without the consent of the teacher
- provide an appropriate learning environment for a teacher visiting the student's home and ensure a responsible adult is also on the premises

Fees and policy about missed lessons

The hourly fee is £..... Lessons will be charged pro rata according to their length.

Missed lessons will be charged at the usual rate. The teacher may in some circumstances agree to re-schedule the lesson.

Period of notice to terminate lessons is.....

## Payment schedule

Fees are to be paid:

At each lesson/ at the beginning of an agreed number of lessons / at the beginning of each half term or term, or as stated below:

.....

This contract can be cancelled by mutual agreement.

Signed

Teacher..... Date.....

Pupil/Parent.....Date.....

This draft contract is for guidance only and is the sole responsibility of the individual teacher.

## Photography Consent – The Music Box, School of Piano

THE MUSIC BOX, SCHOOL OF PIANO recognises its responsibility to ensure the welfare and safety of children and young people and to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We use photographs and videos for a number of reasons including celebrating and recording children successes. These images or videos may be used on display boards, plasma screens, in newsletters and school publications and on our website. Your child's identity will not be disclosed without your consent and only if the photograph is used to celebrate individual success.

Photographs and videos will only be recorded on school owned equipment and will not be kept for longer than is to be considered necessary, and in any event, not exceeding a maximum of three years after your child has left the school.

We also believe that it is important for families to celebrate children's successes and for that reason at some events we may allow parents/carers to take photographs.

We will remind parents/carers prior to the event that any photographs or videos taken should only be shared on social media with close friends and family by use of appropriate privacy settings.

If you are concerned about the privacy of your child we would like to encourage you to make an appointment and discuss your concern with Nichola McCloy so we can take appropriate measures to protect them.

On some occasions if we do not have permission to use the image of your child it may result in your child not being able to take full part in some school events.

I give consent for you to record and use images or videos of my child in the following ways:

(Delete any which you do not give consent to)

As a tool to monitor and track progress

Displays within the school

School newsletters and other paper publications e.g. class yearbooks

Website (shows trips and activities and celebrate children's successes)

General publicity (includes use by the local authority and for training purposes)

Use by the press and other broadcast media

In addition I confirm that:-

I give consent for my child to be photographed by other members of the school community (Parents/Carers) during school events (e.g. Christmas Concert).

The Music Box will take all steps to ensure images and videos are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these are being used or shared inappropriately, please contact the school.

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Consent shall be obtained every school year and will last for the duration of that school year unless consent is withdrawn. Images may be kept for no longer than necessary and in any event, not exceeding a maximum of three years after your child has left the school.

You do have the right to withdraw consent at any time. To withdraw consent please

contact: Nichola McCloy