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### ❖ **Philosophy**

My studio lessons offer a solid method in reading notes, rhythms, and musical terms, in order to use the combination of these to create music. Lessons include regular listening activities and exploration into composition and playing by ear. The majority of my students use a method book and then supplement with classical, jazz, chord songs, worship music, pop music or whatever they really enjoy. Some participate in Music Festivals in competition, and all certainly have opportunity if they choose to. Some students also take exams with the Royal Conservatory of Music examination board. Throughout the year there are opportunities for planned group and performance classes, seniors' home concerts if possible, as well as a final recital in June which we call a "Piano Party".

I believe that if the students enjoy the music they're playing they will be motivated to play more. I encourage students to bring suggestions of music they would like to play and have a lending library of printed music available. I really enjoy getting to know each individual student, how they learn and what they desire to play. I commit to doing everything I can to make piano lessons fun!

### ❖ **Private Lessons**

The individual lessons take place once per week for a 40, 45, 50 or 60 minute session, from mid-September to mid-June. The total of 35 weeks includes private lessons and performance classes or occasional group classes. There is a scheduled break over Christmas (2 weeks) and Spring Break (2 weeks). Summer lessons are a special arrangement. Parents are welcome to attend lessons at any time but are not required, except for possibly the first one or two beginner classes.

### ❖ **At Home**

I believe that parents play a significant role in the level of success attained in the study of piano. Daily practice is essential. This is the best way to ensure success. My experience is that the students whose parents enforce a consistent schedule of practice time make the most progress in the least time. For beginning students approximately 10-20 minutes each day is sufficient, while 30-60 minutes per day is expected for intermediate students. Sometimes children prefer to break up their playing into 2 or 3 shorter segments, which can allow for better concentration. Please check your child's assigned lesson plan each week to ensure they are also reading it and following it completely. Special notes to parents are also included in the lesson plan at times.

## At Home (continued)

If a child is a beginner or in early stages of learning, it is very important that parents participate in practice time (and lesson time too). It's not necessary to have musical ability to assist beginners. Students often just need help with understanding the assignment and this can be clarified by reading it over together and getting into a routine. When questions arise, please feel free to call or text me and I will help explain the concept or direct you to an appropriate resource. Having said that, it is best to allow your child to figure out music for themselves...they won't learn as quickly if you show them everything! In fact, they will likely become dependent on you for their musical development.

Access to a full-sized, weighted-keys piano in good working condition is critical to the success of the student. They need to experience the full range of motion and sensitive touch of an acoustic or good quality electric piano. If the piano is an acoustic (non-digital), it also needs to be tuned regularly. While a pedal may seem optional, it is actually essential. Please contact me if you would like assistance with finding a pedal for electronic pianos.

### ❖ Theory

This musical knowledge in written form is an essential part of the lesson and offers the student an opportunity to think through in their mind what they are learning with their hands. It also forms a solid basis for further music study. Lessons often have a theory component from a separate theory book, but off-the-bench activities and games also provide this important reinforcement work. Group classes and partner lessons are fun for this type of learning.

### ❖ Technique

Technical exercises are another foundational "building block" for the study of music. When they are practiced regularly students experience an understanding of the keys and patterns necessary for developing musicianship. Many famous pianists and composers agree that playing the piano with accuracy, speed, dexterity, emotion and creativity are a result of diligent technical practice.

### ❖ Parent's Responsibility

Parents must be willing to help their children find time and space to practice. When left completely responsible to practice on their own, children generally won't discipline themselves enough - it takes positive reinforcement. As a parent myself, I understand the challenges in establishing regular practice routines at home. Your role in creating a time and space for practice is critical in your child's success. We drive our children to other practices (ie. soccer, dance) at a certain time and place. Piano practice needs the same commitment. Please help your child find a time and space free from distractions (ie. TV, family, friends, computer, iPod or phone) that works for them to practice. It's not natural for them to plan their own practice times! They are kids!

Each week you can participate in the students' goals by reviewing their lesson plan with them and taking note of any difficulties, as well as any desires they have for their learning (ie. new music, competition, exam, church/extra-curricular involvement). And, of course, encourage your child whenever you possibly can. Make sure they know you are listening!