



KUI MIN PIANO STUDIO

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STUDIO POLICY

2016-2017

THE PRIMARY GOAL

To help the student going from being a student to a well-balanced artist, through promoting his or her -

- **Passion** for the piano and music – Artistic engagement, spontaneous musicality and curiosity
- **Discipline** – Fulfillment of expectation, reaching long term and short term goals through careful plans and mindful practice, and having rewarding experience of weekly productive work
- **Personality** – Development of individuality, imagination and creativity
- **Sensitivity** – Development of critical listening, ears for colors and sounds, and refined control of emotion
- **Virtuosity** – Gaining techniques which make the most out of the least; and through which the student performs with confidence, warmth, and freedom
- **Overall Musicianship** – Reinforcement of practical skills such as keyboard theory and sight reading which make music learning more efficient
- **True Enjoyment** – Every single minute the student spends at the piano is rewarding and enjoyable

TUITION FEES

Tuition fees for lessons are due at the first lesson of each month. A late fee of \$15 is added for any tuition payments not received by the first lesson of the month.

LESSONS

Students are expected to arrive at lessons on time and with all lesson materials. No food, gum, or drinks (except water) allowed during lessons. Students are required to wash hands when they arrive for lessons. Siblings are welcome provided they remain absolutely still and quiet during the entire lesson time. Parents who would like to sit in and take notes during lessons are extremely welcome. Please be prompt in picking up your child after his/her lesson if you must be absent during that time. Parents will be fully responsible for the expense of any housing damages caused by waiting children.

MATERIALS

I will let you know what books are necessary for the student's progress, but obtaining them will be your responsibility. Most books can be purchased at the local music stores (e.g. Harknett Music Services at 2650 John St, Markham, ON L3R 2W5) or online carriers (e.g. amazon.ca). It is important that books be purchased in a prompt manner. Students need to bring a 3" three-ring binder that has the exterior, see through plastic pocket cover. This will be used throughout the year to keep assignment sheets and handouts in order.

MISSED AND MAKE-UP LESSONS

A maximum of two make-up lessons could be arranged throughout the year. Make-up lessons could be scheduled if I am given cancellation notice at least 24 hours prior to the lesson time. A make-up will be provided if the lesson was canceled by me. No refund will be given to students who cancel a lesson with less than a 24-hour notice. Planned absences must be informed prior to monthly tuition payment. Sudden sickness or family emergencies will be considered exceptionally.

RECITALS, ADJUDICATIONS, COMPETITIONS AND EXAMS

Public performances are an important component of musical study. In addition to the joy of sharing music with others, they can be inspiring for students who are having difficulties. They help foster the poise and self-confidence needed later in life when we must present ourselves to others in public. All students are encouraged to participate in our annual studio recitals and local festivals, either as performers or as the audience.

Each year, the various organizations provide educational and competitive opportunities for qualified students. Such events may be offered by me to those students who seem to possess the necessary maturity, discipline, talent and temperament to participate in such events. Bear in mind that these opportunities require a high level of determination, more serious practice habits, and the ability to perform in a competitive arena with a high level of confidence. All music (except duets) is to be memorized for the events. Deadlines for preparation are imposed and strictly adhered to in order to ensure that all participating students are secure with their piece(s). Those students whose piece(s) is/are not performance-ready by the deadline shall be withdrawn from the event.

Notes for parents of prospective students...

Practice: A Family Responsibility

To insure optimal progress, sufficient practice time must be set aside. It is important to find a time when it is relatively quiet in the home for effective learning. Please respect the student's practice by eliminating all distracting elements, such as TV, stereos and friends. The emphasis needs to be on mind spent, not only time spent. Praise and encouragement are the parents' greatest tools in helping a young musician. Sit down and listen to your child's practice regularly, and help your child reach his/her weekly goal.

I do not generally require a certain length of time to be spent in practice – I ask only that a practice session lasts *as long as it takes to reach the goal* and that practice need only occur *on those days that the student also breathes*. Parents and students should keep in mind the advancement rate is directly related to amount of time spent in *thoughtful, concentrated* practice. An average of 20 minutes a day will let the student “scrape by” – an average of an hour a day will move the student to a much higher level of skill and enjoyment.

Even a student who loves music and has a strong desire to play the piano needs *encouragement* – not nagging – to practice. The excitement of beginning piano lessons often leaves a parent wishing their child would find something to do other than play the piano! Unfortunately, such excitement seldom lasts forever – the interest and the desire are still there, but the student eventually comes face-to-face with reality of the work and effort involved in studying such a complex instrument.

There are seven basic reasons a student does *not* practice – I take full responsibility for the first three:

1. The student does not know *how* to practice.
2. The study pieces are either boring (too easy) or frustrating (too hard).
3. The student is required to work exclusively on music that is not appealing.

Parents are responsible for the next three:

4. Practice is scheduled when other family members (or nearby friends) are engaged in games or watching a special show.
5. Practice sessions are too long for the student's age.
6. The instrument is not in reasonable condition and/or the practice room is not comfortable and/or too many distractions are in the room at practice time.

The student must bear responsibility (with the parents' guidance) for the most common reason of all:

7. The student must develop a character trait – discipline – in order to learn to schedule priorities and to understand there is not always enough time in the day to do *everything*, but to choose wisely those activities that are important and meaningful. The piano requires the ability to study independently.

Tips of How Parents Can Be Encouragers

- Praise for your child's efforts and special accomplishments is important, but secondary to other actions and attitudes that are ongoing.
- Show your support by attending recitals and other performances; ask for a single piece concert after dinner the next time you have company. (Let the student choose an old and familiar piece.)
- Never complain about having to tolerate the music of practice time or the scheduling difficulty of fitting lessons into busy lives.
- Take an interest in weekly assignments. Assignment sheets are used for the obvious reason of writing weekly assignments, comments specific to the current study pieces, and specific goals to accomplish each week. They can also provide an opportunity for parents to be involved with the learning process.
- Buy a classical music recording for a 'no special reason' present.
- Enjoy the music!

Practice Tips for the Beginning Piano Student

A piano student's at-home practice is the most critical part of their progress. Piano is not something that can simply be done once a week at a lesson, concepts must be effectively reinforced every day. The following are suggestions that parents should help their children understand and remember.

1. Quality of Time vs. Quantity of Repetitions

- Students should practice for a certain amount of time each day and spend that time working to accomplish specific goals. These goals are outlined each week by the teacher in their notebook and music.
- Avoid the “do it this many times and then you are done” approach to practicing.

2. Awareness of hand position and technique

- Am I sitting up straight?
- Am I sitting a proper distance from the piano?
- Is the bench at a good height?
- Are my shoulders, arms, and hands relaxed or do they feel tight?
- Is my wrist level with the keyboard?
- Are my fingers curved and supported?
- Am I dropping my weight into each key?

3. Steady beat and control over rhythms

- Do I feel a pulse inside of my body before I begin and keep it as I play?
- Am I using the metronome?
- Am I feeling the right number of counts in each measure?
- Am I paying attention to how long each note should be held?
- Have I noticed all of the rests?

4. Attention to sound

- Does every note sound good or do they sound hit and harsh?
- Am I doing the dynamics the composer has written into the music?
- Am I playing musically and shaping each phrase?
- Am I observing staccatos, slurs, accents, ritards, and fermatas?

5. Enjoying the process

- Fill your home with music. Listen to works by the great classical composers.
- Dance and move your body to the beat of the music.
- Sing together.
- Learn music that you enjoy and that interests you.
- Perform pieces for supportive and enthusiastic friends and family.

**STUDENT/PARENT INFORMATION
AND AGREEMENT FORM**

Kui Min Piano Studio 2016-2017

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name(s): _____

Current grade in school: _____

Address: _____

Email (if applicable): _____

Home phone number: _____

PARENT INFORMATION

Name(s): _____

Cell phone number(s): _____

Email(s): _____

I have read and understood the policy of Kui Min Piano Studio and agree to abide by its guidelines.

Student's and (or) Parent's Signature

Date