

Calliope Music

Instrumental Lesson Policy

Updated May 3, 2025

Welcome to Common Time Music! Julia and George have been involved in teaching students for 35 years. With degrees in Music, Greek, Latin, and Philosophy they know the importance of music to promote tools such as discipline, confidence, coordination, and creativity that a child (or adult) will use to enrich their lives. *Our goal is to instill a love of music into each student that will last a lifetime.*

Music is often forgotten in amid the digital world and social media. Every person loves music on some level and we know making music brings much happiness to the player. You don't have to be a child prodigy like Mozart in order to enjoy the benefits. Our mission is to give students a good musical education at any level while encouraging a love and appreciation of all kinds of musical styles from Bach to Nina Simone to Taylor Swift. Lessons are meant to be fun but we strive to make sure the student has a good musical foundation so that they can play and appreciate it independently for the rest of their lives.

Below is a list of policies for our program. Some of our teachers might have some additions that they will give to you separately. Please remember that we are always open to discussion about the lessons and teachers. We encourage you to talk to your teacher first if you have concerns.

Location

Our teachers travel to students' homes. It is important that the student be ready for their teacher as all lessons will end promptly. Please respect the teacher's time as she/he likely has a full schedule.

Trial Lessons

We highly recommend a trial lesson before you make a decision about taking lessons. It is important that the student feels comfortable with the teacher and that the teacher feels it's a good fit. And don't forget that the parent needs to like the teacher too! The trial lesson fee is for a 30 minute lesson.

Rates

Vary by teacher

Fees and Payments: Monthly invoices (please pay in advance) will be sent to you via email at the beginning of the month. All checks should be written to Julia Chukinas or can be sent through the Zelle QR code on the invoice. Mail checks to Calliope Music, PO Box 671, Ardmore, PA 19003. Please pay on time. *There is no administrative fee. However, there will be a fee to cover recital venues.*

Absences

24 hour notice is required for absences, however, there are exceptions especially when a child suddenly becomes ill. Please call the teacher as soon as you know there is a problem.

Every scheduled lesson must be paid for. Any lesson missed for sickness will be made up within the month of the absence if possible.

On rare occasions you might have a substitute teacher in case of teacher illness or vacation. You will be told in advance.

A 2-week notice is required should you decide to discontinue lessons.

We reserve the right to terminate lessons if a student is disruptive during lessons or not attending regularly.

Commitment

Commitment is very important. Your teacher will emphasize the importance of making a commitment to your music lessons. Learning anything new can be challenging especially in this day of instant gratification. Some things require patience and perseverance and music is one of them – another life lesson that music gives the student.

Preparation

Please make sure your child has his/her music books/instrument each week. It is also important that they have their assignment books. The assignment book reminds the student what he/she needs to work on but also it means the teacher has a record of what has been done. Consistency for student and teacher is very important.

Practicing: This is an open-ended subject! Depending on how long the student has been taking and the level, practice time varies. It can also vary depending on the family's schedule. Ideally, the student will practice every day working through the assignments in his/her books. Realistically, encourage them to "play" as much as they can. There are reward methods which we would be happy to discuss with you if you want some ideas. Every family has individual considerations and we would never assume to have the answers to how a family copes with practicing. We can only make suggestions. It is important to keep open communication with the teacher who will let you know if there needs to be improvement. If you feel uncomfortable talking to the teacher, please feel free to contact Julia or George to discuss things with us.

Instrument

It is always an advantage to have a decent instrument to play. This doesn't mean you need a 9 foot Steinway grand piano. However, whatever instrument you use should be in good working order. We can recommend places for string and band rental instruments and can give ideas about how to go about buying instruments, sometimes we have used ones for sale. We also have a list of piano tuners if you need one – yes, pianos have to be tuned regularly!

Recitals

Each teacher will decide about recitals but generally we recommend that each student play in at least one recital (informal) per year.

Recitals are meant to be a fun experience for both student and parent -- a chance to share their accomplishments however, we take the performance seriously and expect the student to as well. This is a life experience. What they learn at the recitals they will apply to other things they do in life. It is preparation for many, many things in their future. Memorizing the piece, perfecting it (sometimes playing it until the parents can take no more!), bowing when they finish, looking physically good, all these things can be applied to future accomplishments. There is nothing more challenging than getting up before an audience and performing. But also, there is nothing more rewarding than the feeling after you have finished. It is a natural high that stays with you for a lifetime.

We love to teach and all of us feel strongly that music is a gift of a lifetime for a child and if you are an older student... what better way to use that "other" part of your brain? There are many studies to show that playing a musical instrument has so many benefits.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to Julia or George who have been teaching and playing music for a lifetime!

Julia and George Chukinas
(610) 649-8842
info@calliopemusicstore.com