



Grace Christian Academy
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Studio Policies

Updated July, 2011

Welcome to the Grace Christian School of Music (SOM). Music lessons are a learning experience for your child that can lead to a lifetime of personal enrichment and blessing to others. Please read the following information regarding studio policies and the tuition schedule for students enrolled in the School of Music.

Lessons Overview

Lessons are typically one 30-minute session per week with the instructor. The School of Music also offers 60-minute lessons to advanced students. The instructor will determine if a 60-minute lesson is appropriate for the student and if it will work with his teaching schedule. The teacher will typically recommend this option for the parent to choose. Students may apply for lessons during the school year. Summer lessons may be available as each instructor chooses whether to offer them.

The lesson contract is based on 32 lessons that are scheduled from the beginning of the school year and continue into May. Because of differing weekly activities throughout the year, a lesson contract may finish by the end of April or it may continue through May depending when the 32-lesson schedule is completed. **NOTE:** *The lessons schedule is based on 32 lessons. Some months may have only three lessons for the month while other months may have five lessons. Billing is not based on the number of lessons per month but on the 32-lesson schedule spanning the school year.*

Daily student practice on the assigned lessons materials is required. A lack of consistency in the area of practice and/or preparedness may result in dismissal from the School of Music program.

Please understand that the provision of lessons is dependent upon both Grace Christian Academy's ability to secure qualified personnel as lesson instructors and subject to the schedule of available instructors. The preferred time will be scheduled, if possible. Returning this form does not guarantee that lessons are available.

Lesson registration is a commitment to the continuation of the 32-lesson schedule throughout the school year. Students withdrawn after the first day school resumes in January will be billed for the balance of the school year.

Billing

The lessons schedule is based on 32 lessons for the school year payable in seven monthly installments. The cost is \$22 per lesson plus a \$15 monthly administrative fee. The activity fee covers Administrative fees, Music books, sheet music and Awards.

Piano students will also have an additional, separate activity fee totaling \$25 to \$50 assessed by the piano instructor depending on the student's participation in various events. Students who begin after September may have a prorated billing schedule based on a reduced number of lessons provided with the number of months charged.

Following completion of the School of Music Lessons Registration Form and confirmation from the instructor that lessons are scheduled, the school business office will place the lessons contract on a monthly pay schedule for seven months from October 1 to April 1. Billing for summer lessons is arranged by the instructor who offers lessons.

In Summary: Lessons for 30 minutes cost \$22 per lesson totaling **\$704**, plus the **administrative fee** of \$15 per month that totals **\$105** for the year, amounts to a total cost of **\$809** for 32 lessons during the school year, payable in **seven monthly payments of \$116 per month** beginning October 1, 2010, and ending April 1, 2011. *Piano fee add \$25-50.* (**Sixty-minute lessons** will total **\$1,513** with seven payments of **\$216.**)

NOTE: The lessons are billed for seven (7) months only, from October and ending in April along with the end of regular tuition fees. The monthly cost is more than 10% of the total contract because it is divided into only seven equal payments. In the event of excessive missed lessons due to inclement weather and the like, the final April charge may be adjusted and parents will be notified accordingly.

Delinquent Accounts. While it is necessary to have a policy regarding unpaid accounts, the School of Music and Grace Christian administration appreciate that participating families make it a rare issue to be addressed.

Payment for lessons billed is due the first of each month that a charge is assessed. If the business office notifies the SOM of an unpaid school account, a notification may be issued that lessons are suspended until payment is made. The business office will notify the SOM instructor when lessons may resume. The business office will treat the bill as an unpaid account and may withhold grade cards and transcripts accordingly.

As with the tuition payments, payment for billed lessons is due on the first of each month with a 2% fee assessed after the tenth of the month (payable with cash, check, money order, cashier's check, or credit card: Visa, MasterCard or Discover).

Students with unpaid accounts jeopardize their enrollment in the SOM program and may be dropped at the discretion of the instructor so he may freely enroll a new student. Since the instructor's livelihood depends on the lessons service he provides, he is not expected to negotiate or make exceptions with delinquent accounts.

The school administration implementing policies for the School of Music reserves the option to review them in light of relevant circumstances as it deems appropriate.

Enrollment

Families interested in lessons should complete and submit the SOM lessons registration form available at the school office or on the school website: <http://www.graceknights.org/SOM.htm>. Students are accepted into the lessons program beginning at the following grade levels:

- Piano First Grade
- Band Instr. & Guitar Fourth Grade (Band class starts in 6th grade)
- Drum Set Sixth Grade

The development of musical skills requires time, persistence and patience, and students are expected to continue enrollment in the lessons program for the entire school year. Parents who are concerned about how their child will do in the lessons program may have a trial period of three lessons to see that their child can fulfill his responsibilities and also take lessons. After the trial period it is expected that lessons will continue for the entire year.

Students are accepted into the lessons program based on available instructors and suitable time schedules. Applicants placed on a waiting list will be enrolled as openings become available.

Lessons Expectations

Parents must realize that practice is a discipline, just like homework. Do not sign your child up for lessons if you are not committed to enforcing the practice time. A good formula to remember is "Teacher + Parent + Student = Success." The following summary of expectations affects a student's acceptance, progress and continuation in the program:

- All students must have an adequate practice instrument.
- Thirty (30) minutes should be set aside each day for practice.
- Students are responsible to come to lessons each week with the appropriate supplies.
- The instructor will call the elementary student to his or her lesson each week. Secondary students will be called as needed.
- Starting their second year, piano students are required to take the Maryland State Music Teachers Association Keyboard Musicianship Test each year.
- The End of Year Recital and Awards Program is required for all SOM students.

Piano students are strongly encouraged to have an acoustic piano or a digital piano with weighted keys for practice. Younger students may benefit from shorter practice sessions 2 or 3 times per day, while older students should aim for concentrated practice sessions.

Students may also be offered several extracurricular activities during year. While these are not required, we strongly encourage the students to participate in as many as possible, since participation will lead to further excellence in performance and musicianship skills. The required End of Year Recital and Awards Program gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned as musicians during the school year.

After their first full year of lessons, all piano students are required to take the Maryland State Music Teachers Association Keyboard Musicianship Test in the fall of each year. This test is given off campus in a one-to-one setting between a student and a piano teacher who is a member of the Maryland State Music Teachers Association. The student is evaluated on technical studies such as scales, chords and arpeggios, etc.

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's music education as much as possible. An instructor may invite a parent to observe a lesson to gain a better understanding of needed practice or comprehension issues. Parents are welcome to contact their child's instructor at any time in order to discuss the student's growth as a musician. The instructor will be happy to answer questions relating to the child's music lessons.

Missed Lessons

Parents are asked to make sure the student is prepared for the weekly lesson. Please be aware of the following guidelines for missed or cancelled lessons. The reference to charges here indicates whether lessons are applied to the 32-lesson schedule.

- Lesson cancellations without prior notice or forgetting the required instrument or materials are billed lessons.
- If a student is ill or has an early departure, the parent must notify the instructor the morning of the lesson or sooner, otherwise the lesson will be charged.
- Do not assume the instructor will find out with adequate notice.
- Absences on the part of the student due to lack of preparedness will be charged.
- Failure to bring needed materials will be charged as a lesson.
- Students who arrive late to a lesson will be given instruction in the time remaining and the lesson will be charged.
- School related cancellations, including school closure due to inclement weather, holidays, field trips or school activities will not be charged unless the instructor is able to make up the lesson.
- Charges during a major family emergency situation will be left to the discretion of the instructor.
- Interruptions to lessons such as a fire drill may result in no charge or in a rescheduled time to make up the balance of the lesson time.

Discontinued Lessons

Enrollment in the SOM lessons program is a privilege that wise students will recognize and commit themselves to diligent effort and consistent practice. Every instructor wants each student to achieve his or her greatest potential, and teaching is individually tailored so each student can reach that objective.

School of Music instructors are independent agents who have been accepted by Grace Christian Academy to provide a service to our families and who have agreed to teach within the parameters of the School of Music policies. Instructors are not required to continue teaching students who fail to meet the agreed expectations of the program, who fail to show up for lessons, who come unprepared without their instrument or lesson materials, or who fail to practice.

Instructors will communicate with parents via memo, email or phone to address issues that inhibit progress in the lessons. Failure by the parent to respond or remedy the issue to the satisfaction of the instructor is grounds for the instructor, at his discretion, to declare a discontinuation of lessons and to drop the student from the lessons program. Other instructors are not required to schedule students who have been dropped from the SOM program and future enrollment is not assured.

Students dropped from the SOM program or families who choose to discontinue lessons during the school year may be placed on a low priority schedule if accepted again into the program. Instructors may choose not to accept them as students.

Registration

Please complete the School of Music Registration Form which verifies your commitment to these policies and return it to the school office. Once your registration form is received, your child can be scheduled for lessons. Please note that a large number of students register for lessons each year and there is normally a waiting list.

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