



Studio Policy

Thank you for choosing me as your keyboard teacher. In order to ensure that you or your child get the most effective and creative learning experience possible, I have established the following policies.

Studio location: All Saints Lutheran Church, 17030 Lancaster Highway, Charlotte, NC 28227. In person lessons will be given in the Sanctuary. Online lessons will be taught from my home studio

Student Interview: I meet with all prospective students and families for a free half hour interview as the first step in the enrollment process. This meeting gives me the opportunity to assess a beginner's readiness for piano lessons and to answer any questions about my studio and teaching philosophy. For students with previous music study, the session provides me with an opportunity to assess the student's current level of achievement. At the conclusion of the interview, adult students or parents of K-12 students will sign a Terms and Conditions form, select a payment plan, pay tuition, and schedule weekly lessons.

Registration: Students enroll for one year at a time (August through July). New students may enroll at any time during the year, for whom yearly tuition will be prorated.

Lesson times: to be mutually agreed upon by the students family and the instructor. I am currently available to teach during the following times:

Tuesdays: 1:00PM-7:30PM

Wednesdays: 1:00PM-7:30PM

Thursdays: 1:00PM-7:30PM

Number of lessons: Your tuition guarantees that I will be prepared and present to teach 42 weeks during the school year, from August through the end of July. Please see studio calendar for teaching schedule.

Lesson length: instruction is offered weekly for 30 minutes, 45 minutes, or 1 hour.

Missed Lessons: Because specific times are set aside for specific students, a student who does not attend a lesson will simply miss the benefit of that lesson. **I do not offer makeup lessons.** If a student is unable to be physically present during their normal

lesson time, there is an option for having the lesson online. Please be assured that your tuition pays for far more than the time spent with your child (see [“Where Does My Tuition Go?”](#)). There are no refunds, discounts or makeups given unless I am unable to teach the promised number of lessons.

- **Illness:** Students who are ill should not come to piano lessons. I reserve the right to send a student home if they arrive sick. If students are only mildly ill, please email me and we will do a Zoom or FaceTime lesson.
- **Skype/Zoom/FaceTime:** Skype, Zoom, and FaceTime are useful tools for teaching students who cannot make it to lesson due to illness, weather, etc. If you have a computer with a camera close to your piano or a laptop that you can move close to the piano, please create a free Skype account and add my name to your contacts (or add my phone to your FaceTime). This will allow me to call you and have a lesson with you over the internet if need be. My Skype user name is drpgparker.
- **Teacher Absences:** Any lesson that I have to cancel will be made up. I have set aside two flex weeks during the year that I may use for illness or emergencies. This is time off that you are not and will not pay for as I will make sure that I am scheduled to teach 45 lessons in the year as outlined in this policy.
- **Inclement Weather:** If the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district is closed, I will not be teaching. Lessons missed for inclement weather will be rescheduled.

Attendance: Regular and prompt attendance is required to make appropriate progress. If you are unable to make it to a lesson, please inform me by email, text, or call as soon as possible.

Recitals and Opportunities: There are two studio recitals per year - one in December, and one in June. I also encourage my piano students to participate in competitions, such as the Charlotte Festival of the National Federation of Music Clubs, and the Charlotte Piano Teachers Forum Solo Auditions. For organ students in rising grades 6-12, there is the opportunity of auditioning for the Stigall Scholarship of the Charlotte Chapter of The American Guild of Organists. Additional performance opportunities include the possibility of playing pieces in Sunday worship at All Saints Lutheran Church, and playing at area nursing homes.

Practice Instrument: Access to a piano is required to make progress. Preferably, it should be an 88 key full size acoustic piano. Please try to have your piano tuned twice a year (the best times are spring and fall). If you must use a keyboard, it should have at least 76 keys, be touch sensitive (allowing one to control the loudness/ softness of the key by the force with which the key is struck), have weighted keys (to approximate the touch or action used when playing an acoustic piano), and have a sustaining pedal. Please be aware that this will only get a student through the first year, maybe two. An electronic keyboard severely limits the technical and musical skills a student can practice on at home. After that you will want/need to invest in either a full size- 88 key acoustic piano or a good digital piano with weighted keys to get the full benefit of piano lessons.

[Books and 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 online at Amazon or locally at Music and Arts Center or Sam Ash. It is important that books be purchased in a prompt manner. I understand the expense that books can incur, and I promise that I will only choose books that I think are necessary and beneficial for the student's progress. If you do not have a metronome at home, it would be a good idea to purchase one or a metronome app. My favorite app is called, "[Practice+](#)", which can be obtained for free at the App Store.

[Practice Time and Other Requirements:](#) I like to emphasize the quality versus quantity of time practiced. However, in order to get good quality practice, a minimum of 30 minutes a day, five days a week is necessary. As students advance and mature, this requirement will increase (i.e. students taking 45 minute lessons should practice at least 45 minutes daily, etc.). I try to be very specific about practice techniques to the student and the parent, so that each knows what weekly practice consists of. Weekly assignments of theory and technique are of utmost importance. Theory should be completed at the first of the week and technique should be practiced every day to help enhance the learning process.

Fingernails must be kept short at all times. Long fingernails preclude the development of good piano technique. Students are expected to have washed their hands thoroughly at home or when they arrive for lessons.

[A Word About Using Popular Online Piano Tutorials:](#) The internet is inundated these days with online piano tutorials along the lines of Synthesia, and are rife on video sharing sites, such as YouTube. While this online platform can be useful for comparing musical interpretations in live or recorded performances, the typical tutorial video that features just a keyboard with falling colored blocks, or that show just the performers hands, are not helpful for how I teach. **My primary role in teaching keyboard instruments is music literacy.** Teaching students to read music gives them learning tools for a lifetime. These videos that are devoid of musical notation do not teach eager learners how to read music. Proper fingering choices and keyboard technique are missing in these videos! The only information given is the sequence of keys to be played, not HOW to play them! At best, such videos only encourage copying a sequence of visual patterns that must be memorized for every piece, causing one to reinvent the wheel for every new piece to be learned. **For these reasons, I do not teach any material learned with such tutorials.** If a student wishes - against my professional advice - to view these tutorials, this behavior should not interfere with lesson instruction and the related practice time required.

[Communication:](#) Please keep in contact with me regarding your child's progress and practice habits. Email is my most efficient method of communication, or you may call me at 704 877-7418.

Dismissals and Termination: If for any reason, you must stop lessons, 1 month's notice or 1 month's tuition is required. Regrettably, I will have to dismiss a student if any of these circumstances occur:

- Failure to pay tuition on time
- Persistent absences
- Uncooperative attitude
- continual misbehavior, inappropriate or disrespectful behavior
- Failure to follow practice as instructed
- Lack of progress due to insufficient practice or unfulfilled requirements

Teaching piano has been a very exciting and rewarding experience for me. Since music has added such richness to my life, I have been impressed with the desire to teach others about music so that they may be as blessed as I. I pray that you, as a student, will enjoy lessons and practice time as you are learning to enjoy music; but I pray most of all, that you will understand music to be a gift from God and will use your talents accordingly. Thank you for the privilege of allowing me to teach you!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I have read, and I fully understand the Studio Policy of PPO Music Studio. By participating in this studio, I acknowledge and accept all of the policies detailed in this document.

PPO Music Studio and Dr. Patricia G. Parker are released from any accidents, liabilities, and injuries that may incur from the enrolled student with participation in lessons, recitals, student parties, and off site student events.

MEDIA POLICY

Pictures and videos of students may be posted on the studio website and included in studio publications and studio-related social media with no names attached.

Photos taken by the teacher OR that are shared with the teacher by other parents or students of gatherings or performances become the property of the studio and can be used at the discretion of the teacher in regards to the studio.

The studio follows online safety rules in this matter.

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Instructor's initials: _____