



the music education centre

How long should a music lesson be?

Traditionally in New Zealand culture, a weekly music lesson has been accepted as “normal” but how long a lesson should students take? Are longer lessons beneficial for all students – and why?

By far the majority of students learning with the Music Education Centre take a 30 minute lesson once week. This works very well, especially for students of a beginner level, allowing a variety of musical skills to be covered, including revision and the introduction of new material. It is important to remember though, that with personalised education, (such as the lessons our teachers provide) the needs of each individual student can vary, and a “one size fits all” approach is not necessarily the best way forward.

For very young students, a group environment, involving a range of other musical activities will usually allow a far wider foundation of conceptual musical skills to be taught. With the action and variety able to be included in a group lesson, it is quite realistic to keep a younger beginner engaged in learning much longer than in a traditional individual lesson. It is essential that students remain engaged during a lesson to allow both retention and the active building of new skills. This is the reason we generally recommend our Forte School of Music Group classes for beginner level students under the age of 7. If individual lessons are given at this age, 30 minutes tends to be the maximum amount of time that children will stay focused on learning, and in some cases an even shorter lesson (such as 20 minutes) might be appropriate.

The biggest challenge with a 30 minute lesson for older students is simply the amount of material that needs to be covered in a lesson – particularly those getting to intermediate grade exam levels. As the levels increase, the amount of technical work, general musicianship, and even the length of the required works to be played all start taking longer to cover, and it is at this stage a longer lesson really becomes essential. Keeping a short lesson means that more time has to be spent in unsupervised home practice, which in turn slows progress further, meaning more time of the next lesson is spent on revision, therefore compounding the problem. Of course most students don't like to practice anyway, so whilst parents may feel that they are saving money by sticking with a shorter lesson, instead they may be creating an environment where their child is more likely to lose interest, experience frustration and ultimately waste much of the investment already made in lessons over several years.

Remember that you can always talk with your teacher about the most appropriate lesson length for you or your child. Too longer lesson can be boring and counter-productive, too shorter lesson, frustrating, so do remember to give this important matter your consideration to ensure you continue to get the very best value out of your tuition with the Music Education Centre.



PERFORMANCE AFTERNOON

With Term 3 already drawing to a close, our Performance Afternoons are a great way to showcase your progress over the past few months. Open to students of all ages, levels and instruments, these events provide a positive and supportive environment for all our budding musicians.

To book your performance time, simply ask your teacher to include your name on the appropriate performance list at our centres. Remember, admission is free so why not invite all your friends and family to come along and listen to you play.

WHERE: North Shore – Takapuna War Memorial Hall, The Strand, Takapuna.

West Auckland – Tirimoana School Hall, Kokiri Street, Te Atatu Peninsula.

DATE: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 11th

TIME: North Shore – 2pm or 3pm
West Auckland – 1pm

We do have one final performance afternoon scheduled for 10th December so mark that date in your diary today. Otherwise we look forward to seeing you 11th SEPTEMBER!!!

HAVE YOUR STATEMENT EMAILED EACH MONTH

Thank you to those students who have requested delivery of their lesson invoice/statement by email. If you would like yours delivered electronically each month, please let us know by emailing lessons@musiceducation.co.nz giving your student name and we will set this up for you. If you prefer to continue receiving your statement by post, you don't need to do anything.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Music Education Centre strongly advocates for students to sit external music examinations. Congratulations to the following students who have recently achieved success in their exams.

Robert Newey	Grade 6 Trinity Piano with merit	<i>Amanda Morley</i>
Amado Manaos	Grade 4 Trinity Piano with merit	<i>Amanda Morley</i>
Ryan Tomov	Grade 1ABRSM Piano with merit	<i>Janet Tracey</i>

School holiday programme for piano EXAM

Candidates:

With so many of our pianists sitting external examinations before the end of the year, and building on the popularity of our previous programmes this term, our holiday programme will be focused to ensure you achieve your very best result!

Fine tuning your pieces, as well as scale, aural, and musicianship – all in a FUN environment, sets you up for success!

PERFECT FOR ALL STUDENTS SITTING A PIANO EXAM BETWEEN INITIAL AND GRADE 3 BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR!

Dates: **Monday 26th to Friday 30th September** (first week of the holidays).

Times: **10am to 3pm daily**

Cost: **\$299 for 5 days** (or \$75 per day for part of the week)

Location: Music Education Centre 75 Bentley Ave, Glenfield.

For more information or to book email
clementi170@gmail.com.

FORTE FESTIVAL

Our 2016 Forte Festival was a great success, allowing over 170 of our youngest students to enjoy performing to a capacity audience last month. With some participants as young as 3 years old and having their first time on stage, we were particularly pleased to welcome several players for whom this was their 8th or 9th Festival. Why not check out our facebook page for photos or to share your favourite moments of the day.

www.facebook.com/musiceducation.co.nz

Good Luck

We wish the very best of luck to Music Education Centre teacher – Sasha Reekie – representing New Zealand at the World Accordion Championships in Russia this month.

Sasha started learning music with our centre at the age of 3, and after having completed all her grade exams in piano, started teaching with us late last year. Sasha is currently the youngest teacher on our team – even so, we are very proud to have a NZ representative musician as part of our organisation.

Sasha will be competing in the 18 years and under Junior Virtuoso Entertainment category of this prestigious international event, which in recent years has been dominated by Italian and French players. Perhaps this year it will be NZ's turn!



School Holidays

Whilst our Forte Group classes generally take a break for the school holidays, most of our individual lesson teachers continue lessons as normal over this period.

Please make sure you confirm with your teacher if you are going to be away over the holiday period. (Monday 26th September to Sunday 9th October). In-school lessons will take a break over the holidays.

The Music Education Centre office will remain open over the holiday period, although the North Shore reception (and phone hours) will finish one hour earlier at 6pm.

