



the music education centre

HOW TO MEASURE PROGRESS

As parents we all want to make sure that our children are both enjoying lessons and gaining sound music skills. Add to this the financial investment being made and then the importance of seeing tangible progress becomes an even greater priority. How then can we accurately measure learning outcomes when playing music is such a multi-skilled discipline?

Perhaps the single most important step in measuring progress, is setting a clear expectation of goals and intended outcomes from lessons. If the number one priority for music lessons is for them to be a fun leisure activity, then the amount of different material taught may be less important than if lessons are being taken to ensure a specific skill level is reached (for example to audition for a school orchestra.)

Once goals are established, it is important to regularly review these and see if they are relevant to a student's ability, interest and indeed whether they are realistic. As an example, it is not uncommon for students to start lessons working with one genre of music, only to decide after some time that a different style offers more interest for them.

Remember that a music teacher's role is to develop the SKILLS that a student requires to continue playing music later in life – even after lessons have ceased. Because music is a “life-time” skill, rather than something that requires short-term mastery it is arguably more important to consolidate skills rather than learn as many songs in as shorter time as possible.

For many students the old adage “slow and steady wins the race” is very appropriate when coming to their musical achievements. To maximise the structure and direction in lessons though the use of published tutor book materials or recognised examination syllabuses can be an invaluable tool to keep students on track.

Every student is different, and if you ever have any concerns about how your child is going, feel free to contact your teacher directly to discuss the types of goals that are realistically achievable, and what materials can be used in lessons to meet those targets. Above all – proactive communication is your greatest asset in making sure that lessons are “on-track” and that suitable progress is being made.



MUSIC EDUCATION CENTRE WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

At the 20th Anniversary Celebration Conference of the Forte Schools of Music held in Cardiff, UK, the Music Education Centre won the Product Award for the Creative Keys Course.

Recognising the exceptional student retention that our centre has in our young children's programmes, our organisation beat out other schools from all over Australia and as far afield as Wales to win this award.

The Creative Keys Course is taught as a follow-up to the extremely popular Junior Keys Course (for 5-7 year olds) and helps provide a solid, all-round musical knowledge for students beginning to develop their piano skills.

To find out more about our Forte School of Music classes for young beginner students, please contact our office on 0800 89 39 39

TERM INVOICES – Student accounts for Term 3 lessons in schools are now overdue. Please ensure your account is brought up to date as soon as possible to avoid any late fees or disruption to your lesson continuity. Thank you.

MUSIC EXAMINATIONS:

The mid-year exam season has been a tremendously successful time for Music Education Centre students. We would like to congratulate all of our students that have recently sat examinations including:

Daniel Breen – Initial Trinity Piano with Merit (*Teacher: Elena Reekie*)
Elliott Kitchener – Grade 1 Trinity Piano with Merit (*Teacher: Elena Reekie*)
Julia Ortanez – Grade 1 Trinity Piano with Distinction (*Teacher: Wendy Fowler*)
Tommy Pang – Grade 1 Trinity Piano with Distinction (*Teacher: Wendy Fowler*)
Alina Reekie – Grade 1 Trinity Piano with Distinction (*Teacher: Amanda Morley*)
Grace Penberthy - Grade 2 ABRSM Theory – 100% Distinction (*Teacher: Blain Austin*)
Beth Clothier - Grade 2 ABRSM Theory - 97% Distinction (*Teacher: Blain Austin*)
Megan Wilkie - Grade 5 ABRSM Theory 96% Distinction (*Teacher: Blain Austin*)
David Kung - Grade 3 ABRSM Piano (*Teacher: Blain Austin*)
Robert Newey - Grade 3 Trinity Piano with Distinction (*Teacher: Amanda Morley*)
Violet Elliott – Grade 4 Trinity Piano (*Teacher: Elena Reekie*)
Shania Reithmann - Grade 5 Trinity Piano with merit (*Teacher: Amanda Morley*)
Yulia Koudinova – Grade 7 Trinity Piano (*Teacher: Elena Reekie*)
Elisa Soerjadi – Trinity Advanced Performers Certificate (*Teacher: Elena Reekie*)



KEEPING IN CONTACT WITH YOUR TEACHER

Our teachers enjoy providing feedback about progress, goals and areas for on-going improvement with parents. In many cases, however, teachers have only limited time between lessons or (in the case of in-schools tuition) rarely have the opportunity to see parents at all.

Please make sure that your child has a notebook at each lesson, so that your teacher can write practice notes, and offer regular written feedback to keep you up to date with your child's achievements.

TUTOR BOOKS

The majority of our students should be using a tutor book in lessons. Tutor books make it easier to see a tangible record of progress, provide a framework for structured tuition and generally ensure students focus on the development of overall musical skills rather than specific pieces of music.

If you ARE NOT already using a tutor book in lessons, please discuss with your teacher which one might be best for you. Alternatively, feel free to contact the centre manager – Lionel Reekie on 444-5654.

Do you follow the Music Education Centre on Facebook? If so, please remember to post pictures and videos of your musical performances to keep us up to date with your latest achievements. You can find our page at www.facebook.com/musiceducation.co.nz

