

Gift of Music Studio
Policies Relating to Guitar Students
November 20, 2009

The Gift of Music Studio is established to teach classical guitar, combining material and techniques from the Suzuki method with the latest, most innovative music developed for guitar teaching. This document, as amended quarterly, describes the studio policies that apply to all students in the program. Policies that are addressed include group class attendance and timeliness, initial training and ongoing discussion groups for home coaches, quarterly tuition and payment due dates, make-up lessons, lesson cancellations, recital attire, and expectations for behavior during lesson observations.

Please read and indicate your understanding of, and commitment to adhere to, these policies by signing and returning the signature page of this document to your child's teacher by their first private lesson of the current quarter.

Group Classes

Because absences and late arrivals at group lessons have a negative impact on other group members, it is necessary to have a stricter attendance policy for the groups than for private lessons.

Attendance:

When only a few children show up for their group class all members of the group will suffer. The teacher may not be able to engage in planned lessons and activities, and much of the benefit of the group experience is lost. **We ask that all parents commit to having their child attend a minimum of 6 out of the 9 group classes in each quarter.**

The subjects and activities covered in group class are not covered in private lessons. Therefore, students who do not attend their group regularly will fall behind their peers, and the teacher may reassign such students to different groups.

Please make every effort to attend each weekly group class with your child. If you and your child are unable to attend a group class for any reason, please let us know as far in advance as possible.

Timeliness:

All group classes will begin promptly at their scheduled time. Students arriving late disrupt the class, since the teacher must take time out to set up the late student's chair, footstool, and tune their instrument. Parents are asked to **arrive 10 minutes before** the scheduled start time of their child's group class so everyone will have time to get set up and tuned before class begins. If another group class is still in session when you arrive, you are encouraged to quietly enter and observe. ***If you arrive after class has started, please enter the studio and have your child sit with you in the home coach seating area until the teacher invites the child to join the group.*** The child will be invited to join the group at the discretion of the teacher, when the teacher determines a break can be taken that will not disrupt the activity of the class.

Home Coach Training and Discussion Groups

Home Coach Training

During a child's first quarter in the program, and in lieu of the child's first four group classes, parents are expected to attend four 60 minute "home coach training" sessions. At these sessions, the home coach will learn how to get the most out of a child's individual and group lessons, how to manage home practice sessions, and how to play the first basic exercises/songs the child will learn on their instrument. The home coach training sessions substantially increase the student's opportunities for success and growth.

Discussion Groups

Once a family has been a part of the studio for a full quarter, the first week's group class of every subsequent quarter will be reserved for 60-minute home coach meetings to continue the home coaches' development. Attendance at these meetings is optional, and they are not considered a part of a child's group class attendance obligations. The sessions will be used to discuss problems, questions, and ideas that have come up in the most recent quarter, as well as administrative issues. We may also discuss readings that have been assigned during the preceding quarter. There will be two opportunities at the beginning of each quarter to attend these discussion groups. If a parent misses both opportunities, topics covered during the discussion groups can be reviewed during the child's next private lesson.

Tuition

Similar to enrollment in private schools and programs, payment is on a tuition basis rather than a set fee per lesson or hour. Tuition is assessed and paid on a quarterly basis. Regular tuition for a child enrolled in the Suzuki program is \$360 per quarter. If one or more of the child's siblings are enrolled in the studio, the quarterly tuition for the second and each subsequent sibling will be reduced to \$300. ***Tuition payments are non-refundable.*** The sibling discount does not apply to any family member whose scheduled private lesson period lasts 60 minutes instead of the normal 30-minute session.

Tuition Due Date: A New Student's First Full Quarter

In addition to payment of tuition, families that are just beginning in the program have the extra expenses of purchasing a quality instrument and all of the related accessories. To help new families cope with these expenses, parents of new students will be allowed to pay their first quarter's tuition in three installments. The first payment will be due at the student's first regularly scheduled private lesson. The second payment is due at the child's third regularly scheduled private lesson. The third payment is due at the child's fifth regularly scheduled private lesson. For families that start in the middle of a quarter, special arrangements will be made for payment of tuition relating to the partial quarter, and the above due dates will apply to the child's first full quarter of study.

Tuition Due Date: A Student's Second, and All Subsequent Quarters

Unfortunately, in the past, some parents who have decided to leave the studio have simply stopped attending lessons at the start of their child's new quarter, giving the studio no notice of their intention to leave the program. When this has happened, the studio,

reserving lesson periods for students intending to drop out, was unable serve families that were waiting to get started in the program.

For this reason ***the tuition due date for a student's second full and all subsequent quarters will be the date of the student's regularly scheduled group class in the second to last week of the current quarter.*** By meeting this due date, parents will reserve their child's private lesson period for the coming quarter. If payment for the coming quarter is not received by a student's last regularly scheduled group class, the student's lesson period may be made available to new prospective students and to those veteran students who wish to make scheduling changes. Finally, we request that any parent who is contemplating leaving be considerate of those who may be waiting to get into the studio. Please let the studio know, as far in advance as possible, if you will not be continuing study with us.

Make-up Policies

Group Classes

Make ups will not be given for group classes missed by the student. If the studio for weather, teacher illness or other similar event cancels a group class, the studio will offer either a make-up or a pro-rata refund (at the discretion of the studio).

Private Lessons

Rescheduling lessons: A lesson may only be rescheduled during a period that is not reserved for another student. A lesson must be rescheduled within one week (7 days prior or 7 days after) of the original scheduled lesson period. A lesson may be rescheduled no later than 9:00 P.M. two days prior to the regularly scheduled lesson. ***In regards to rescheduling lessons, it is important to understand that the teacher will have less flexibility and less availability as the studio grows and there are more students occupying available lesson periods.***

Make-up Lessons: The first Saturday of every quarter will be available to make up lessons that students missed the previous quarter. Time periods will be available between 9:30 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.

Exchanging Lessons: Within the first week of the start of each new quarter, all home coaches will be given a current student phone list. It is recommended that if you know in advance you have to miss your regular lesson period and are unable to reschedule the lesson, you try to arrange an exchange with another student, and if successful, notify the teacher of the scheduling change.

Cancelled Lessons: If the studio for weather, teacher illness or other similar event cancels a private lesson, the studio will offer either a make-up or a pro-rata refund (at the discretion of the studio).

Weather Cancellations

The Gift of Music Studio will follow the Highlands Ranch area schools in regards to cancellations for weather. On any day which the Highlands Ranch area schools are closed due to weather by the Douglas County School District, the Gift of Music Studio will also be closed. Also, the studio will be closed on any day in which the Highlands Ranch area school children are sent home early due to weather. The studio will be open, however, on all days for which there is merely a delayed opening at Highlands Ranch area schools.

If you call but can't reach the studio to learn about a weather cancellation, there are three other ways to find out if the Highlands Ranch area schools and the studio have been closed or are sending children home:

- 1) check the "Studio Closures" button on the studio web site at www.giftofmusicstudio.com,
- 2) call the Douglas County Weather Hot Line at 303-387-SNOW (7669) and select "Option 2" for the "North Area,"
- 3) or go directly to the Douglas County School District "School Closure Status" web page at www.dcsdk12.org, and check the status for the "North Area."

Performances: Attire & Timeliness

Unless otherwise specified, the required public performance attire for Gift of Music Studio students will be a dark gray or black skirt or slacks, and a white dress shirt or blouse. The arrival time for all recitals and public performances is 30 minutes before the scheduled start time. A student who does not arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled start time of their performance risks being excluded from participation.

Observation of, and Participation in, Another Student's Lesson

An important principle of the Suzuki Method is that all children should be encouraged to observe and, when appropriate, be invited to participate in the "private" lessons of other students. The Gift of Music Studio invites parents to bring their children to lessons early and to stay after their own lessons are finished in order provide opportunities for this kind of learning environment. It must be understood, however, that even under the best of circumstances, the arrival or departure of a family can temporarily disrupt a lesson already underway. For this reason, the behavior standards must actually be higher for those children who are observing than for those who are having their lesson. When entering the studio with your child, please be mindful of the potential impact your arrival may have on the student who is already in session. Thank you for your consideration.

Student Illness

For the sake of keeping a safe and healthy environment for everyone in the studio, please do not bring your child to their lesson or group class under any of the following circumstances:

- 1) The child was brought home or kept home from school due to illness, or the child is in a similar condition on a Saturday or vacation day,
- 2) the child has a fever, or

3) the child was sick and unable to sleep the night before their lesson or group class.

We all get colds, and if we take sensible precautions the risks of spreading them can be significantly reduced. Students who have colds are welcome to come to lessons and group classes, as long as the cold is not accompanied by symptoms such as a fever, chills, or nausea that may indicate a more serious illness. Please notify your teacher, upon arrival, if either you or your child has a cold.

Student choice lessons

For older, more advanced students the studio will offer two “student choice” lessons each quarter, where those interested may have a lesson on music outside of the Classical idiom. This will provide opportunities for students to explore other musical interests they might have, such as rock, jazz, or popular songs. These lessons will be offered on the fifth private lesson and the tenth private lesson of each quarter.

Setting appropriate boundaries for the thematic content of music is the responsibility of the parent.

Studio use of unpublished--but copyrighted--material

The studio is currently using material from an unpublished guitar method by guitarist/composer Richard Wright called *First Pieces, First Principles*. Mr. Wright is allowing the studio to photocopy and use his books on the condition that students buy them once they are published and made available to the public.

Thank you for your understanding of our studio policies. We all stand to benefit in following them.

Signatures

By signing this document we acknowledge that we have read, understand, and agree to adhere to all of the above policies.

Nicolas Palan, Studio Director

Date

Home Coach

Date