

## Piano / Instrument:

Do we need a keyboard/piano at home?	For any of our Piano Courses, other than Kinderbeat, you will need an instrument for your child to practice on at home. Ideally, it needs to be at least 4 octaves (49 notes) with full size keys. After a couple of years, or if your child is not a beginner, they will require an instrument with 7 octaves and fully weighted keys (like a real piano!)
Where can I buy a suitable piano?	At Accent On Music we like to keep our teaching pianos up to date, so we sometimes sell off pianos of different sizes to pupils at reduced rates. Please ask your teacher if you are interested. You can also purchase a brand new acoustic or digital piano from most music retailers. If in any doubt, your teacher or our helpful office staff will try to assist you in.
Where is best to keep our piano/keyboard	It is best to have your instrument in a room where your child can still feel part of the family – not in their bedroom where practice feels like homework or a punishment. If you have a portable keyboard, try to keep it permanently set-up so you do not have to get it out every time you need to use it.

## The Music:

Why does Encore use solfege 'do, re, mi' as well as CDE for beginner classes?	<p>We use Solfege for many reasons and combine it with letter names from the very beginning –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Solfege is an international musical language</li> <li>2. Solfege is much easier to sing than letter names, which have lots of sounds that strain the voice (eeee sounds).</li> <li>3. Using Solfege helps with pitch memory, which means students recognize notes more easily when played.</li> <li>4. We refer to 'CDE' as the written language of music during the lesson to differentiate.</li> </ol>
When will my child be able to read music?	<p>Parents are often concerned that their children are not reading the music, because the traditional method of teaching music is to read the music first. This method, which is typical of teachers who work with children over 8 years old, always tries to master music reading first, even before playing the notes. The essential skills such as ear training and musicianship are then learned years into the course.</p> <p>We believe that music should be taught like a language, in a natural way. As a child, you copied your parents talking, then read books and finally wrote words and sentences. Our keyboard courses therefore get the children to imitate the teacher, first by singing then playing. This is followed by reading notes, that they can already play and finally writing them</p> <p>With Encore courses we are teaching children from as early as three or four and children of this age are not able to read words yet, so we spend time developing their aural skills and fine and gross motor skills, until they are learning to read at school. We do preliminary note reading exercises even with three to four year olds, so that they are able to recognise notes on the whiteboard or in their books. As they progress developmentally with their reading they will be able to transfer this knowledge across to the written word.</p> <p>If you are concerned about what to do to help them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· encourage them to follow the notes in their books – they will start to recognize patterns and intervals</li> <li>· help them with their note identification in the fun books</li> <li>· sing the notes along with them</li> <li>· try not to pressure them</li> <li>· let them enjoy music</li> </ul>

## Practising

<p>Does my child need to practise?</p>	<p>Yes. Otherwise, progress will be slower and your child will not enjoy the lessons as much. It is important to understand that a parent is involved in the practice too; 4-7 year olds need lots of support and encouragement. They are not very good at practising alone. Practice time is also a great opportunity to develop that special relationship with your child.</p>
<p>My child enjoys the lessons, but will not practice. What should I do?</p>	<p>The worst thing you can do is stress out a child about practising and put them off learning an instrument for good. Read the next 3 answers for more help:</p>
<p>How much practice should my child do?</p>	<p>Students will need to try and practise 5-6 times a week. For roughly the following lengths:            Junior level 1: 5 minutes            Junior levels 2 &amp; 3: 10 minutes            Junior level 4: 10-15 minutes            Primary Level 1: 10 minutes            Primary Level 2: 10-15 minutes            Achiever students will need to spend progressively more time practicing as they complete the 4 levels and possibly advance onto grade pieces.            A little each day is better than a long practice once a week.</p> <p>For Jiggle n' Jam and Kinderbeat the only 'Practise ' you need to do is to listen to the CD's and sing along with your child – at home or in the car!</p>
<p>How should we go about practising with younger children?</p>	<p>Start a practise session with a song that your child really enjoys. Then play through the songs learned in class three or four times. Use the CD to help with rhythm and to encourage accuracy. Include the actions and singing prior to playing the on the piano. Try to finish the practise with a favourite song. Also, listen to your CD outside of practise time, eg. in the car, or playing in the background at home.</p>
<p>How can I help with practising?</p>	<p>Your positive attitude towards practicing is very important. Don't make it too hard for your child; your teacher will guide you. "Crawling before you walk" is really important. Children may begin to resent practise time if it is too hard or pressured. Try to be happy with what your child is doing, and if your child is struggling, speak to your teacher at the next lesson.</p> <p>Your presence and support at practise time will make a huge difference. Children need and thrive on your help and guidance. Try to be enthusiastic about spending time with your child.</p> <p>It is very difficult to appear enthusiastic when you are exhausted. However, if children pick up negativity, they also tend to become negative. Try to pick a time that's good for you too.</p> <p>Encouragement is a great motivator. "That sounds great, Sally" will develop great self-esteem. Always try to accentuate the positive. Encourage them to play for your family and friends.</p> <p>Practice rewards work very well too, try: stickers, stamps, certificates, a favourite television programme or anything, which you know the child enjoys.</p>

## Parent participation:

<p>Do we have to attend lessons every week?</p>	<p>It is important to attend every lesson. Continuity is really important at this age and playing a music instrument is a totally new experience for the children. As well as learning about music, children are also learning wonderful social skills like: how to work as a team with other children, how to respond to directions given by the teacher, and to work with other parents. This development breaks down if lessons are missed and the continuity is lost. Parents can sometimes get confused about when it is best to bring their child to lessons: apart from when a child is to unwell or infectious there are no “good” reasons to not come to lessons. It is not a good idea to miss lessons because a child is going to be a little late to the lesson, is a bit tired or has hurt their hand (they can always use the other one!). Whilst the worst reason to miss a lesson is when your child has not had time to practice. They won’t get told off, so bring them along and they should be able to catch up. Every lesson missed will put your child behind the rest of the class and mean that they will feel left out. Please check the Forte Terms and Conditions for missed lessons for further details.</p>
<p>Does an adult have to stay in the lessons?</p>	<p>Children need to feel secure when they are embarking on a new experience; therefore we always encourage a responsible adult to attend with the children each week. For children under 7 years old, we make this obligatory. We understand that it is not always possible for the same adult to come every week. Other family members are very welcome to bring children to their lessons and it is nice for them to share in your child’s success. Just make sure they know what to expect and are aware of how to help. After some time at Forte, we will advise you that it is no longer necessary for an adult to remain in the lesson. However, you always remain responsible for your child – Forte does not take responsibility like state schools do.</p>
<p>What does the adult have to do in the lessons?</p>	<p>Parents need to be free to assist their child in the lesson; this is why we do not allow other siblings into the classroom. It is expected that the parent will encourage and discipline their own child when at the keyboard, as well as checking to see that they have the correct finger positions for each song. It is also the responsibility of the parent to help find the correct page for the song being taught, assist the child by singing solfege with them and ensure that your child does not play the keyboard when the teacher is speaking. It is also always helpful to encourage correct posture when sitting at the keyboard.</p>
<p><b>Miscellaneous:</b></p>	
<p>When should we start private lessons?</p>	<p>The answer to this question is different for each student. Some will progress fast and need to be moved into more advanced classes and will need private lessons sooner than other students. Others will get so much out of the class learning, that they will benefit from staying with others for as long as possible. In private lessons, there is not time to do the aural (singing) &amp; harmony (chords) and with no other students, the ensembles can be tricky to play too. The private lessons will be more focussed on two or three pieces and will obviously be less fun for the child. The decision to change to private lessons should not be taken lightly and we would advise talking to your teacher and other parents who have been through the change before making any decisions.</p>
<p>When will we do exams?</p>	<p>Students who start at 4-5 yrs old are generally grade one standard after roughly 3 years and older students sometimes a little sooner. Forte Classes often choose to learn the grade pieces in class then go into private lessons sometime during their grade preparation. This is different for each class and will depend on the class makeup.</p>
<p>My child is losing interest, what should I do?</p>	<p>There are lots of reasons for children losing interest in music, some are simple and can be easily fixed, while others can be a little more complex. These can be anything from a child’s fear of failure, to the lessons interfering with a child’s playtime with friends or an instrument at home not being appropriate. It’s really important to speak to your teacher, as soon as you notice any declining interest. Many problems can often be resolved or even avoided if you speak with your teacher or your Forte school reception. Both teachers and admin staff have had lots of experience and would be delighted to help.</p>

<p>A friend's son is having private piano lessons and is playing more difficult pieces than my child. Why is this?</p>	<p>The main thing you need to remember is that every child is different and learns at a different rate. Learning a musical instrument should never be competitive but thoroughly enjoyable. At Forte we give children many basic music skills that are not taught in a traditional piano lesson, such as singing, ensemble playing, chords, theory, harmony etc.; therefore, a child who learns at Forte becomes more of an all round musician.</p>
<p>When will my child be able to read the music?</p>	<p>Parents are often concerned that their children are not reading the music, because the traditional method of teaching music is to read the music first. After music reading was mastered some ear training may have been done. Traditionally, children would begin music tuition at eight years of age, which is a peak time for the development of reading skills.</p> <p>Forte courses are designed to stimulate children from as young as three and four, who are not yet able to read, so we spend time developing their aural skills and fine and gross motor skills, until they are learning to read at school. We do preliminary note reading exercises even with three to four year olds, so that they are able to recognize notes on the whiteboard or in their books. As they progress with their reading they will be able to transfer this knowledge across to the written word. If you are concerned about what to do, just let them enjoy music, help them with their note identification in the fun books, and sing along with them, try not to pressure them.</p>