

# Blakemore

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

## **Policies and Procedures**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Blakemore School of Music! It is our hope that this will be an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience. Students, we look forward to working with each and every one of you. Parents, we encourage you to be involved with your student's music lessons! The following is a list of our policies and procedures which all students and parents should be aware of so that our lessons will go as smoothly as possible. We look forward to another great year of studying music together!

### **Studio Mission/Teaching Philosophy**

Our priority as music teachers is to share our love of music with our students and create a positive and encouraging learning environment. Students will study various aspects of music history, theory, technique, and performance procedure, in addition to the standard repertoire. Through the study of music, students will learn to strive for excellence while developing invaluable skills such as creativity, artistry, discipline, problem-solving, setting and achieving goals, attention to detail, and appreciation for beauty.

### **Hours of Operation**

Music instruction will be offered at our private studio which is located at 895 Willow Run Lane, Winter Springs, Florida 32708. In-home lessons are available in the Baldwin Park area. Lesson times are arranged based on the student and teacher's schedules and will be determined on a first-come-first-served basis. Our administrative hours are from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM on weekdays. If you need to reach us after hours for any reason, please email us or leave a voicemail and we will get back to you.

### **Weekly Lessons**

Individualized instruction will be offered for each student. Lessons will be 30, 45, or 60 minutes in length, depending on the age and level of the student. Lesson time will focus on the individual development of musicianship, basic theory skills, technique, and repertoire.

### **Musicianship Classes**

As part of our music education at the BSM, we offer group musicianship classes that all students are welcome to attend. These classes cover topics such as aural skills, rhythm, conducting, singing, and music history.

### **Practice Requirements**

Practicing for lessons is an essential element for improvement. Time needed for daily practice can vary greatly from student to student based on age and level. We believe in a "task" oriented approach to practicing. This means that instead of telling a student "we expect you to practice for 30 minutes each day", we are more likely to give an approximate amount of time and let the student know which exercises and pieces they should make sure to complete each day. Students will be expected to come to lessons with their assignments completed and with questions prepared regarding anything that was confusing and/or too difficult to accomplish during their practice. Students that continually come to

lessons unprepared as a result of a lack of practicing may be required to keep a practice log so we can better determine how time is being used so we can help them develop better practicing techniques.

### **Attendance Policy**

To ensure the cohesiveness of the studio, it is important that students arrive for their lessons on time. Parents, please make every effort to have your students here a few minutes early in order to mentally prepare for their lesson. Once lesson times are decided for the semester, we are only able to adjust or change a lesson time as the schedule allows.

If a student misses a lesson, one make-up lesson will be considered if 24-hour notice is given prior to the lesson time or in cases of illness or family emergency. Make-up lessons will NOT be offered in situations with less than 24-hour notice, in cases of family vacation, unexplained/unexcused absences, etc. All this being said, we do understand that sometimes life just happens and will do our best to work with you as the schedule allows. While we do not give refunds for missed lessons during the semester, we set aside a few days after the end of each semester to offer make-up lessons for any missed lessons or absences during the semester. Please see the studio calendar for more details. All make-up lessons must be scheduled before the end of the same semester as the original missed lesson and cannot be carried over into a future semester.

There are a few dates during the year that we will be absent due to concert obligations, conferences, etc. These dates will be marked on the calendar or communicated as known. We will provide make up dates for these lessons. If for some reason we need to cancel a lesson due to illness, etc, we will communicate with students and families to make up the lesson as soon as possible at a time that is mutually convenient.

### **Recitals/Performances**

One of the most important ways for both students and parents to recognize and celebrate hard work and accomplishment is through recitals and other performances. Formal recitals will be held at the end of each semester. In addition to these performances, various other casual concerts and performance opportunities will be scheduled throughout the year around the community. These performances will allow the students to share what they are learning with each other as well as give back to the community. Students are highly encouraged to participate in at least one of these performances each term.

### **Student Progress Reports**

At the end of each semester we will provide parents with a brief written evaluation of the student's progress. These reports will outline what was achieved during the semester, list the student's strengths, discuss areas for improvement, and set goals that we will work towards in the future. We believe these are helpful ways for parents to stay engaged in their student's musical education and for us to more clearly articulate what we believe the next steps are for each student's progress.

### **Fees and Payments**

Fees are based on the length of the weekly lesson (30 min, 45 min, or 60 min) and can be paid by the semester (16 weeks for Fall, 20 weeks for Spring) or in equal monthly installments each term. The desired method of payment should be noted on the Student Registration form. The payment options are explained as follows:

Option #1 – (due September 1, January 1). Students who choose this payment option will receive a 5% discount. Please see the attached Fee & Payment Schedule for details.

Option #2 – Tuition can be paid in equal monthly installments each term – 4 payments in the Fall and 5 in the Spring. Please see the attached Fee & Payment Schedule for details.

Family Discount: Each additional family member enrolled in lessons will receive a 5% discount on tuition.

Late Payments: All payments not received by the 10th of the month will be considered late and will be charged a \$10 late fee and will begin accruing late fees of \$5 each subsequent day.

### **Listening Requirements**

Students will be asked to complete 1 brief listening reflection each week, which they will bring with them to their lesson or submit online through the website. As learning music is similar to learning a language, it is impossible to truly grasp the intricacies and nuances without developing the musical ear. Thus, students are encouraged to listen to music as part of their curriculum.

### **Books & Materials**

Students will need an assignment book which will be brought to each lesson (a regular notebook or lined paper is sufficient). Other books and materials will be assigned as needed and can be purchased either through a local music store or online. If families prefer, BSM can collect a \$50 materials fee which can be used towards the purchase of books. Any funds not use will be returned or transferred to an upcoming year.

### **Parking & Pickup/ Drop off Procedures**

For lessons held at the studio, parking will be available on the street around the house. Students may be dropped off a few minutes prior to their lesson time. Parents are invited to wait in their cars, come back to pick up their children at the end of the lesson, or sit in on the lesson if they prefer. Siblings are welcome to wait in our dining room area as long as they bring homework or a quiet activity to keep them occupied.

### **The Royal Conservatory of Music Development Program (formerly The Achievement Program)**

For those students interested in pursuing the leveled assessments provided by The Royal Conservatory Music Development Program (formerly called The Achievement Program), please let us know and we can begin working towards the next assessment. For students and parents interested in learning more about what the program has to offer, please let us know or visit the Music Development Program's website: [www.musicdevelopmentprogram.com](http://www.musicdevelopmentprogram.com)

### **Competitions/Festivals**

For motivated students who are interested in participating in different local and regional competitions and festivals, we would love to help you prepare and succeed! Having participated and competed in numerous auditions, competitions, and festivals in our past we are well equipped to help advise and mentor you through the process. Please let us know so that we can help find the opportunities that best suit your goals and aspirations.

### **Summer Lessons**

Lessons during the Summer will be offered by request and will be flexible to accommodate vacation schedules and other summer activities.