

Music – Instrumental Tuition Attendance Policy

One of the strengths of CRGS is the strong extra-curricular music provision, and part of this strength is the continuing availability of first-class tuition for a range of musical instruments, and for singing, provided by our team of around 20 peripatetic music teachers.

Key Points of Music Tuition

- Parents pay for ten music lessons per term, timetabled on a set day of the week, depending on the tutor and the instrument chosen
- The School contracts with Essex Music Services (or in some cases individual tutors) for a tranche of teaching time that exactly covers the lessons required.
- Instrumental tutors have no free time as such in school, unless they have scheduled themselves an unpaid break, as they are paid only for their contracted teaching time
- Timetables are 'rotated' as much as possible, but priority for break times and early morning lessons is given to Sixth Form and GCSE students
- One thirty-minute lesson costs approximately £12 (November 2009)

Absences

- Because of the financial and contractual obligations, the Music Department must ensure students are able to attend their lessons. Apart from illness, and simply forgetting, the main reasons for students missing a music lesson are: school trips, external examinations, work experience, students selected to represent the school at sport, special days organised by other departments, or, rarely, staff refusing to allow students to leave a lesson, e.g. because they have scheduled a 'surprise' test
- The Music Department has a system in place for chasing-up absentees. Mrs Billowes contacts parents of students who miss more than the occasional lesson.
- Parents are encouraged to complete an existing form to give advance notice of a planned absence (e.g. work experience, holiday).
- Wherever possible, tutors will reschedule lessons to accommodate planned absences, if enough advance warning is given, but this is not always possible
- Parents, understandably, query bills for lessons which the student has been unable to attend due to a clash with a school activity

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- Contractually, instrumental teachers are not obliged to make-up a missed lesson. It is only possible to rotate times within the available teaching time for a particular instrument, but in most cases it should be possible to prevent a student missing a disproportionate amount of time for any one subject
- Students are responsible for checking the times of their lessons at the start of each term and for arriving promptly for their timetabled lessons. Students can check lesson times on the Elyanore notice-board, or at the Music Office
- Students should take some responsibility for spotting potential future clashes between their music lessons and other foreseeable school events (including those on the school calendar) and make arrangements accordingly to resolve the problem by seeing the Music Administration Assistant. Students must take responsibility for rearranging missed music lessons in these circumstances.
- If, due to missing one particular subject, a student is falling behind with work, subject teachers may wish to contact the Music Administration Assistant, (preferably by email). The Music Department will then do its best to help. Younger students in particular are uncomfortable about conflicting demands on their time and find it hard to explain if they were not permitted to attend a music lesson.
- Teachers are encouraged to contact the Music Department as soon as possible to highlight a possible future problem, if they know it will affect music lessons
- If a student is refused permission to attend a lesson at the last minute, parents will be charged for the lesson, so teachers should avoid doing this. In this instance, the relevant school department may be asked to pay for the missed lesson in question. To re-iterate, however, students can and should take some responsibility to deal with clashes they know about in advance. Students must catch-up on schoolwork.
- Teachers should be aware of the contractual obligations above. If a student misses an instrumental lesson, it must still be paid for. There is no leeway in a peripatetic teacher's timetable, so it is important that students are on time for their music lessons.
- Form Tutors are encouraged to remind students regularly to check that their music lessons do not clash with other events, and if they do, to make alternative music lesson arrangements accordingly

- **From Essex Music Services:**

Events which affect tutors (e.g. Non-Pupil Days, school trips, exams etc) should be expressly notified to them at the beginning of term where possible and in any case no later than two weeks before, so that the session can be rearranged.

If less than two weeks' notice of an event is given, no credit will be due if the tutor is unable to offer an alternative date.

If the tutor is not notified of an event until they arrive on the day, they should teach any students who are available but may require the School/College to alter the timetable for that session. There will be no further expectation on the part of Essex Music Services that the tutor make up the session."