

Pheasey Park Farm Primary School and Early Years Centre

Address: Wimperis Way, Great Barr, Birmingham, B43 7DH

Telephone: 0121 3666183

School Email: postbox@pheasey.org.uk

Early Years Centre Email: early-years@pheasey.org.uk

Website: www.pheaseyparkfarmprimary.co.uk / www.elstonhallmat.co.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs S Arnold

Early Years Centre Managers: Miss T Ilsley and Mrs L Smith



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Primary School &
Early Years Centre

Monday, 18th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Instrumental Tuition - Autumn Term

In lieu of the usual face-to-face music parents meeting, we are choosing this year to disseminate all information electronically as we work to balance a return to normality with ongoing precautions against the spread of Covid-19. As such, please read through the information contained in this letter regarding instrumental tuition at Pheasey Park Farm Primary School. If you have any further questions, please e-mail postbox@pheasey.org.uk "FAO Mr Orbell"

Introduction

Playing a musical instrument is a hugely beneficial activity for children. Not only does it support their artistic development but has also been shown to give academic improvements, since it stimulates more parts of the brain than most other activities; consider playing a wind instrument - you must simultaneously co-ordinate your breathing, pressure of the mouth and diaphragm, movement of the tongue, dexterity in both hands, reading the music and listening to the sound that you produce.

At Pheasey Park Farm, we are very fortunate to be able to offer a wide range of individual musical instrument tuition - violin, cello, trumpet, trombone, flute, clarinet and drum kit - alongside the opportunity to learn recorders, steel pans, djembe drums, ukuleles and keyboards in curriculum music sessions.

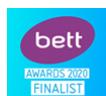
Care of Instruments

For children who have borrowed an instrument in order to have instrumental tuition, here are a few helpful notes to ensure correct care of the instruments:

- Avoid leaving the instrument out of its case - always put it away when not in use
- Take care when assembling/disassembling the instrument - try not to put too much pressure on delicate parts of the instrument
- Parents are responsible for damage caused to the instrument while it is in their care - we have had issues in the past where parents have been charged by Forest Arts for damage to instruments - please take care to avoid this and remind children to look after the instrument
- Taking care of an instrument is a good way to instil a sense of responsibility in children

For certain instruments, there is additional information to be aware of:

Flute/Clarinet - be aware that the mechanisms for the keys are very delicate and rods can bend very easily. Also, if the instrument produces a bubbling sound, there may be moisture under the keys. Sliding a piece of tissue or kitchen towel beneath can soak up the moisture (many professional players use cigarette papers for this job as it does not disintegrate as easily as tissue). The most delicate part of the clarinet is the reed.



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Take care to remove it from the ligature after playing and keep it in a plastic case to avoid it getting cracked.

Trumpet/Trombone - the valves and slide need to run smoothly. The teacher will oil these as required; however, if a trombone slide sticks when played at home, a light spray of water will help it to run more easily. Both instruments will gather moisture when played. It can be advisable to have a piece of kitchen towel or a cloth on the floor to catch any moisture released from the water key. When inserting/removing the mouthpiece from the instrument, use a twisting motion. Avoid ramming it in, as it can get stuck and require significant force to remove, risking damage to the instrument.

Violin/Cello - these instruments are the most fragile, being made of wood. Children should avoid turning the tuning pegs, as overtightening can lead to strings snapping, which can cause injury. Any tuning can be performed by the teacher during lessons. The bow is similarly very fragile and should be treated with care. Broken bows will have to be replaced, at cost to parents. Always put it back in the case when not in use. Sometimes, individual hairs on the bow will break and flap free - this is normal and the teacher will deal with it as required. However, if the bow is used too harshly, it can lead to many broken hairs, requiring the bow to be re-haired or replaced, at cost to parents. The cello possesses a spike on which it balances. Take care that this always points downwards to avoid injury. Also, ensure that the spike does not retreat fully inside the instrument as they can be very difficult to remove.

Drum kit - obviously children do not borrow a kit from the school. However, if parents wish, sticks and practice pads can be purchased online or from music shops to facilitate home practice. Please ensure that all instruments are insured. The overall value of these instruments means that they will likely be covered by home contents insurance.

Fees

Forest Arts are paid by the school for the presence of peripatetic staff. In order to continue to provide this service, we require parents to contribute the sum of £40.00 per term towards these lessons. This does not cover the total cost of the tuition and is not broken down into an amount per lesson. Without these payments, the school would not be able to continue to provide these opportunities to our pupils. Requests for payments for tuition fees are sent out on a termly basis. Fees for the Autumn term are now due to be paid via Pay360. Please log into your child's Pay360 account and select Fees and Subs, Instrumental tuition Autumn 2021. Please be aware that cancelling instrumental tuition part way through a term may still incur a charge, either partial or whole, depending on the amount of tuition already received by the pupil.

Practice

We recommend that children practise their instrument for 10 minutes a day. As with many skills, it is little and often that reaps the biggest rewards. Over-practising can lead to children becoming tired of the



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instrument or resenting it. Children should enjoy playing their instrument; however, it is a commitment and does require consistent work. Children will be expected to attend lessons every week, unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as pupil absence or injury that prevents them from playing. We also advise children to persist with instrumental lessons - it is easy to give up after a short while and move on to something else, but it can become a life-long skill if they stick with it.

Further Information

If you would like any further information about instrumental tuition, please e-mail postbox@pheasey.org.uk "FAO Mr Orbell".

Yours sincerely,

Mr T. Orbell

Music Co-ordinator

