



*"If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline and endurance. They get a beautiful heart."
Shinichi Suzuki*

IRINA CHERKASSKI'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC POLICY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Greetings and welcome to ***Irina Cherkasski's School of Music!***

In this outline, you will find information about procedures and policies of the studio and related topics.

Please take a few moments to carefully review the contents of this packet.

RESUME

Born and educated in Moscow, Irina Cherkasski broadened her musical and academic knowledge during more than 25 years' experience in Piano Education, Piano Accompaniment and Vocal Coaching in Russia, New Zealand and Australia.

Upon completion of an M.Mus. degree in her homeland she got further qualifications as an Opera Repetiteur (Dip. Perf. Arts/Opera) at Auckland University and a Grad. Dip. Ed. at Monash University.

Irina is passionate about Piano Pedagogy and highly experienced in teaching both traditional and Suzuki methods. Dozens of Irina's students sit exams, participate in concerts and competitions, play at Suzuki graduations and win scholarships every year.

Irina is an inspiring Piano Educator who was awarded Best Teacher prizes from Brooklyn Music Teachers Guild and Bernstein Piano Competition. Irina's students won numerous Australian and international Piano competitions. Her students performed at Carnegie Hall (New York) and Albert Hall (London). Irina's student Julia Rozenkova was interviewed by Carl Stefanovic on Channel 9 in 2018 for her outstanding achievement of learning 60 pieces in one year!

Irina brings her expertise in Piano Pedagogy to students of MLC Music Academy and considers her busy private studio as a Music School of international level.

Irina established her reputation as a piano accompanist through her work at XLArts, Melbourne City Opera, Opera Australia, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne Chamber Choir, Opera New Zealand, Auckland University and Ippolitov-Ivanov College of Music in Moscow, as well as extensive free-lance activity as a chamber musician.



CLASS CONTENT

Music is a **language** - and like any language, there are many basics which must be mastered before advancing to more complex applications.

Irina truly believes that a well-rounded musical education helps students define for themselves what music means to them.

During a course of study, Irina attempts to cover all areas of musicianship: sight-reading, technique, repertoire, performance, theory, analysis, harmony, ear-training, and ensemble study.

It is important to bear in mind that no two students are exactly alike, and children (as well as adults) learn at different rates of speed. Even brothers and sisters within families differ radically in motivation and temperament.

Therefore, Irina approaches students as individuals and attempt to challenge each according to their unique potential.

Piano studies are challenging but getting results and seeing your skills developing are always fun and enjoyment.

PRACTICE AND PARENTAL SUPPORT

"The best predictor of success among students is in their belief in their ability to succeed"
(Robert Sternberg and Elena Grigorenko)

Sufficient **scheduled** practise time **daily** is the surest guarantee that you, or your child, will experience consistent progress at the piano.

Learning the necessary skills to become proficient at the keyboard will not occur by simply going to piano lessons.

It takes committed to practising daily during the week to put skills covered at the lesson into motion.

Parental support is an extremely important factor in musical training.

Children whose parents take an **active and honest** interest in their child's progress tend to be more enthusiastic and productive. Irina strongly urges a parent to attend the weekly lesson(s), this way the parent is better equipped to assist his/her child with home practice sessions.

The roads of Music learning and Piano playing are not always easy and can, at times, become bumpy.

As Dr.Suzuki once answered to a very frustrated mother, who asked him how she could help her child who didn't want to practice and deliberately dropped the violin on the floor, 'You should just pick up a violin and carry on'.



PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

*“Confidence, that results from progress through effort has enormous worth”
(Michael Griffin)*

Students are expected to maintain practice sessions at a daily minimum time advised by the teacher.

Piano Practice time should be given the same priority as school homework.

If needed, it is possible to break practice time into smaller sessions to help maintain concentration.

Practice distractions such as television, pets, visitors, phones, or interruptions of chores reduce the efficiency of work input significantly.

Regularly revision of old repertoire is highly encouraged.

Irina Cherkasski reserves the right to offer a transfer to another teacher if the student is not meeting home practice expectations without a legitimate reason for longer than a year.

PARENTS ATTENDING LESSONS

Parents of all beginners are expected to attend the lessons with their children.

Taking notes, asking questions, video- and audio-recordings of the lessons are strongly encouraged.

Any problem or concern regarding a child's musical development or general wellbeing should be brought to the attention of the teacher immediately.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE FIRST LESSON?

For Young Beginners:

- Notebook or A4 scrapbook
- Suzuki Book 1 (for Suzuki students)

For Early Intermediate and Late Intermediate Students:

- Notebook,
- Theory Book,
- Current repertoire book,
- Folder with plastic pocket pages for extra materials



MUSIC MATERIALS AND PHOTOCOPYING

All students are encouraged to buy their music books.

The following books are compulsory to obtain:

- Suzuki Piano Books
- AMEB Technical Work Books
- AMEB publication Grades books

Irina determines which additional music books and supplies should be purchased.

The local music stores usually stock all the music books students use.

Families are also encouraged to use online music stores for better deals.

Suggested site is www.sheetmusicplus.com.

Special orders will require shipping and may take more time.

If any music needs to be ordered at the studio's expense, the studio needs to be reimbursed upon arrival of the music to prevent late charges.

Any working copies must be destroyed after the exam/performance.

Items from Irina's musical library are available for occasional borrowing.

If the borrowed material was lost it must be replaced at the expense of the student's family.

When the need arises, the studio shall determine which music books and supplies should be purchased.

The local music stores usually stock all the music books my students use.

Families are also encouraged to use online music stores for better deals.

Suggested site is www.sheetmusicplus.com.

Special orders will require shipping and may take more time. If any music needs to be ordered at the studio's expense, the studio needs to be reimbursed upon arrival of the music to prevent late charges.

ARRIVAL TO/DEPARTURE FROM THE LESSONS

A student is welcome to enter the studio **no earlier than 10 minutes before the scheduled time** in case of early arrival.

Parents of senior students are expected to be prompt for pick up time.

All students should wait (quietly) until their parent has arrived.

For safety reasons, no student will be allowed to wait outside or by the street.



LATE ARRIVALS

Lesson time cannot be extended due to late arrival.

However, if Irina runs late with the previous student it won't be affecting the next student's lesson duration.

PROPER GROOMING, PROPER DRESS AND PROPER STUDIO USE

All students should keep fingernails short, as long nails impede good hand position.

Washing hands and using studio hand sanitizer before each lesson is expected and encouraged.

Girls should have their hair tied up in buns or ponytails.
Wearing ribbons, hair clips, headpieces bring additional fun to the lessons.

Shoe wear should be left outside in a shoe cabinet provided.
Wearing socks is compulsory.

Arriving at lessons in pyjamas doesn't complement the educational atmosphere of the class.

RESTROOM

Parents and children are welcome to use the restroom on the ground floor.

SPORTS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Although this is a private Piano studio and is not affiliated with any school district, it is no less an educational institution - and must be regarded as such.
It is the position of this studio that piano lessons are to be treated with the same level of importance as any other subject the child may be studying in school.

Please respect Piano Studio curriculum and Irina's commitment to every child's musical education by maintaining a priority level for piano studies equal to that of other school subjects - regard it as a "private extension" of academic subjects.

It is also the position of this piano studio that sporting events and other extracurricular activities **are not** considered valid excuses for not practising during the week.

Sports and music involvement are essential parts of all-round education required for today's children.
Therefore, they need not be mutually exclusive.



RECITALS AND PERFORMANCES

During the year, several performance opportunities are made available to qualified students.

These events provide pupils with further incentive to practice and excel and can have a positive effect on a student's sense of accomplishment.

Recitals build confidence and reinforce the concept that good practice habits result in good pianists.

Important events include:

- Mid-year concert
- End-of-year concert
- VMTA showcases
- Suzuki Association concerts
- Suzuki Association Festivals
- Suzuki Association Playathons
- Bernie's Music Land Masterclasses
- Studio Masterclasses

Students scheduled to perform in any event are **required to attend and perform**. Except in cases of family emergency or illness, students may not "drop out" from the program. Such behaviour then affects the entire recital and is not fair to the other performers.

Performers must be at the facility no later than 15 **minutes** before the beginning of the recital unless called for earlier rehearsal/soundcheck.

Participating students and their families are expected to remain for the duration of the entire recital, thereby providing ample audience and respect for all performers.

COMPETITIONS

Each year, various organizations provide educational and competitive opportunities for qualified students.

Participation in these events is offered by Irina to eligible students who demonstrate the necessary motivation, maturity and practice discipline.

These opportunities require a high level of determination, more serious practice habits- and the ability to perform in a competitive arena with a high level of confidence and intensity.

As is the case with recitals, deadlines shall be imposed and strictly adhered to.

Students who commit to such events must be "performance-ready" by the deadline or must be withdrawn.



Families are strongly encouraged to attend the competitions even if the child is not participating in the event.

It's a great opportunity to meet the community of like-minded families, see the required standard and learn by observing others.

Information on Eisteddfods you can find here: www.nationaleisteddfods.com.au

BILLING POLICY

Hourly rates for piano lessons in 2020 are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| 20-minutes lesson | \$35.00 |
| 30-minutes lesson | \$50.00 |
| 45-minutes lesson | \$75.00 |
| 60-minutes Lesson | \$100.00 |

These are flat fees to reserve your or your child's, weekly time for lessons, whether you choose to attend or miss.

Fees are charged by the term for students willing to have a holiday break. Students choosing to have lessons during holidays are charged for 10 lessons per account. Fees are not lowered nor refunded for lessons without a legitimate reason.

ATTENDANCE, MISSED LESSONS AND MAKE-UP LESSONS

Regular attendance of lessons is an issue of responsibility and choice on the part of parents and students.

The studio shall not assume any financial responsibility for the student's absence(s) due to illness, weather, sports, etc. If, for some reason, a lesson must be missed, please, send notification not less than 24 hours in advance so the make-up lesson could be arranged.

Lessons missed without notification will not be made up. Less than 24 hours' notice won't be accepted and the lesson will not be made up. Excuses may be given to the situations which are beyond the control of student/parent.

Any lesson missed due to Irina's circumstances will be made up.

The studio shall, however, assume financial responsibility in case Irina Cherkasski becomes ill, be out of town, or cancel for any reason.

The month's regular fee will then be reduced by that particular amount.



TERMINATION OF LESSONS

If a student and/or parent should decide to terminate lessons at any given time during the year, the studio requires a TWO WEEKS WRITTEN NOTICE.

Such notice must be delivered to Irina Cherkasski personally, by mail or official electronic correspondence.

The studio will not accept/recognize texts or telephone messages as documentation for said notice.

Regardless of when appropriate notice is given, such student/parent shall be financially responsible for the following two weeks/lessons, whether the student/parent chooses to attend or be absent.

PAYMENT AND LATE FEES

All fees for lessons are due within two weeks following the billing date.

A **\$20.00 late fee shall be assessed for any payments received after that.** This late charge would best be paid at the time that the fee is remitted, or it will appear on the following statement.

SIBLINGS

Lesson time must remain as focused as possible - siblings are welcome to attend provided they remain quiet. It is very difficult and tense to teach while a sibling is walking/running/jumping around and making various noises during a lesson.

Please, feel free to use the toys and books provided.

Please, take the initiative to remove a sibling from the studio should this situation begin to arise. Again, it is very uncomfortable for me to remind a parent of this procedure should the need arise, so please help us to keep the atmosphere of the lesson time enjoyable and productive for the learning student.

The safety of the sibling during the lesson time is entirely the parent's responsibility.

PARKING

Please, do not park in the driveway as it may block the way for other members of my family willing to get into the garage.



GROUNDS

The piano studio is part of my private residence, and must **always** be regarded and respected as such. Please do your part to maintain the premises for the sanctity of my home.

Please! Feel free to enjoy the sun deck before or during lessons if the weather is nice. If you should elect to sit outside during your child's lesson, the deck is an ideal location to read, relax, etc.

We frown upon the disposal of gum and other debris on the premises.

Please, use the rubbish bin in front of the house or take your disposables of this sort with you.

Neither food nor drink (except water) is allowed in the studio!

DOG

Our friendly dog Schnapps is a passionate music lover who enjoys playing with children. He may get excited about seeing new people and start greeting barking. If you or your child feel uncomfortable about Schnapps coming to the Studio, please, let us know and we'll keep him away!

CODA

***Thank you for entrusting your child's musical development to
Irina Cherkasski's School of Music!***

We hope it will be a mutually enjoyable journey!

Welcome to the wonderful world of MUSIC!