



A Guide to Individual Music Lessons



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Why learn to play a musical instrument?

Having the opportunity to learn a musical instrument at school enables a child to learn and develop new skills, it also increases their confidence through performing.

Learning an instrument and taking the external examinations, show both progression in the chosen instrument and a commitment in learning. This is beneficial to pupils as they move through their academic life. We at Staines Preparatory School also enjoy being able to celebrate musical achievements in our assemblies where we present pupils with their music grade certificates.



What instruments can my child learn?

Children can begin lessons from Year 1 if they are ready. However, children in Reception, who are showing musical aptitude, may be considered for instrumental lessons on a case-by-case basis from the Spring Term onwards. Some instruments are more suited for children from Year 3 upwards.

Below are the instruments we have available for children to learn with a maximum of two permitted:

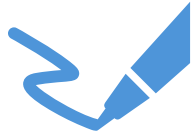
- Piano – from Year 1
- Violin and viola – from Year 1
- Cello – from Year 1
- Singing – from Year 3
- Drums – from Year 3
- Guitar – from Year 3
- Brass (Cornet, trumpet, trombone, French horn, euphonium, tuba) – from Year 3
- Woodwind (Saxophone, flute, oboe, recorder, clarinet) – TBC





About our individual music lessons

How do I apply for my child to have music lessons?



Please complete the application form indicating which instrument your child would like to learn, please also include if they are new to lessons or if they are currently working towards a grade.

The contact details you give will be forwarded only to the music teacher who will be teaching your child. The school office will let you know the name of the teacher and the day the lessons will take place.

Link to [Application Form](#)

How do I pay for lessons and how much do they cost?



The contract you sign will be between yourselves and the music teacher, who will invoice you directly. Music lessons cost £270.00 per term (this equates to 10 lesson per term). Your child will have 30 lessons during the academic year; each lesson will be for 30 minutes. Payment is to be received before the lessons begin.

Music lessons will continue on a rolling basis until notice to stop lessons is given directly to the music teacher, in line with the general terms and conditions of music lessons.

When will lessons take place?



Music lessons take place during the school day, and each music teacher has a specified day to attend. The lessons are arranged on a three weekly rotation so that pupils do not miss the same academic lesson each week.

Every attempt is made to avoid disruption to core subjects as much as possible.

A limited number of lessons are conducted over the lunch period; however, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are given priority for these sessions.

Music lesson timetables will be emailed to parents; they are also on display outside the music practice rooms and on the music notice board by the main music room. The music teacher will also keep parents updated in regard to timetables should there be a need for any changes to the day or time.

Pupils in years 1 to 3 will be collected from class for their lessons.



About our individual music lessons



Missing lessons due to fixtures and non-attendance

If your child has been chosen to take part in a sporting fixture which clashes with a music lesson, the parent should notify the music teacher as soon as possible, they will then try to rearrange the lesson.

A music lesson which is missed through the pupil's non-attendance will still be charged. Should there be scheduled school trips or examinations the music teacher will endeavour to rearrange times.



What equipment will my child need?

If you have any queries prior to starting lessons in respect of instruments and practice books your child may require, the music teacher will be happy to help. They will be able to advise whether and how to purchase or hire instruments and what music practice books your child will need.



How will I know when my child is ready to take a music exam?

Your child's teacher will be able to tell you when your child is ready to take their music exam, they will give you all the information about how the process works and costs.



What if my child no longer wants to have lessons?

If your child, no longer wishes to have music lessons you will need to give written notice directly to the music teacher. One half term's notice must be given in writing to discontinue lessons; for example, to withdraw from lessons from the spring term 2026, notice must be received before the October half term 2025. Failure to give the required notice will make you liable for tuition fees.



Choirs and Music Ensembles

Our Concert Band is for children in Years 3-6, and we rehearse during Monday lunchtimes. Pupils must have been learning their instrument for at least a year and places in the ensemble are allocated at the discretion of the Director of Music. Pupils are invited at the beginning of the academic year, but if you are interested in your child joining this ensemble, please get in touch to discuss: g.nathan@stainesprep.co.uk

Singers can join the Lower School Singers (Years 1 and 2), Upper School Singers (Years 3-6) and the auditioned Chamber Choir (Years 4-6). Information is given to pupils regarding these choirs at the beginning of the academic year and parent sign up is not necessary.





Scholarships and further information

What if I am interested in a senior school music scholarship for my child?

- The standard required for a music scholarship is usually a minimum of Grade 5, but expected standards for rarer instruments are generally much lower (e.g. Grade 3 for a tuba), and much higher for the guitar or piano, (e.g. Grade 6/7+) although this depends on the requirements of each school.
- Schools would usually expect the candidate to be learning 2 instruments.
- Schools would expect children to be working through music theory books alongside their practical graded examinations.
- Schools would expect the applicant to be involved in a music ensemble and a school choir. There are a variety of additional ensembles in the local area, which your child could become involved with.
- Applications are usually due around October-November when your child is in Year 6.
- Schools usually request a reference from your child's instrumental teachers and current Director of Music.
- Auditions are usually held in January-February when your child is in Year 6.
- Auditions usually comprise an interview, performance of 2 contrasting pieces/songs on your child's first instrument and 1 piece/song on the second. They may also conduct some aural and general musicianship tests. We recommend the ABRSM Aural Trainer app. Your child can gradually work through the grades and should be able to complete Grade 5 tests by the time of their audition.
- Schools are looking for children that are passionate about music and that have a dedicated approach to practice.
- We recommend regularly listening to a wide variety of music, watching live music and talking about favourite pieces/songs, composers and performers. Your child's instrumental teacher will be able to recommend recordings or live performances.
- Consider whether your child might want to stand out from the crowd by learning an unusual instrument. At Staines Prep, our unusual instrument opportunities include the viola, double bass, trombone, French horn, euphonium and tuba. Other unusual instruments include the oboe and bassoon, although these lessons are not currently available at Staines Prep School.
- Please arrange to meet or speak to Mrs Nathan (Director of Music) as early as possible (ideally by the end of Year 4) so that she can support your child through the process.

Further information.

Please contact the school office by sending an email to office@stainesprep.co.uk if you would like further information or if you have a query that has not been covered in this guide.



Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers



Julie Aherne – Piano

Julie studied at Royal Holloway, University of London, and holds a degree in Music as well as a diploma in Piano Performance. Julie's lessons focus on making music from the very outset, using rote-learning and improvisation activities, while developing music-reading skills methodically. Her students enjoy playing lively and characterful pieces, songs, and even composing their own music.

Julie has a busy career as a pianist, accompanist, and coach. She has performed concertos by Bach, Mozart, Grieg, and Finzi, and frequently plays for amateur and professional groups including choirs and opera societies, as well as for competitions, exams, and recitals. She works for the charity Lost Chord UK, delivering interactive music sessions for people living with dementia, and is the Musical Director of Woking Ladies Choir.



Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers

Peter Ford - Piano

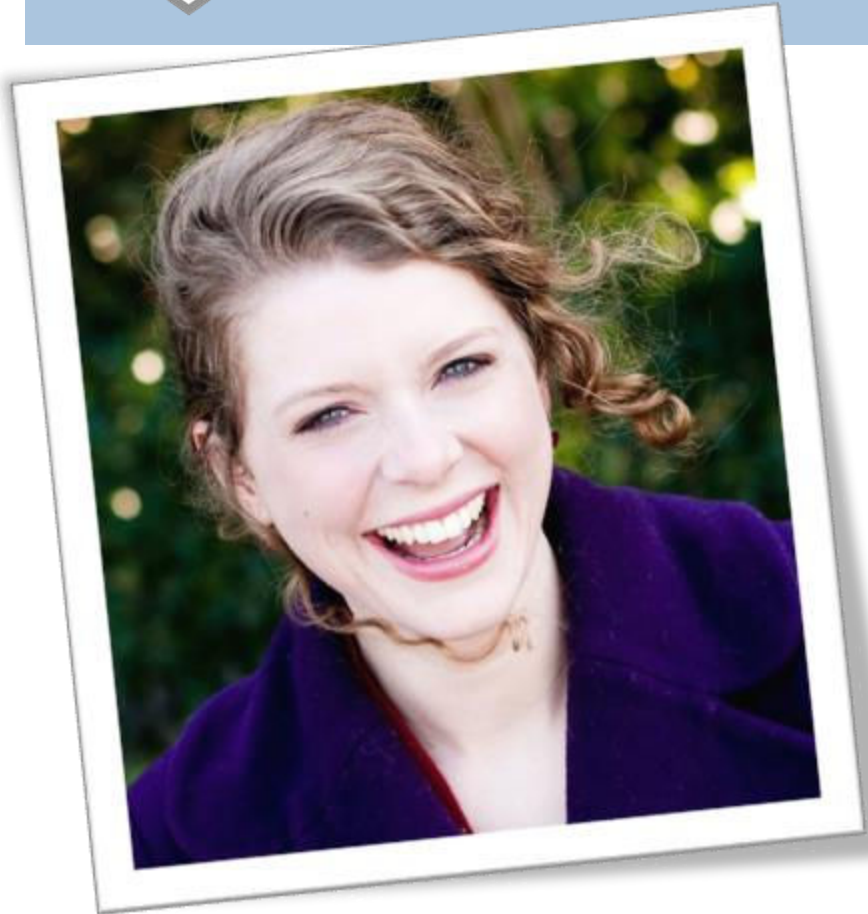
Peter has over 20 years of teaching experience, ranging from prep schools to universities. His lessons focus on providing his students with the skills to learn independently and imaginatively, ensuring they are fluent music-readers with a well-furnished toolkit of practice strategies. His students achieve strong results in ABRSM exams and have a thorough grounding in music theory.

As a performer he enjoys an international career. As a pianist and harpsichordist, he has performed widely, including at the Tíbrá Festival in Kópavogur. He is a pianist, music coach, and staff conductor for the Melofonetica Veneto Opera Summer Schools in Bassano del Grappa and has been the resident conductor for the Arte Lirica Festival in Asolo. Peter was privileged to conduct a fully staged performance of *Così fan tutte* with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra at the opening of the 2016 Birgitta Festival in Tallinn. He also maintains a strong academic interest in music and is credited as an editor of Dr Matteo Dalle Fratte's acclaimed book *The Melofonetica Method: A complete guide to clear and expressive Italian diction for singers*. His own research interests include the historical and contemporary performance practices of 18th C. recitative.





Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers



Anna Goodhew – Piano/Singing

Mrs Anna Goodhew teaches piano and singing at Staines Preparatory School. She studied at Guildhall school of music and Drama achieving a BMus (1st class hon) and MMus.

Anna has a passion for theatre and regularly performs in operas across the Southeast. She has performed at venues such as The National theatre, The Barbican Hall and The Rose Theatre. Some of her favourite operatic roles include Juliet in Romeo and Juliet, Contessa in Le Nozze di Figaro and Violetta in la Traviata.

Anna also enjoys a wealth of outreach work including regular concerts with Songhaven (dementia friendly concerts), FunKey Foundations (concerts for babies and young children) and delivering opera workshops in schools. Anna has taught piano and singing for over 15 years and enjoys sharing her knowledge and passion with her students; aiming to instill a confidence and connection to music that goes beyond the practise room!



Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers

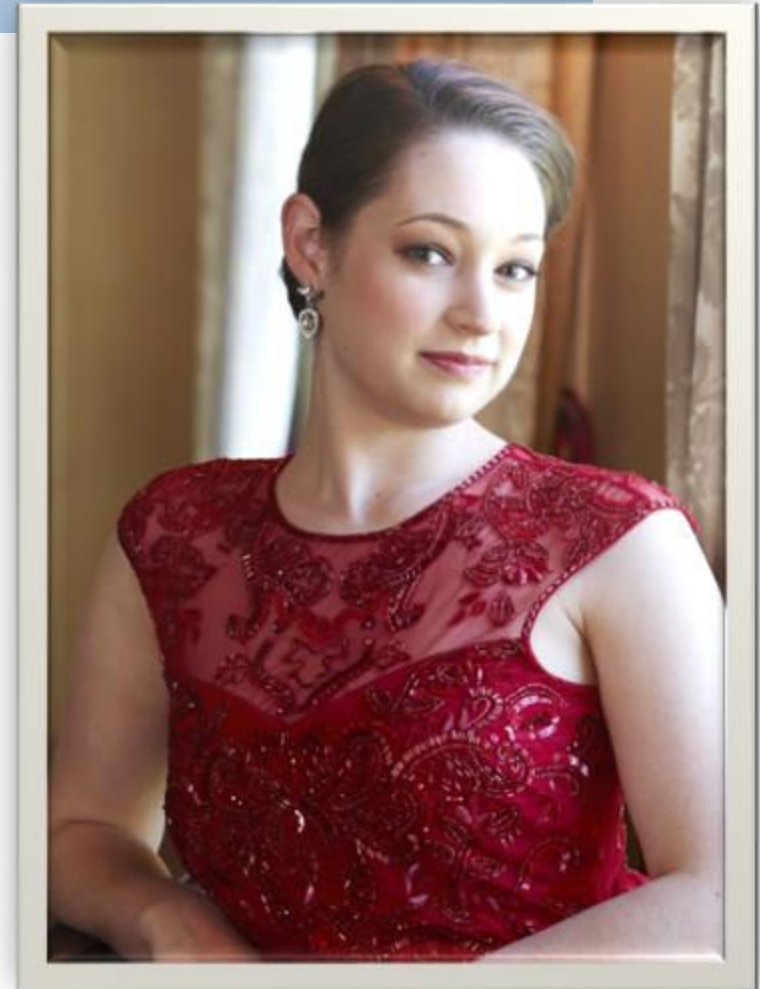
Camilla Jeppeson – Piano/Singing

Camilla initially studied as a pianist at the University of Surrey with renowned pianist Clive Williamson and subsequently went on to study voice at London's Associated Studios, working with top professionals from Glyndebourne and tutors from the Royal College, Royal Academy and Guildhall.

Camilla's singing career takes her all around the world - singing in opera houses in Italy, concert halls in France, and performing in many iconic venues in London including The Royal Albert Hall, St. Paul's Cathedral, The Royal Festival Hall, Cadogan Hall and The Ritz.

Camilla also works as an accompanist for local choirs and is an advocate for young musicians, working with Grange Park Opera's vocal outreach project Primary Robins.

Camilla was influenced by her wonderful primary school music teacher who taught the class how to play the recorder - after this introduction to playing music, she desperately wanted to learn the piano, and at the age of 7, she began to learn more about the magical world of music.





Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers



Nicola Garty – Violin/Viola

Nicola Garty studied piano and violin at the Royal Academy of Music and has played in professional orchestras such as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, The Ulster Orchestra, Belfast and L'orchestra lirica e sinfonica di Lucca, Italy. She currently leads the Hounslow Symphony Orchestra (HSO) and freelances as a violinist.

She is also a professional pianist, much in demand as an accompanist. She plays the organ and directs a church choir.

As well as teaching violin at SPS, Nicola teaches piano, violin and singing at St Catherine's School, Twickenham and piano and violin at St James' School, Ashford.

Nicola holds regular concerts which give all her pupils performing opportunities.



Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers

Gill Walshaw – Cello

Gill Walshaw studied at Goldsmith's College, University of London with a specialism in performance (cello).

She enjoys playing in a variety of settings and styles, from concert halls to recording studios. Alongside performing Gill is a keen educator, having taught cello for many years, and loves getting people together, through festivals, summer schools or running ensembles.

Previously she was Senior Teacher for In Harmony Lambeth (partnered with the Southbank Centre and London Philharmonic Orchestra) formed to bring high quality classical musical training to young people living in a deprived part of London with an aim to raise aspirations and academic achievement through the power of music.

Gill has also published compositions and arrangements, including Trinity College London's piano exam syllabus and in the upcoming violin syllabus. She also creates transcriptions for contemporary classical pianist RIOPY.





Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers

Jim Alexander - Brass



Jim grew up in Hastings and took up the trombone when he started secondary school. He had heard his future teacher play the trombone as part of an assembly given by the East Sussex Music Service and was hooked on the loud, comical sounding instrument! Alongside his lessons, Jim was also a member of numerous ensembles across the county of East Sussex. After passing his Grade 8 in year 11, Jim began exploring the possibility of a career in music and during his A level studies, successfully auditioned at a number of the country's specialist music conservatoires.

In 2009, Jim commenced his studies at the Royal College of Music in London, graduating with a first-class honours degree as a Bachelor of Music in 2013. Subsequently, Jim studied for a Masters in Performance and graduated with a Distinction in 2015.

In the years that have followed, Jim has enjoyed a varied career, both teaching and performing. As well as being the brass teacher at Staines Prep, Jim also teaches at Thomas's Battersea, Danes Hill, Bolingbroke Academy and Wandsworth Music.

Jim has played with the National Symphony Orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia and Orpheus Sinfonia. Jim has performed as part of the BBC Proms, including the CBeebies Ocean Adventure and Jungle Jamboree (check them out on iPlayer!), and Classic FM. Away from the teaching rooms and concert platforms, Jim can often be found underground in the pits of the West End, having performed in Wicked the Musical, Les Misérables and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.



Meet our Peripatetic Music Teachers

Micah Moody - Drums

Micah Moody has been playing drums professionally for over 35 years. He plays a range of styles including rock, blues, funk, hip hop and reggae.

Micah has played on many recordings and toured the world extensively, playing major festivals including Montreal Jazz Festival and Glastonbury.

More recently Micah has started to teach drums to bring his experience to a new generation of drummers.



Alex Hart – Guitar



British Guitarist Alexander Hart is alumni of the Royal College of Music and currently at The Royal Academy of Music under Michael Lewin and Grammy award winning guitarist David Russel.

A finalist of a growing number of international music competitions including London International Guitar Competition, Lithuania International Guitar competition and holder of the Manual Barruecco Prize at the Koblenz International Guitar Festival.



Music Lessons

General Terms and Conditions and Fees from September 2025

Instrument	Year	Day	Fees per term
Piano	Year 1 to Year 6	Mon/Tue/Wed/Friday	£270.00
Drums	Year 3 to Year 6	Monday	£270.00
Cello	Year 1 to Year 6	Tuesday	£270.00
Singing	Year 1 to Year 6	Tuesday	£270.00
Guitar	Year 3 to Year 6	Wednesday	£270.00
Brass	Year 3 to Year 6	Monday	£270.00
Violin	Year 1 to Year 6	Friday	£270.00
Woodwind	Year 3 to Year 6	TBC	£270.00

Fees

Fees are to be paid directly to the music teacher. Charges for lessons are made in advance and must be paid by the set date i.e. one week before the start of term. Lessons will not start until payment has been made in full. Existing pupils may lose their place in the timetable if payment is late. For new pupils lessons will begin only after receipt of payment and the signed copy of the Terms and Conditions.

Pupils are charged for thirty lessons per year. Due to differing lengths of term, this may sometimes mean only nine lessons in one term and eleven in another. If for any reason the teacher has to miss a lesson, the lesson will be made up at another time, or where this is not possible the final term's bill will be amended.

Lessons

Lessons missed through a pupil's non-attendance will be charged for. Where there is a School event such as academic examinations or a trip published in the School Calendar (excluding Fixtures), every effort will be made by the teacher to re-schedule these lessons. Where a school event has not been published in the School Calendar, efforts to re-schedule the lessons will only be made if parents give 1 weeks' notice to the music teacher.

Fixtures

In the event that a child is chosen for a fixture that clashes with a music lesson, it is the parent's responsibility to let the teacher know as soon as possible. The teacher will endeavour to give another time on the same day, although there is no guarantee. If less than 24 hours' notice is given, the lesson will be chargeable.

Notice

Notice to discontinue lessons must be given in writing directly to the music teacher by the half term break of the term that you wish to stop lessons. Failure to give such notice will render the pupil's parents liable for fees in lieu of a further term.

Scheduling

Scheduling extra music lessons - It remains difficult to schedule individual music lessons without impinging upon the regular curriculum. In order to alleviate pressure on academic work, lessons will be scheduled on a three-week rotation, with information published around School and online to inform pupils and parents of when lessons are taking place. When allocating the lessons, Year 6 pupils have precedence, as they will be sitting their external exams in the Autumn Term or at the beginning of the Spring Term.

· NB Where pupils miss lesson time the teachers involved endeavour to ensure that any work missed is 'caught up'. It is essential that pupils have the correct instrument at home and practice between each lesson to ensure progress is made.

Years 1, 2 and 3 will be collected from their classroom for music lessons. It is the responsibility of pupils in other years to make their own way to the music lessons at the correct time.