



Keys to Harmony, LLC

2012  
Student Handbook  
Piano Students

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# 2012 Annual Update

What's new in 2012:

## Student Handbook:

As Keys to Harmony grows, it becomes more necessary to strengthen its foundation. Toward that end, we have expanded our previous Goals and Policies document to include more detailed information about what to expect at the studio as well as what we expect from you as students and parents. The result is this Student Handbook, which will be updated annually.

Much of the content is not new; however, we are requiring that each student/parent review the Student Handbook online and document that you agree with the policies on a separate form, which will be kept on file. It is my sincere wish that you have a successful and fulfilling experience at Keys to Harmony, and that part of that experience is adhering to the guidelines set forth in this handbook.

## Studio Holidays Update:

See the 'Studio Holidays and Vacations' section of the Handbook.

## Play-a-Story Launch:

We are very excited to begin offering this program that was initially created for younger children aged 4 - 5 but is appropriate for all ages. We will begin forming classes for pre-schoolers and will incorporate the program with some of our existing classes as well. It is centered on improvising music to create a "soundtrack" to a story, fostering freedom and self-expression at the keyboard.

## Guitar Lessons:

Although we have offered guitar lessons for several months, we plan to expand and stabilize our guitar student base in 2012. The plan is to then begin offering regularly scheduled, guided 'jam sessions' with both guitar and piano students to give them a taste of ensemble playing and the enjoyment and opportunities that it brings.

## Late Fees:

Refer to the 'Late Fees' section of the Handbook for details. There is a slight change, effective January 1, 2012.

## Reading Adventures:

A more focused approach to music reading will begin in the second year of lessons. See the 'Reading Adventures' section of the Handbook for details.

We are incredibly blessed to have this opportunity to share a breakthrough in music education through the Simply Music curriculum and are committed to achieving unprecedented results with our students. This requires a cooperative effort between student, teacher, and parent (if the student is a child). The policies in this handbook are designed to facilitate the entire process and ensure that your investment in this lifelong skill yields the highest return.

We value all of our students and parents and welcome your feedback at all times.

*Laurie Richards*

Owner

Advanced Simply Music Teacher

## Simply Music Goals

Keys to Harmony is dedicated to realizing the fundamental and stated goals of the Simply Music organization:

Fundamental goal: To maximize the likelihood that students will retain music as a lifelong companion. Toward this end, Simply Music has stated four specific goals.

Stated goals:

Students will

- Experience playing as a natural self-expression;
- Play a vast repertoire covering a broad array of musical styles and genres;
- Develop the ability to self-generate, i.e. the ability to progress independently. This includes developing a foundation of music reading, writing, composition, improvisation, arrangement, structure and theory etc;
- Have a highly positive, self-affirming experience throughout the music learning process

## Contact Information

Contact information for Keys to Harmony can be found on the cover page of this handbook. Owner Laurie Richards is a big fan of open communication. Should you have any concerns that you feel are not being resolved, please contact her directly.

All teacher e-mail addresses are located on [keystoharmony.com](http://keystoharmony.com) on the Contact Us page.

If any of your contact information changes, please update your account online (see "Accessing Your Online Account"). This includes any changes to your physical address, e-mail address, and phone numbers.

## General Studio Guidelines

Plan to arrive several minutes prior to the scheduled class time. When it is time for your class to begin, please quietly enter the appropriate studio; do not wait for the door to open and a previous class to be dismissed.

Prior to entering the studio, please turn OFF your cell phone and put it away for the duration of the lesson. If you must accept an urgent call, please leave the studio prior to answering. This should be an occasional exception.

Food, gum, candy and beverages are not allowed in lessons. Adults may have a beverage in a covered/sealed travel mug.

Siblings: The breakthrough nature of Simply Music requires an undistracted parent/life coach to be present at each lesson with children. Therefore, please make other arrangements for the care of younger siblings during lessons so that the life coach is able to devote his or her attention to the teacher and the lesson content. Onsite babysitting is available for many class times at a nominal fee. Contact the office for more information.

Siblings old enough to play safely and quietly without supervision are invited to stay in the sibling room, in which a variety of books, toys and puzzles, a table and chairs and a small keyboard are provided. Please be sure all items are put away and returned to their original state before leaving the studio.

Loud, rambunctious behavior will not be tolerated; anyone in the sibling room who cannot quiet down after one warning will be required to wait quietly with a parent for the remainder of the sibling's class time that day.

Waiting Area and Office: Please be respectful of items displayed in the waiting area, and leave the traffic area clear. In rainy and snowy weather, remove your shoes as soon as you enter the studio and place them on the shoe rack. Children are not allowed in the office unless a parent is with them.

Restrooms: Two restrooms are located in the back of the studio, at the end of the hallway. Plan to use the restroom if necessary before or after class, not during. Extra toiletries are provided in the east restroom, in the drawer of the free-standing cabinet. We can help prevent the spread of germs by washing hands prior to each lesson.

## Roles and Responsibilities

"There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results." ~ Ken Blanchard

The roles and responsibilities outlined below are in place to help you to achieve the absolute best results. We understand that this level of commitment may not be for everyone; however, this is what we require so that we can give you the best value for your investment. Students, parents, and teachers all have equally important roles and responsibilities. Adult students act as their own "parent", so these roles are relevant to all students.

### Student's Role:

- Maintain a "coachable" attitude regarding your lessons.
- Maintain your playlist as directed by your teacher.
- Read your Notes Book every week to ensure your assignments are completed.
- Bring all relevant materials (books and playlist) to class each week.
- Practice 15–20 minutes per day, 5–6 days per week. After the first year, this typically increases to 30-35 minutes per day.
- Be courteous and respectful to everyone present in class.
- Commit to a long-term relationship with piano.

### Parent's Role:

Parents are their children's Life Coaches and are held accountable for supporting and encouraging the child's progress during lessons ("coaching sessions") and in the time between lessons (the "real learning" environment):

- Actively participate in the lesson and discussions.
- Provide an environment at home conducive to successful practice/playing sessions. For example, situate the piano or keyboard away from televisions or other electronics if they are in use regularly.
- Ensure that all assignments are completed and that the playlist is checked off during practice. It is not necessary that you actively engage in every practice session; however you should be available to offer help and support where needed, particularly when using the student home materials.
- Read e-mail updates and monthly newsletters for important information.
- Utilize the studio's website, [keystoharmony.com](http://keystoharmony.com), to access necessary information and forms important to your experience at Keys to Harmony.

- Pay monthly fees on time. Familiarize yourself with the "Tuition and Materials Fees" section.
- Commit to a long-term relationship with piano lessons and structured practice at home.

### Teacher's Role:

The teacher is your Method Coach and is responsible for imparting the concepts and skills during class necessary for students to do the processing and learning at home that week.

Keys to Harmony takes pride in its teachers, each of whom completes several teacher training programs through Simply Music and through regular training events at the studio. Students and parents can expect the following from their teachers:

- Provide instruction appropriate for the level of the class.
- Be prepared for and ready to begin each class on time.
- Be enthusiastic and patient during lessons.
- Maintain open communication with students and parents.
- Learn new pieces and create compositions to expand their own repertoire.

If you feel that your teacher is not fulfilling his or her role adequately, please contact the owner so that it may be addressed.

## Practice/Student Home Materials

Students are expected to practice 15 - 20 minutes per day, 5 - 6 days per week in the first year of lessons. If your schedule does not allow for this, please postpone lessons until sufficient time is available for this consistent practice routine.

It is important that the student practices on the same day of the lesson to reinforce what was learned. You will be asked to set aside a scheduled practice time each day to ensure progress.

The playlist must be kept alive, marked daily and brought to each lesson. Parents of children aged 16 and younger are accountable for ensuring that this happens.

The student home materials must be utilized as directed by your teacher. This includes the DVD, CD, practice pad, reference book, and music book when applicable.

A specific practice system will be taught beginning in Level 2 which helps students achieve the most efficient use of their practice time. All students are required to use this system as directed by the teacher.

## Student Attendance

Regular attendance during the scheduled lesson time is expected. A parent/life coach is required to attend as described in 'Roles and Responsibilities'. Classes meet year-round, with four to eight weeks of holiday/vacation time throughout the year. (See 'Studio Holidays and Vacations')

### Class Length

The length of classes is determined by the number of students in the class:

1 student (private)	30 min.
2 students	35 min.
3 students	40 min.
4 students	45 min.
5 or more students	50 min.

### Missed Lessons:

- Contact your teacher prior to the missed lesson if possible.
- It is the responsibility of the student or parent to contact a classmate for class notes and clarification of assignments. E-mail addresses and/or phone numbers will be exchanged during class for this purpose. If your attempts are unsuccessful, then you may e-mail your teacher for the assignment.
- If another student misses a lesson and contacts you for the assignment, please respond promptly if possible.
- You may attend a different group session as a makeup session. Contact your teacher for appropriate options.
- A private makeup lesson may be scheduled with your teacher at a cost of \$30 per half-hour session.
- No credit will be issued for missed lessons.

### Inclement Weather Policy

In the event that schools are closed due to the weather:

- Keys to Harmony will generally remain OPEN.
- If you opt not to attend that day, the usual options for missed lessons are available.
- If the weather is severe and we opt to close the studio, you will be contacted prior to your lesson time. PLEASE CHECK YOUR E-MAIL regularly if you think there is any chance that classes may be cancelled.
- If the studio closes, makeup sessions will be scheduled. These sessions will be organized by level, not by individual class.
- No credit will be issued.

### Extended Student Vacations

If you must miss lessons for an extended time, re-enrollment is subject to the availability of classes at the appropriate level. Alternatively, you may reserve your class time by paying regular tuition during your absence with a commitment to remaining caught up with the class.

If possible, video calls may be arranged so that the absent student may “attend” regular lessons via computer.

Please note that “taking a month off” of lessons without payment is not an option.

## Studio Holidays and Vacations

Keys to Harmony observes several holidays during which the studio will be closed. You can check these dates any time by visiting [keystoharmony.com](http://keystoharmony.com) and selecting the appropriate holiday calendar on the Student Resources page.

Teachers take an additional 1 - 4 weeks of vacation, depending upon experience. (More experienced teachers earn more vacation time.) Your regular class will not be held during teacher vacations. Your teacher will inform you of these dates.

## Flexible Learning Environment

One way we ensure that our students thrive in our studio is by maintaining a flexible learning environment. For example, if it becomes apparent that the pace of a student’s class is not optimal for him or her, we will try to place the student in a more appropriately paced class. If

one is not available, the teacher may employ some other options in the existing class to help the student experience success.

Because of this ongoing flexibility, you may occasionally experience one or more of the following:

- A change in the configuration, size and length of your class
- A request to change your regular lesson time (please see 'Scheduling' below)
- If you began in a shared lesson but end up in a private lesson (even if through no fault of your own), there will be a grace period of up to 60 days before an alternative arrangement or private lesson rate is instituted.

## Scheduling

While it is important to maintain as much stability as possible in our studio schedule, we are flexible when necessary and ask the same courtesy of our studio families as we work with your busy schedules. Accordingly, your lesson time is not guaranteed to remain the same for an extended period of time.

Most commonly, class times may be adjusted for one of the following reasons:

- to accommodate a schedule conflict arising from studio families' outside activities
- to place your child in a more appropriately paced class (see 'Flexible Learning Environment' above)
- if the class size decreases to 3 or less
- to advance to the Reading Adventures course during the second year (explained below)

Please be assured that we make every effort to remain as consistent as possible while continuing to provide the absolute best value for all of our students.

## Reading Adventures Course

Students typically progress to the Simply Music reading program at the beginning of their second year after building a repertoire of 30 - 50 songs. The reading program has multiple components and affords students a solid foundation in rhythm and pitch-reading before applying these concepts to written music.

At Keys to Harmony, we believe this process is most successful and enjoyable in a focused reading environment and in a larger group setting. When students are ready to begin this course, classes may be combined to form a larger Reading Adventures group of typically eight to ten students. Consequently, it may be necessary to change your class time.

The class will generally consist of the following:

- 30 minutes of focused reading activities:  
This consists of a variety of activities and materials including, but not limited to, group games, worksheets, drum activities, playing the piano, using rhythms on a digital keyboard, writing and transcribing exercises, and processing rhythm OR pitch (not both at this stage) from written music.
- 20 minutes of repertoire and other auxiliary programs:  
Students continue to keep their playlists current and learn new material in various streams, but at a slower pace while completing this course. Students will support one another in new learning; if some learn at a faster pace than others, those students will be asked to aid others during class who may benefit from their help.

A typically progressing class will complete Reading Adventures in about six months. Once completed, if necessary the class will be divided according to the students' comfort and ability levels with regard to reading rhythm and pitch. They will then continue to advance in all the programs and will begin working with written music as well.

## Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees are due no later than the first day of each month. The tuition payment covers your lessons for that month. You will receive a statement between the 20th and 25th of each month via e-mail for the following month's tuition and fees due. Please check your statement for the current balance prior to making payment.

### Enrollment Fee:

Upon initially enrolling at Keys to Harmony, a \$30 enrollment fee per family is collected. This fee also covers any additional immediate family members who subsequently enroll, provided the family has not lapsed in their enrollment at any time. If a family discontinues and later re-enrolls, the enrollment fee is collected.

### Tuition:

Monthly tuition is \$90.00. This is a flat monthly fee which covers payment of 44 - 48 lessons per year, depending upon your teacher's level of experience (See 'Studio Holidays and Vacations'.) The resulting per-lesson charge is slightly higher for more experienced teachers.

### Family Discount:

Each additional family member of a full paying student will receive a 10% discount off the regular monthly tuition rate.

### Late Fees:

If payment is not received by the due date, a \$10 late fee will be assessed. An additional fee of \$1 per day will be assessed for every day after the 5th on which payment is not received.

### Student Home Material Fees:

To ensure both the teacher's and student's success, each student is provided with instructional materials to use at home. Professionally prepared to the highest standards, these video, audio and print aids allow students to easily and effectively review some of the material presented in their lessons. Regardless of the student's age or experience, the Student Materials dramatically increase his or her results and playing satisfaction.

- Materials fees are collected in full shortly before the materials are ordered.
- Alternatively, new students may spread the cost of first-year materials evenly over a period of several months by agreeing to the terms of our level payment plan. Inquire at the office if you would like to learn more.

The cost of materials is as follows:

- \$46 for each Foundation Level (typically completed every three to four months)
- \$8 - \$29 for auxiliary programs (added periodically throughout the curriculum, usually 2 - 4 times per year)

### Individual Student Sessions

Occasionally a private session may be necessary. This may be scheduled with your teacher at a cost of \$30 per half-hour session.

## Private Lessons

Lessons are most effective in a shared lesson environment. However, private lessons can be arranged to accommodate special circumstances. Tuition for private lessons is \$150 per month for weekly lessons, or \$90 per month for biweekly lessons.

## Payment Options

Keys to Harmony accepts checks, cash, most major credit cards, and online payments through Intuit Payment Network. Cash and checks should be placed in the payment box located in the entry. Place cash in a sealed envelope with the student's name written clearly on the envelope. Credit or debit card payments may be made in the office, or online by accessing your online account (see "Accessing Your Online Account for instructions).

Current payment options are also provided on the Student Resources page at [keystoharmony.com](http://keystoharmony.com). Links are provided to your online account and to the Intuit Payment Network website.

## Accessing Your Online Account

From your online account you may:

- View your account detail
- Make a one-time payment using your debit or credit card
- Enroll in the recurring payment plan
  - If you opt for the recurring payment plan, your balance due will be automatically charged to your account during the last week of each month. You will be notified in advance of the balance via your e-mailed statement. A receipt for your automatic payment is immediately e-mailed to you.
- Update your physical address, e-mail addresses and phone numbers
- See your studio schedule

To access your online account:

1. Click "Access your online account" on the Student Resources page of our website (or go to <https://www.thestudiodirector.com/keystoharmony/register.jsp>)
2. Sign in using your main e-mail address on file. Select "Forgot your password?". An e-mail will be sent containing a link where you can set your password. You can change your password at any time by again selecting "Forgot your password?".
3. You may view your account detail by clicking "next" at the bottom of the screen.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The system we use to track charges and payments will show your account activity for the entire calendar year, including future recurring monthly charges. Find the current balance due in the Family Info box on the first screen or at the TOP of the second screen.

To make a payment from your online account:

1. Log in to your account.
2. Select "Next" at the bottom of the screen.
3. Select "Submit one-time payment" or "Enroll in the recurring payment plan".
4. Follow the remaining prompts.
5. A receipt is immediately sent to your e-mail address on file.

## Discontinuing Lessons

If you must discontinue lessons for any reason, we respectfully request a 30-day written notice. Tuition is due in full for this 30-day period, even if you opt not to attend your lessons.

## Referral Bonus

Keys to Harmony appreciates and acknowledges studio families who help our student body to grow by referring friends, family, coworkers, and acquaintances. You will receive \$50 cash for each referral, after they have paid for their second month of lessons. Bonuses are limited to \$50 per referred household (i.e. two siblings from the same family equals one \$50 bonus). However, you may earn as many bonuses as you wish by continuing to refer new families.

## Performances

Opportunities are available throughout the year for students to share their talents (for example, at an assisted living facility). This encourages students to excel, play with confidence and have a self-affirming experience as well as provide a much-appreciated service to the community.

Larger studio events are held once or twice annually to provide students with a different venue in which to share their talents. These are fun, informal events which demonstrate different ways in which piano-playing skills can be enjoyed. Parents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of at least two of these performance opportunities each year.

Separate events are scheduled for adult piano students who do not wish to participate in those opportunities with younger students.

Weekly classes also give students the opportunity to play for others, increasing their comfort and confidence levels, as well as providing a social setting in which to share music.



Our policies have been very carefully considered, and they are designed to afford Keys to Harmony the ability to operate as smoothly and efficiently as possible. In this environment we have the greatest freedom to share the gift of music with our students and to help them achieve the breakthrough results promised by the Simply Music program.

Feel free to contact me at any time with questions, comments, or concerns regarding your experience at Keys to Harmony.

Laurie Richards, Owner  
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Thank you!