
CAROLINE'S KEYS

What a term!

We wouldn't have expected a term like this at Christmas would we! I want to extend a huge thank you to each and every family who has made it possible for me to continue teaching over the last 4 months. Switching over to Zoom lessons was a very steep learning curve for me, and I know it was a bit bumpy in places for some of you too. I want to give a special shout out to my youngest students who managed to stick with the lessons on line - not being able to spend all of the time away from the bench like we do in face to face lessons has been really tough. Read on to see how I am hoping to open up the studio space very soon..... What a term!

Partial Studio Reopening

I plan to reopen the studio for in person lessons from Monday 6th July to **early years students only**. These students, ages 3-5, are the age group who are finding lessons via Zoom the most challenging and are missing out most on their music education.

I have put in place a risk assessment, following government guidelines for early years establishments, and educational meetings in the home, to allow the lessons to take place safely during the current pandemic.

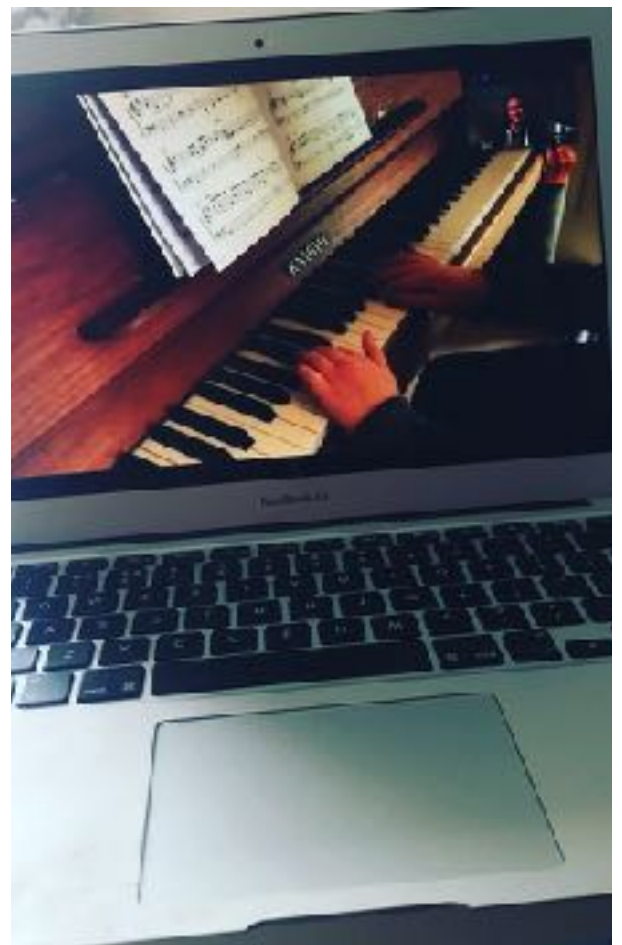
I will be asking all students to sanitise their hands before entering and leaving the house. I will keep the window open and will ensure rigorous cleaning of the teaching space between each student. In light of this your usual lesson time may not be available as I will have to space out students to prevent people waiting in the hallway between lessons and to allow time to clean the space between students.

Please arrive promptly at your agreed lesson time and be ready to collect your child at the end of the lesson.

I shall continue to produce digital lesson notes which will be emailed to you on the evening of your child's lesson.

Bathroom facilities will be available and cleaned after each use, but where possible, please ensure that your child has used the bathroom before the lesson to minimise the chance of a bathroom break being required.

All soft furnishings have been removed from the teaching space to enable thorough and efficient cleaning - please ensure that your child doesn't bring toys with them to their lesson. Any toys/ game pieces used within lessons will be those which can be easily sanitised.



Where possible I shall maintain a 1m+ social distance from your child, however, I am mindful that for the children to get the most from their lessons we will be playing games together, and there may be times when I need to assist with hand positioning or location on the music, which will require me to be in closer proximity to your child. As per the government guidelines for early years teaching, I will not wear a mask during lessons, nor will I expect your child to wear a mask. I feel that a mask would inhibit the teacher, student relationship that you can build

If your child or anyone in your household displays any of the symptoms of COVID-19, please do not bring them to their lesson. Additionally, if symptoms develop within 14 days, please inform me so that the appropriate steps can be taken.

I will trial the partial reopening for my early years students for the remainder of this term and then review the possibility of opening more fully for lessons through the summer holidays.

Summer Lessons

The current term finishes on the 17th July and the Autumn term will restart on the 14th September. I will start lessons a week after schools restart to allow students to settle in to their new normal when they return to school. As this will be a very long period without lessons, I am planning to open up lesson slots on two half days per week through the summer holidays (minus a couple of weeks I will actually have off!). Lessons can be booked on a first come, first served basis through the My Music Staff portal. Simply navigate to the calendar within the portal, you can see the "open lesson" slots on the allotted days, click on the slot you would like and select "register". If you require reminders of your log in details - please let me know. You may just want a couple of lessons to "keep in touch" through the summer, or you may like lessons every week - I will be flexible through the holidays - please just book what you would like - lesson slots are open now.

Exam Preparation

Many of you have been working hard throughout this period on exam pieces and were close to being ready for an exam at the start of the lockdown period. I am so proud of each one of my students for not letting the pandemic make them lose focus on driving forward with exam preparation. There is a new syllabus being released next week for the ABRSM piano exams, including a new "initial" grade. I shall be chatting to each student individually regarding the next step with practical and theory exams. ABRSM is also currently rolling out the option to sit theory exams online - I have quite a few questions around the practicalities of these exams at the moment but once I have all of these answers, I will update you again on how this process will work.



Piano Tuning

I am very pleased to say that Suzanne Ward is working again and I am very much looking forward to getting my piano tuned post lockdown! I try to get the piano tuned every 6 months to keep it right on tone. Typically a change in the weather can cause the tuning to slip a little so all of this hot then damp weather is playing havoc with the tuning. If any of you feel that your pianos need a little tune up or for any maintenance, I can highly recommend Suzanne. Her contact details are 07510111201 or suzannewardtune67@gmail.com.

