



Mr. Alvin

Piano Studio Parent Handbook & Policies

Meet Your Instructor

For years, my piano students have simply called me ***Mr. Alvin***, and I invite your family to do the same. I began studying piano at the age of six and received over ten years of private classical piano instruction. Later, I studied jazz improvisation with the renowned **John Lewis**, pianist and musical director of the ***Modern Jazz Quartet***, whose influence helped shape my approach to performance and musicianship.

For more than 25 years, I have served in music leadership, directing choirs, vocal ensembles, bands, orchestras, and church worship teams. I have recorded four albums, three of which were live, and one of my original compositions appeared on an internationally distributed recording project that has sold more than one million copies worldwide.

I hold a *Master of Arts* degree in *Organizational Leadership*, am a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), and am fluent in both English and Spanish, offering piano instruction in either language.

Teaching is one of my greatest passions. I have taught 20 - 25 weekly piano students each year, from beginner through intermediate levels, helping each develop strong musical foundations, technical skills, and a lifelong appreciation for music. ***My goal is to provide every student with a positive, encouraging learning experience while inspiring confidence, creativity, and a love for the piano.***

This handbook explains the policies that help our studio operate smoothly and ensure every student receives the highest quality instruction. Enrollment in the Music Studio signifies that the parent or legal guardian has read, understands, and agrees to these policies.

1. Teaching Methods

Piano Students (Ages 5–12)

Beginning piano students between the ages of **5 and 12** generally begin with Alfred's ***Music for Little Mozarts***, followed by Faber's ***Piano Adventures*** curriculum. All students receive music theory instruction through the ***Theory Time*** curriculum. Each of these are a graded series from beginner to advanced. These nationally recognized methods provide a comprehensive foundation in:

- Piano technique
- Music reading
- Music theory
- Rhythm
- Ear training
- Performance skills

The curriculum is designed to develop students into confident, well-rounded musicians while making learning enjoyable and engaging.

Improvisation

Once students demonstrate a solid understanding of music theory and basic technique, instruction expands into:

- Chord structures
- Ear training
- Improvisation
- Creative musical expression

Developing these skills allows students to become more independent musicians and performers.

Jazz Studies

Basic jazz concepts are introduced through the *Faber Piano Adventures* and Hal Leonard methods.

Students wishing to pursue jazz more extensively may receive additional instructions in:

- Jazz harmony
- Jazz standards

- Chord voicings
 - Jazz improvisation
-

Songwriting & Composition

Many students desire to compose their own music.

Once a student has developed a solid understanding of music theory and harmony, composition and songwriting are strongly encouraged as part of their musical development.

Broadway & Accompanying

Students interested in Broadway musicals, accompanying singers, or collaborative piano may pursue these styles after developing several years of foundational study.

Historical Music Styles

To provide a complete musical education, students study music from every major historical period, including:

- Baroque
- Classical
- Romantic
- Twentieth Century
- Twenty-First Century
- Contemporary styles

While students naturally develop personal musical preferences, exposure to every historical period is an important part of becoming a well-rounded musician.

2. Practice Expectations

Consistent practice is the single greatest factor in a student's musical success.

We understand that today's families have busy schedules. Rather than requiring every student to practice the same amount of time per day, we encourage intentional, goal-oriented practice and practicing pieces 'x' number of times per day versus a length of time.

Be Intentional

Students should establish consistent practice times throughout the week whenever possible.

Practicing at least **three days each week** is strongly encouraged.

Set Weekly Goals

Teachers and students work together to establish weekly practice goals structured upon the student's ability:

- Age
- Ability
- Experience
- School schedule
- Extracurricular activities

Weekly assignments may include:

- One scale each week
- Theory assignments
- Specific lesson measures
- Memorization
- Review assignments
- New repertoire

I will adjust weekly expectations according to each student's schedule.

Students with lighter weekly commitments may receive larger assignments, while students with particularly busy weeks may receive reduced assignments to ensure music remains enjoyable while maintaining steady progress.

3. Recitals

Performance is an essential part of musical education. Performance opportunities will be made available to the student.

Competitions

Students seeking additional musical challenges may participate in competitions.

Competition participation is entirely optional.

Registration fees vary depending upon the competition and are the responsibility of the student's family.

4. Attendance, Cancellations & Make-Up Lessons

Our goal is to maintain flexibility while respecting the time commitments of every student and teacher.

Student Cancellations

Students must provide **at least 24 hours' notice** to cancel a lesson.

Notifications may be made by:

- Phone
- Text message
- Voicemail
- Email

Lessons cancelled with at least 24 hours' notice qualify for a make-up lesson.

Missed Lessons

The following lessons are considered forfeited:

- Lessons cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice
- No-show appointments
- Failure to notify the teacher

No refunds or credits are issued for unused or cancelled lessons.

The fastest way to notify our Piano Studio of a cancellation is by phone or text.

Teacher Cancellation

If an instructor must cancel a lesson, the Piano Studio will either:

- Schedule a make-up lesson, or
- Provide a qualified substitute teacher.

Illness Policy

Students should not attend lessons if they:

- Have had a fever within the previous 24 hours;
- Have been unable to attend school or work because of illness; or
- Have a contagious illness.

When appropriate, students may receive an online lesson or a make-up lesson.

Make-Up Lessons

Lessons cancelled with proper notice will receive one make-up lesson scheduled at a mutually agreeable time.

Whenever possible, make-up lessons are scheduled:

- On another day during the week; or
- Immediately before or after the student's regular lesson, creating an extended lesson.

The **Lesson Mate** platform is available as a make-up lesson option when appropriate.

5. Tuition, Payments & Late Fees

Tuition is based upon the total number of weekly lessons reserved for the student or family. Tuition is for one-month increments ... **NOT** per lesson.

Monthly Tuition

One 30-minute lesson per week: **\$180 / month**

Two 30-minute lessons per week (*or one 60-minute lesson*): **\$340 / month**

Three 30-minute lessons per week: **\$500 / month**

Four 30-minute lessons per week (*or two 60-minute lessons*): **\$680 / month**

Each additional 30-minute lesson: **\$160 / month**

Payment Schedule

Monthly invoices are issued on the **20th** of each month.

Payment is due by the **last day of the month** as prepayment for the following month's lessons.

Automatic payment through Square is strongly encouraged.

Families needing an alternate billing date should notify the studio so invoices may be adjusted accordingly.

Late Payments

Accounts remaining unpaid for **30 days** may result in:

- Suspension of lessons;
- Loss of the students' reserved lesson time; and
- Removal from the studio.

Students may re-enroll once their account has been brought current, subject to studio time availability.

6. Withdrawal Policy

Parents wishing to discontinue lessons must submit written notice before the **20th of the month preceding withdrawal.**

Example:

If written notice is submitted on **September 25**, October tuition remains due because notice was received after the September 20 deadline.

Failure to provide timely written notice does not release the parent or guardian from financial responsibility for the following month's tuition.

7. Summer Lessons

We strongly encourage students to continue lessons throughout the summer.

Taking an extended break often results in:

- Loss of muscle memory
- Regression in technique
- Reduced musical momentum

Summer also provides a more relaxed atmosphere where teachers and students can explore:

- Improvisation
- Contemporary music
- Radio favorites
- Composition
- Other musical interests

Recognizing that many families travel during the summer, the Piano Studio offers flexible scheduling options.

Families may choose to:

- Combine weekly 30-minute lessons into a 60-minute lesson every other week.
- Schedule two 30-minute lessons for one week instead of weekly lessons.
- Explore a reduced summer tuition option tailored to their family's availability.

8. Open Communication

We believe that open and respectful communication is essential to every student's success.

Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly with the Piano Studio regarding lesson scheduling, student progress, practice concerns, or any questions about studio policies.

Our instructors are committed to providing encouragement, constructive feedback, and guidance that helps every student achieve his or her musical goals. If concerns arise, we ask that parents contact the Piano Studio promptly so they can be addressed professionally and respectfully.

The Piano Studio also welcomes feedback from families as we continually strive to provide the highest quality music education.

9. Photo & Video Release

Throughout the year, the music studio may photograph or record students during lessons, recitals, workshops, or other studio sponsored events.

These photographs or videos may be used for educational purposes, recital presentations, promotional materials, printed publications, the Piano Studio website, or social media.

Student names will not be published with photographs unless separate written permission is granted by a parent or legal guardian.

If you do **not** wish for your child to be photographed or recorded, written notice must be submitted to the studio before participation in Piano Studio activities.

10. Inclement Weather Policy

The safety of our students and families is our highest priority.

Should severely weather or hazardous road conditions occur, the studio reserves the right to close or transition lessons to an online format.

Whenever possible, families will be notified as early as possible by phone, text, or email.

If the studio cancels lessons because of weather, students will receive either:

- An online lesson;
- A make-up lesson; or
- Another instructional option determined by the Piano Studio.

If a family chooses not to travel due to weather while the studio remains open, an online lesson may be provided when scheduling permits.

11. Technology During Lessons

To help students remain focused and receive the greatest benefit from each lesson, cell phones, smart watches, tablets, and other electronic devices should remain silent and put

away during instruction unless they are being used for an educational purpose approved by the teacher.

Parents are welcome to record short demonstrations during lessons with the teacher's permission for home practice purposes.

12. Tuition Reserves Your Lesson Time

Monthly tuition reserves your student's exclusive weekly lesson time and the instructor's preparation time.

Tuition is **not** based solely upon the number of lessons received in a particular month. Rather, it guarantees your students' reserved place in the Piano Studio's teaching schedule.

Because lesson time is reserved exclusively for your student, tuition remains the same regardless of holidays, occasional absences, or the number of weeks in a calendar month.

13. Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Demonstrate a positive attitude, a willingness to learn, arrive on time, and be prepared for each lesson.
- Have all required music books, assignments, and materials ready and on hand.
- Complete weekly practice assignments to the best of their ability.
- Demonstrate respect toward instructors, fellow students, Academy property, and musical equipment.

Repeated disruptive or disrespectful behavior may result in dismissal from the studio.

14. Parent Responsibilities

Parents play an important role in their child's musical development.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Ensure their students arrive on time for lessons.
- Provide a quiet environment for home practice.

- Encourage consistent weekly practice.
- Review teacher assignments and progress.
- Notify the Academy promptly regarding absences or scheduling conflicts.
- Maintain a current payment account.

For younger students, parental involvement at home significantly contributes to long-term success.

15. Liability & Supervision

The studio in your home is committed to providing a safe learning environment.

Parents or guardians remain responsible for their child before the lesson begins and immediately after the lesson concludes.

The studio in your home instructors is not responsible for students who remain after their scheduled lesson ends.

Families are responsible for any damage caused by students to studio property resulting from intentional misuse or negligence.

16. Right to Refuse or Discontinue Instruction

Mr. Alvin's Piano Studio reserves the right to suspend or discontinue lessons for any student when, in the Academy's sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the student, instructor, or Academy community.

Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated failure to pay tuition.
- Excessive absences or no-shows.
- Repeated failure to comply with Music Studio policies.
- Disruptive, disrespectful, abusive, or unsafe behavior by a student or parent.
- Conduct that interferes with the learning environment.

Whenever possible, concerns will be discussed with the family before dismissal becomes necessary.

17. Policy Revisions

Mr. Alvin's Piano Studio reserves the right to modify or update its policies, tuition, fees, lesson schedules, and procedures at any time.

Families will receive reasonable advance notice of any significant changes before they become effective.

Continued enrollment after such notice constitutes acceptance of the revised policies.

I acknowledge that I have carefully read this Parent Handbook and understand the Piano Studio's policies.

I understand and agree with:

- Monthly invoices are issued on the 20th of each month.
- Tuition is due on the last day of each month as prepayment for the following month's lessons.
- Unpaid accounts may result in withdrawal from the Piano Studio. Students may re-enroll after 30 days, subject to availability.
- Lessons cancelled without at least 24 hours' notice are forfeited.
- No-show appointments are forfeited.
- Two no-shows within one semester may result in dismissal from the studio.
- By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the Piano Studio Parent Handbook in its entirety and understand the policies contained within.
- I agree to comply with all Studio policies regarding tuition, attendance, make-up lessons, performances, summer scheduling, communication, and student expectations.
- I understand that enrollment reserves a weekly lesson time and that tuition is paid monthly to maintain that reservation.
- I further acknowledge that the Piano Studio may periodically revise its policies and that continued enrollment constitutes acceptance of those revisions.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all Academy policies and procedures.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed):

Student Name:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: _____