



Online Learning Policy:

Remote Vocal & Instrumental Teaching (Video-Lessons)

Statement

In order to provide continuity of service for our young people in the London Borough of Merton, Merton Music Foundation will support the delivery of video-lessons online during the period of social distancing in lieu of face-to-face lessons.

MMF tutors will use Zoom Conferencing to deliver live video-lessons via the internet.

Terms & Conditions

Merton Music Foundation's normal [Terms and Conditions](#) apply. Parents/Guardians can book lessons via: www.mmf.org.uk

Safeguarding

Just as in a face-to-face lesson, MMF's safeguarding policy and procedures still apply when teaching/learning online.

MMF's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Elisabeth Wigley (elisabeth.wigley@mmf.org.uk). Any concerns about the health and wellbeing of pupils must be communicated to her immediately.

Our full safeguarding policy is available to read here: www.mmf.org.uk/policies

A one-page summary of the key points for tutors, parents and guardians is available here: www.mmf.org.uk/policies

Technical Information

MMF recommends the use of the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. **All MMF e-lessons must take place via the Zoom platform** in order to ensure safeguarding protocols are specific to the functions of the software and to allow for greater technical support to tutors, parents and guardians. There is no cost to use the Zoom 'Basic' package for either parents/guardians or tutors, although tutors may choose to upgrade to a 'Pro' account at their own expense.

The use of laptop/desktop is preferable due to improved functionality and security. However, in order to increase accessibility for all teachers and learners, it is possible for lessons to be facilitated on mobile devices via the Zoom app. In this case, additional precautions must be taken including ensuring that the tablet/phone is mounted on a stand or table and not hand-held; to avoid the accidental sharing of private or confidential data/images.

Online Learning Code of Conduct: Mandatory Guidance

- All video lessons must be arranged with the full knowledge and consent of an adult responsible for any participants under the age of 18. MMF tutors must only initiate video-lessons via the email address of a named adult with parental responsibility for their pupils. Where parental consent has been obtained, it is permissible for the pupils over the age of 16 to schedule their lessons directly with the tutor via email only if the pupil uses a dedicated email account that the parent/guardian maintains shared access to.
- Before the start of the first video-lesson MMF tutors must ensure that a parent/guardian has read and agreed to MMF's Online Learning Consent Form.
- When creating an e-lesson on Zoom and inviting parents/guardians via email, tutors must also cc: e-learning@mmf.org.uk and include the date/time of the lesson.
- MMF staff will continue to observe lessons digitally for the purposes of quality assurance and safeguarding.
- MMF tutors will be required to use a dedicated professional email account (e.g. john.smith.teaching@gmail.com) for all communications regarding the scheduling of lessons and for initiating lessons via Zoom or any other video-conferencing package. It is not admissible for tutors to use their own personal email accounts for this purpose. Therefore, tutors will need to create their Zoom account using their dedicated professional email address.
- All participants and all members of their household will be expected to wear suitable clothing at all times whilst the lesson is taking place.
- Language must always be professional and appropriate during video-lessons, including that of all other members of either household.
- Lessons must take place in an appropriate room in the home and wherever possible, not in the pupil's bedroom. It is recommended not to use the 'virtual background' function as this could be distracting from teaching and learning and may obscure the presence of other persons from view.
- All lessons must be supervised by an adult with parental responsibility for the pupil(s). Ideally the parent/guardian will remain in the room for the duration of the lesson, however this may not always be possible or desirable. As a minimum, the parent/guardian should remain in the general proximity throughout (e.g. by remaining in the building with the door to the teaching room being left open) and will ideally be present in the room at the beginning and end of the lesson. Alternatively, the parent/guardian could supervise the lesson digitally, by joining the Zoom conference on another device. In this case the adult must join the conference before the child. It may be preferable for the supervising adult to mute their microphone so as not to disrupt the lesson with background noise.

- Lessons should take place during reasonable working/learning hours. What is reasonable will be dependent on the age of the individual pupil concerned and a matter of negotiation between the parent/guardian and tutor. However, no MMF e-lessons are permitted to take place before 8am or after 8pm.
- Tutors must ensure that the teaching environment, both physical and digital (including desktop backgrounds and open tabs, software, documentation) are professional and neutral (e.g. family photos would be inappropriate).
- Extra-care must be taken by all parties to ensure that private or sensitive information and data is not accidentally shared during a video-lesson. Bills, receipts, documents (both physical and digital) and letters/emails should not be on display. All members of both households should be aware that the video-lesson is taking place and be mindful of this.
- To further prohibit the accidental sharing of private/confidential data/images, it is required that when lessons are delivered or received via a mobile device, such as a tablet or phone, the device is securely mounted on a stand or flat surface (not hand-held) before the video-lesson is due to start.
- Recording lessons is prohibited. Zoom can make video recordings of meetings/lessons. Whilst there are arguable benefits of doing this (quality, training, safeguarding), it is not permitted for either party to record lessons. This is because MMF can not ensure the security of the storage of these files or guarantee limitations of their future use.
- Tutors must not share their personal phone numbers with pupils or interact with pupils via social media, even for the purposes of sharing lesson content. Tutors and pupils must not 'friend' or 'follow' each other via social media accounts. Video-lessons are only permitted to take place via Zoom and not other webcam or video chat platforms.
- Zoom's chat feature may be used during lessons for the purposes of supporting pupil learning, however all content must be appropriate. The chat function may not be used outside of a scheduled lesson or for social purposes.

If at any time during or after a video-lesson the terms and practical measures set out in the Code of Conduct are not followed by either party, the lesson should be terminated and the reason for this communicated afterwards.

If parents/guardians, pupils and/or tutors breach the terms of this policy, MMF withholds the right to terminate their contract without further pay or cancel all remaining lessons without refund.

Scheduling Lessons

- MMF suggests that its tutors use Calendly to enable parents/guardians to book lessons at a convenient time, however this is not mandatory; arranging lesson times via email/text is equally valid.
- MMF maintains a 24-hour cancellation policy for all e-lessons; parents/guardians should notify their MMF tutor of any requested changes to a scheduled lesson time at least 24 hours in advance or forfeit the lesson.

Additional Clauses for Tutors:

- All video-lessons should be set up in advance with Zoom's 'Schedule' function and then emailing the 'meeting link' to parents/guardians before the lesson.
- It is not recommended to invite pupils to video-lessons using the 'invite' / 'contacts' functions as this is less secure.
- To ensure security, tutors must **password protect** video-lessons ('meetings') when scheduling them.
- To further ensure safety and privacy, all lessons should include the '**waiting room**' feature, meaning all participants must be admitted by the host (tutor). This will prevent the intrusion of uninvited participants.
- For groups/ensembles the meeting should be set up to include **host-only file and screen sharing** parameters to prevent the risk of 'Zoom-bombing'
- For added security, it is recommended that tutors 'lock' meetings once in progress – this stops any further participants joining

Ensembles/Groups

- It is recommended that chat function is set to host-only during ensemble/group zoom lessons.
- As is the case for individual lessons, all meetings must be password protected and have 'Waiting Room' enabled.
- Meeting links for ensembles/groups will be shared with parents via direct email from a member of the MMF core team or via the password protected E-Music Centre page of www.mmf.org.uk
- Parents/Guardians will only be granted access to the secure E-Music Centre page upon the completion of a Music Centre application.
- The use of the 'Breakout Rooms' function is permitted during ensemble/group rehearsals
- MMF recommends the deployment of an additional member of staff (other than the ensemble leader) to act as 'Zoom Technician' during large group/ensemble rehearsals to manage the participants of the meeting and oversee the Waiting Room.

Best Practice Guidance for Tutors:

- How to set-up/install Zoom: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=QsAYUq42vLI&feature=youtu.be>
- It is recommended to use headphones wherever practical for both tutor and pupil in order to minimise feedback
- Utilise the Zoom's 'Original Sound' feature to improve audio quality for music lessons: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50NoWIIYECA>
- It is not going to be possible to play simultaneously with pupils during Zoom lessons (e.g. for the purposes of accompanying) due to the lag inherent in this form of communication. Alternative approaches will be required, such as utilising backing tracks or pre-recording accompaniments and sending these to your pupils.
- Consideration will have to be made for how to approach teaching and learning in this environment, it may not for example be possible to see the pupil's music. Additional preparation and alternative approaches may be required (e.g. parents could email a jpg or photograph of the music in advance).
- For some instruments (e.g. piano/keyboard) it may be advantageous to have a two-camera set up (to show hand positions, for example). This can be achieved with a second webcam. It is possible to utilise a phone/tablet as a second webcam using an application such as EPOC Cam. Alternatively, tutors could invite themselves to the meeting and join on a second device, however care must then be taken to mute the microphone and speaker of this device to avoid feedback.
- The use of 'screen sharing' by the tutor could be a valuable pedagogical tool (for showing pupils notation, lyrics etc.). You are encouraged to use this feature, subject to the clauses of the Code of Conduct above. Use of Zoom's annotation feature could be an effective way of highlighting passages on a score to a pupil in the absence of being able to physically point at their music.

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