



Welcome to Bryden Keys

Hello, welcome to Bryden Keys, the gateway to unlocking your musical potential. Join me, Bryden, an experienced musician and teacher in gaining maximum impact in yours or your child's piano or electric keyboard lessons. Included in this welcome pack is information designed to make your music learning experience as enjoyable and valuable as possible. All programs are tailored to the needs of the individual and incorporate all the elements of current, best practice in learning music. I look forward to working with you in your musical journey!

What happens in lessons?

As all lessons are tailored to individual needs, lesson format will vary. However, usually lessons will incorporate reading music, playing by ear, technique building and interpretation depending on your level. I incorporate a tutor series with beginner or early level students (Bastien/Alfreds/John Thompson depending on individual student needs) and supplement this with other appropriate music to promote a well-rounded musical education.

With more advanced students who are working towards exams or completing WACE Music, the focus is on fulfilling the requirements of these while supplementing where needed.

With more advanced students wishing to focus on jazz music my approach is to incorporate some fully scored music with developing interpretation of lead sheets, more complex chords and improvisational skills.

Music theory (written) is an integral part of learning and this is usually incorporated into lessons. Once students reach a more intermediate level, a theory lesson can also be scheduled and I offer these in small groups. I will discuss this option as the need arises.

Parents are welcome to sit in on lessons as this assists in reinforcing concepts learned when practising at home. I have a comfortable teaching studio and am happy to discuss any needs you may have to maximise learning for yourself or your children.

What do I need to know about lesson times, costs and missed lessons?

Lessons are usually during the week or on a Saturday and I'm happy to organise a mutually suitable time with you. Usually lessons are scheduled once per week for 30 minutes (beginners) or 45-60 minutes (more advanced students).

Please contact me for costs.

Lessons are scheduled in and charged in blocks. I always make exceptions to this for the first lesson to make sure that everyone is comfortable, me included. I understand there are many competing financial demands these days and am more than happy to discuss individual situations. Please be aware that I plan my schedule around lessons each week so I ask that everyone is mindful of the difficulties that result from cancelled or missed lessons.

I am very flexible and understanding with time commitments and make every effort to accommodate changes to lesson times. As a general rule, missed lessons need to be paid for but I understand that sometimes things just happen so am happy to discuss this at any time. Sickness is unavoidable and none of us like having germs spread around (coughs etc.) so with some advanced notice I can change some lessons around and cater for this.

Do we need a real (acoustic) piano?

Everyone has different needs and it really depends on these. An acoustic piano is great and is best for learning correct tone production and developing aural skills. This can be a substantial investment and an 88 note (full sized) electric piano with weighted keys and touch sensitivity can be another good option. Using an electric keyboard can be ok for a while but for motivation and serious playing, I recommend an acoustic piano. Alternatively, some students specifically wish to learn the electric keyboard and utilise the functionality these provide and that is good but it's a different approach to learning. Sometimes parent may wish to see how their child is going before investing in an acoustic piano or electric piano. This is fine too but eventually the time will come when motivation will decrease without an acoustic or electric piano. I find that without a suitable instrument and home environment for practising, interest will decrease and students will stop lessons eventually.

There are many options for purchasing an instrument and I am happy to discuss options with you and help wherever possible.

What about group or individual lessons?

While lessons are individual, there are times when an opportunity arises for you or your child to participate in a group lesson. Group lessons (x2 or more students) can provide great motivation and opportunity to learn from one another. Piano duets and trios as well as accompanying other instruments are great ways of building teamwork and improving musical skills in an enjoyable way. I will discuss such opportunities this with you as they arise.

What music do I need to buy?

As there are strict laws and regulations regarding photocopies, music books will need to be purchased and can be added to your invoice if desired. On many occasions, I am able to purchase music and provide it to my students. I will discuss this with you as required prior to purchasing music.

As each student's lessons and learning program are individualised, I will provide advice on the best options with regards to music with you.

What do I need to know about practice?

Practice consolidates learning that takes place at lessons and is an important aspect of keeping up motivation. It is never intended to be arduous or excessive but simply regular.

Having a regular routine assists in progress. Progress is linked to motivation both for students and myself. Incentive systems are helpful for children and I can design these if you wish. I am happy to discuss individual practice needs with you.

Will I be filmed/photographed and can I film/photograph?

No photographs or videos of students will be used for promotional purposes without prior written permission.

I ask that lessons are not filmed or photographed without my permission. I am quite flexible with this and understand that it may assist with revising lesson concepts but is usually not necessary.

What can you tell me about performances/eisteddfods/exams?

Many performance and exam opportunities exist throughout each year and I will always discuss these options with you before enrolling in these. Also, signing up for these also needs to be completed by me. Depending on individual needs, I may encourage you to participate in performances, eisteddfods and exams but never demand this. Having something to work towards is beneficial to most students and provides for excellent motivation. Likewise, if you hear of opportunities in which you would like to participate, please feel free to discuss it with me and I will give you my professional advice. My experience with exams has been with AMEB and ANZCA but I am happy to explore other options according to your background and needs.

Do you accept feedback?

Yes - I welcome feedback. Please let me know what is working or if there are areas for improvement in my delivery of lessons. On occasions, I may ask you to complete a survey that can help me improve what I have to offer and make lessons as beneficial and enjoyable as possible.

Do you have an enrolment form?

I used to but don't use this anymore.

Can you administer medical treatment?

Absolutely, safety of children comes first at all times and I regularly update my First Aid Training. Please feel free to discuss with me any other medical needs and allergies you or your child have prior to the first lesson or as the need arises.