

## **Guidance for Online Learning** *for Parents, Carers, Students and Teachers*

We are delighted to be able to provide a package of support to our students through an online platform, in order to continue learning throughout the summer term.

The specific support provided will vary from one lesson to another, with all students having the opportunity to check in with their teacher on a weekly basis during the term. Video conferencing is the primary way in which we will be delivering lessons, through the video conferencing platform 'Zoom'. Lessons may be supported with additional resources being provided by email between sessions.

Information on Zoom can be found at [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) – you may wish to review their Privacy and Security documents.

In using Zoom individual lessons will continue to be on an individual basis and group lessons will continue to take place in groups (students will be able to see and hear the other students in their group).

### **Getting Set Up for Online Learning**

We understand that doing anything for the first time can be daunting and it will take time to adjust (for both students and teachers) - it may take a lesson or so to get used to this way of learning. We have put together some tips below in order to get the most out of your lessons.

#### **Zoom**

Your child's teacher will email an invitation with the time and date of the first lesson along with a link, ID number to access the lesson and password. At the agreed time, simply follow this link and you will be put into a 'waiting room' until the lesson commences. We'd really encourage you to try and 'zoom' people you know before lessons so you get an experience of what it is like. Chat, recording and screen-share will not to be used during zoom sessions .

#### **Computer, Tablet or Phone?**

The type of device you use for a video lesson doesn't really matter - you can use a computer with a webcam, a tablet computer, or even a smartphone. Whichever device you use will need a built in microphone, speaker and camera or the option to plug them in. The bigger the screen, the easier it will be for you to see the other person.

#### **Audio & Video**

Many microphones in devices are absolutely fine, however some may not pick up sound clearly / be very faint. Headsets and earphones with built in microphones may be an alternative however

headsets are designed primarily for the amplification of *voices* rather than instruments. So you may need to experiment to make sure that you have the right balance of sound - both for transmitting and receiving.

### **Internet connection**

For most people the internet connection should be fine for good quality video and audio. It is worth testing this with friends or family before starting the first lesson. If it seems slow there are several things you can try:

- Move your PC/device closer to the router (if you're far away the wi-fi signal isn't as strong) or use a network cable to connect your computer to the router
- Check that other people in the house aren't using the internet at the same time (e.g. streaming video or TV)
- Test the speed of the internet connection, for example, at <https://www.speedtest.net>
- If there is a temporary problem with your line, you can contact your service provider to ask them to check for faults on the line

Not everyone has a fast broadband internet connection, or good mobile data signal. This can result in lower video quality, but generally the sound will be prioritised so you should be able to hear the teacher and any other students in the group lesson.

### **How to get the most out of a lesson - setting up a space for learning**

Although homes may not have much "spare space" and may have other people around, it is helpful to think about where the learner is going to be and get things set up before each lesson. This should make it easier and safer to enjoy the lesson. The teacher will likely have other students after the end of each lesson, so being set up and ready on time means you can make the most of the time available.

The space should be somewhere:

- With room to play your instrument, and to set up your laptop/PC/phone
- Where you can focus, and that isn't noisy (e.g. not with a washing machine on, or a TV, or other people coming and going)
- Within earshot of a parent, carer or responsible adult (to help sort out practical difficulties, or if the internet connection drops, or if the learner is uncomfortable about anything)
- Appropriate - a place that you would invite teachers and other students into (definitely not a bedroom)

## Be Prepared!

Have everything you might need during a lesson ready *before* you start the connection. This way you can stay at your computer and be focused on the lesson, instead of having to interrupt the lesson to go and find items.

Examples of things that you may wish to have in easy reach of your computer screen include:

Instrument, Tuner, Stand, Music, Bottle of Water, Metronome, Pencil, Paper

Remember that if you are using **earphones** or a **headset**, then you will need to make sure that everything is within arm's reach, so that you don't have to interrupt the lesson in order to retrieve something!

## Latency (delay)

This depends on many circumstances however it can be common to have some delays in the audio / visual. If this is due to the bandwidth of your internet connection, then there's very little that you can do about this. So instead, you need to be prepared to adjust your communication style to accommodate the delay.

## Setting up camera positions:

Make sure that you plan ahead... you don't need to have a tripod; propping up devices (so they remain secure) is OK. You'll just need to think about what a student / teacher needs to see e.g. your hold of the instrument, the keys etc. Remember to secure your device if it is propped up so it doesn't fall during the lesson.

- Is there enough light for both pupil / teacher to be seen clearly?
- Check what can be seen behind you on screen? Is there anything personal you do not want to be seen?

## Test, Test, Test!

For this reason, it's ALWAYS a good idea to test your setup before you start your actual lesson. If you can, try and connect with a friend via Zoom so that you can...

- Test the **audio levels**
- Test the **picture quality**
- Test the **video software** (and get used to how it works)
- Test the **device** that you're using

- ...and test anything else that you can think of!

Remember, an online lesson is **best when you test** first!

Students – this is a great opportunity to perform / give a concert to someone you may not see very often!

### Communication

When you're speaking through a screen, especially if the screen is small, you will need to make sure that all your gestures are clear. Sometimes you will need to slightly exaggerate your movements if you are speaking or demonstrating something. But don't become self-conscious; you shouldn't especially change how you are playing the violin for example just because you are using a webcam.

### Language & Speech

Try always to **speak clearly and slowly** when using a webcam for a lesson. Remember that **latency** (time lag) can mean that you have to wait for the other person to finish speaking in order to make your point.

If you're not used to this time delay, speaking can seem stilted and awkward at first. But if you just imagine that you're communicating through a walkie-talkie system (when one person would usually have to say the word 'over' to indicate that they have finished speaking) then actually it becomes really easy!

### Staying safe online - treating the lessons in the same way you would if you were in school

There are some other things to think about as lessons will be taking place in the informal space of people's homes rather than in the more "professional" setting of a school. It is important for the learning experience and for learners' safety that the same behaviour is expected in online lessons that would be expected at school.

### Responsible behaviour and dress

To help make lessons safe and enjoyable, a parent or carer should be within earshot of the student taking part in the online lesson. Just as in a school or other face-to-face lesson, learners are asked to:

- Dress appropriately (e.g. not wear pyjamas). Students are courteously asked to wear clothing that would normally be worn in public
- Follow the teacher's instructions

- Not take phone calls, message others, or use devices that aren't requested by the teacher for learning
- Not take screenshots or record video of sessions (as in schools, written permissions are needed to take photos or video)

In a group lesson the background behind the learner will be visible to the teacher and other students. So it is good to make sure:

- That you try and have a neutral background that doesn't show any personal information (e.g. screens with social media profiles), or personal items (e.g. laundry drying)
- Doesn't have anything that might offend others (e.g. posters with inappropriate language)
- That there isn't a TV/screen showing in the background where there's a risk of age-inappropriate content showing

#### **If the student / parent has any concerns....**

A parent/carer or responsible adult should be within earshot of the child during the online lesson. Students should be told that if they have any concerns before, during, or after a lesson they should ask the parent/carer for help.

This could include for example:

- Technical issues with the computer or internet connection
- Practical issues, such as arranging the appropriate space to play their instrument
- Other issues, such as not being comfortable with what is happening in a lesson
- Tuning of, or problems with the instrument.

The parent/carer should be aware that the reporting of any safeguarding concerns is the same as under JMS's Safeguarding Policy (just as it would be in face-to-face lessons in schools). Any concerns can be addressed to JMS's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Katy Parker [k.parker@music.sch.je](mailto:k.parker@music.sch.je)

#### **And if the teacher has any concerns....**

If the teacher feels the student hasn't followed the kinds of behaviour expected in a school environment, in spite of prompting, or is concerned about something (inappropriate dress or language, for example), the teacher will stop the session for that learner, and then contact the parent or carer later to explain to help resolve any issues.

## What we expect of parents or guardians, and their involvement in lessons

Having the support of a parent/carer is one of the key factors in young people's musical development and it is only natural that they may want to be involved and see what is happening in the lesson too.

Support from a parent or carer in setting up the lesson is often needed and being within earshot for children in Year 8 and below is important for safety as well as for practical help. Parents are expected to be present at the start and end of lessons wherever possible, particularly for younger children. This helps teachers make sure everything is OK and ready to go at the start, and so parents/carers know at the end of each session about plans for practice and the next lesson.

The level of involvement of the adult during the lesson will depend on the age of the student. Younger children may need a person in the room to help keep them focused and safe, particularly if it's a new activity, but too much parental involvement can also be distracting or cause shyness with older students. In general it is recommended that after the first few lessons, the parent/carer is within earshot but not "in the lesson" particularly with older students, wherever possible.

Please ensure you have read the accompanying document *JMS Safeguarding for Online Learning* prior to the first online session

Please note that we do anticipate some technical challenges, despite this, our teachers will be aiming to give the best possible service during this unprecedented time. We thank you for your understanding.