



2017-18

STUDENT HANDBOOK

206-526-8443 | www.mcnw.org
901 N 96th Street, Seattle

Music Center of the Northwest is a non-profit community music school located in North Seattle. We believe in the transformative power of music in the lives of people and our community. With a commitment to music education and live performance, Music Center provides access to exceptional musical experiences for people of all ages and abilities.

Music and the performing arts connect people with their culture through a common language, crossing generational, social, and ethnic barriers. Music Center's programs permanently enrich the lives of our students through our commitment to personal development and performance excellence. Our classes, groups, and lessons provide joy for the participants and entertainment to our local community. A structured and positive learning environment for people of all ages instills a lifelong joy of making music, and our programs are available to everyone, regardless of financial status.

Your decision to join us creates a partnership that we take seriously, and our faculty stands ready to help you attain your musical goals. A dedicated and unified group of volunteers, community leaders, and professional staff guides the direction of Music Center, working in close harmony with the participants to maintain a proud and responsible organization. Their support is the cornerstone of our success, and we rely on it to bring our mission of "music for all" to the community.

To get the most from your Music Center experience, we recommend that you interact with other students who are a part of our musical family. We regularly hold student recitals, and also offer ensembles for strings, voice, and winds. You can even create your own ensembles with other students, and faculty members are available for those who want professional coaching.

We are excited and honored to be a part of your musical journey.

When you or your child register as a student, you are agreeing to abide by the policies of Music Center of the Northwest. The purpose of this handbook is to reflect the prevailing policies and procedures of Music Center of the Northwest that, along with the bylaws, govern the conduct of all Music Center activities.

Administration

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Founded in 1989, Music Center of the Northwest is a member of the National Guild for Community Arts Education, the Suzuki Association of America, an Associate Member of the Washington Education Association and a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION POLICIES

Private Music Lessons

There are many benefits to taking private lessons at Music Center of the Northwest. Through one-on-one study, a music student receives complete attention in their lesson, without the distractions or any other problems that can interfere with paying attention to the teacher. However, beyond the weekly repetition of being asked to perform tasks, listen, and answer questions is the great strength of private lessons; the student is working with a teacher/mentor who helps guide their musical life. This is how “the fun of learning and the joy of accomplishment” takes shape, through a method that has been used for centuries. Students work individually with a teacher to develop their musical skills to their fullest potential while honing those skills in large ensembles under the direction of a conductor and in small ensembles where you work democratically with other members of the group to create music. And it means that your teacher’s work with you goes beyond the 30 to 60 minutes you are in your lesson each week. It includes organizing recitals and performances, preparing repertoire, and many other activities designed to help each student gain the skills and enthusiasm that leads to lifelong involvement in music.

TUITION IS FOR ENROLLMENT, NOT JUST ATTENDANCE AT LESSONS AND REHEARSALS.

When you register for lessons at Music Center of the Northwest, the lesson time agreed upon by teacher and student/parent is a mutual commitment. It is a contract stating that you have reserved your teacher’s time at that specific time period each week. Students gain the highest benefits from their lessons when they attend each lesson.

The academic year runs from September through June and includes a total of 38 lessons. Payment plan options are available. Tuition for lessons is prorated for those who start after the beginning of the year. For summer session (July and August) students may sign up for a predetermined number of lessons at the regular lesson rate. A student may arrange for single lessons with the permission of the teacher and Music Center. Faculty members are not required to accept students wishing to pay per lesson or wishing to take single lessons. Discounts are given for additional family members taking individual lessons (Discounts do not apply to Single Lesson students.)

Attendance and Absences

Students are charged for all lessons they schedule with the teacher, including those missed due to student absence (vacation, field trips, school music obligations, sports, illness, etc.). Music Center recognizes the complexity of trying to juggle the many activities which we value for our children and that it is a parent’s responsibility to decide what takes priority. Music Center has a no-makeup policy, however, it may be possible to reschedule a missed lesson. Rescheduling is subject to teacher availability and is NOT guaranteed. Please be sure to speak with your teacher about how they incorporate this policy in their studio. If you must miss a lesson (especially for illness) you should stay in contact with your teacher for additional assignments or practice ideas. Any lesson missed due to teacher absence or inclement weather will be made up or refunded at the end of a term. No credits or refunds will be given for student absences.

Discontinuing Lessons

If it is necessary for a student to stop taking lessons, students/parents should pick up a Withdrawal Form at the office, fill it out, get the teacher’s signature, and return it to the office. Verbal notification of intent to withdraw is not sufficient. This must be done one month (four weeks) in advance of withdrawal in order to receive any refund for the remainder of the year (or to stop the automatic withdrawals). No refunds will be given for those students withdrawing from lessons during the last four weeks of the year. If a Tuition Assistance recipient withdraws from lessons, the amount paid will be applied before assistance to determine the final balance.

Students may, with faculty permission take a leave of absence from lessons due to extended illness, bereavement, or long-term travel, lasting longer than 4 weeks in a single term. During a leave of absence, tuition charges will be suspended until you are able to return; however, your instructor may not be able to “hold” your lesson date and time open for you until your return. We will make every effort to resume lessons after a leave of absence at an acceptable scheduled time. Please make a request for a leave of absence in writing to the Music Center office.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$75 is charged for students (per family) participating in private lessons.

GENERAL POLICIES

Classes, Ensembles and Workshops

Classes, ensembles and workshops take place throughout the year and rates vary depending on their length and duration. Specific information is available on our website, mcnw.org. Fees are due in full at the time of registration. Students who withdraw from a class or ensemble, one week or more before the first class, will receive a full refund, before the second class, 50%. No refunds will be given after the second meeting. Students withdrawing from workshops by the registration deadline will receive a full refund. No refunds are made after the registration deadline, and all refunds are subject to a \$15 drop fee. If a class is canceled by Music Center, students receive a full refund.

Tuition Assistance

Fees owed to Music Center of the Northwest may be reduced by participation in our Tuition Assistance Program. To apply, complete and return a Tuition Assistance form. Please request what you need, without embarrassment, but please pay what you are reasonably able. Our desire is to make musical study and participation available to all who sincerely want to pursue it, regardless of their financial status. Students who receive financial assistance must take their involvement seriously, maintain regular attendance, and make satisfactory progress (based on teacher evaluation). Assistance will be suspended if four (4) or more lessons or classes are missed due to student absence in a given school year. Tuition Assistance awards are for either one class/ensemble or for 30-minute lessons.

Inclement Weather

We are committed to remaining open whenever possible, but the safety of our students is our foremost concern. In general, Music Center of the Northwest follows the same emergency weather closure procedures as the Seattle Public Schools. In the event that the school is closed, a recorded message will be available on the Music Center phone line (206) 526-8443, posted on the website mcnw.org, and sent to all students via email (if possible).

Animals

With the exception of service animals, no animals are allowed inside the building without permission of Music Center staff.

Photographs and Recordings

Music Center of the Northwest uses photographs and recordings of school sponsored functions involving students in its publications, brochures, and website. If you prefer not to be included, please notify the office with a written notice. Verbal notices are not accepted.

Personal Property Liability

Music Center of the Northwest does not assume liability for personal property, including musical instruments used in lessons, classes, ensembles, workshops or other school sponsored activities. All students are encouraged to check with their personal insurance carrier to cover theft or damage.

Discounts

All discounts must be used during the current year and are non-transferable.

Private Lesson "Second Student" Discount: Families with more than one student registered for music lessons may take a discount of 5% for the second student and 10% for subsequent students. The 5% discount will be taken from the smallest tuition and the 10% from the next smallest. All students must register at the same time for the family discount to apply.

Music Together® Bring a Friend Discount: When a current Music Together family refers a new family to a Music Together class both will receive a \$25 discount on their tuition.

Refer a Friend Private Lesson Credit: Current students are given a \$50 credit when they refer a friend (not immediate family) who registers for full-year lessons.

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY MODEL

At Music Center of the Northwest, we strive to help students take part in every aspect of the music-making process. For us, this means working in these four key components to music education:

Performance

Students can share their progress and develop performance skills through concerts at Music Center and beyond. Music Center recitals and concerts also give students a chance to hone their listening skills and hear students, faculty and other musicians perform. Students are also invited to audition for the annual Honors Recital.

Theory/musicianship

These classes offer a deeper understanding of how music works and help students with rhythm, ear training, reading, composition & performance skills.

Ensembles

Complementing instrumental and voice lessons, ensembles give students the opportunity to make music with others. Students learn to follow the direction a conductor/director, or work democratically in a chamber group setting.

Private Lessons

The foundation of instruction, private lessons provide guidance through the process of learning to play or sing. Designed to nurture individual talent, lessons help students learn how to practice, develop technical skill, improve musicianship, and gain a knowledge of and appreciation for musical works.