

Terms and Conditions

Slough Music Service (SMS) offers instrumental tuition in school on the following basis:

For the purposes of this agreement a 'term' refers to a three term academic year: autumn, spring and summer.

Teaching

Individual Lessons are offered for 20 minutes or 30 minutes duration.

Group lessons are offered in groups of 2 to 7 pupils. The duration of the lesson varies according to the number of pupils in the group:

2 pupils - 20 minute lessons

3 to 4 pupils - 30 minute lessons

5 to 7 pupils - 45 minute lessons

SMS guarantees to deliver 30 lessons during the academic year, averaging 10 lessons per term. Where possible we aim to deliver 33 lessons in the academic year. SMS will decide appropriate grouping of pupils, depending on the number of pupils requiring lessons and their standard of playing – lessons are usually offered in the largest group available.

Cost of lessons

Please see our website or contact the music service for current fees and details about assistance for low-income families. Fees are payable one term in advance and will be invoiced termly. SMS reserve the right to add an administrative charge of £10 per term for late payment to cover the cost of debt management. Fees are reviewed annually in September. Any changes will be notified one half term in advance.

Assistance with fees

We can offer reduced lesson fees for pupils who are registered at their school as eligible for free school meals or where the family income is less than £25,000. Please see our remissions policy or contact the music service for full details about eligibility and how to claim.

Our bursary fund is limited, and will be available whilst funds last. Pupils receiving bursaries will be monitored termly for attendance and commitment.

Where a pupil is not attending regularly or showing sufficient commitment, the bursary may be withdrawn. In the event a claim for assistance is found to be ineligible, backdated full fees will be charged. Parents/Carers are responsible for informing SMS immediately if they are no longer eligible.

Missed lessons/Refunds

SMS will undertake where possible to inform parents/carers if attendance or progress is unsatisfactory, however parents/carers are ultimately responsible for monitoring their child.

SMS will not refund missed lessons where:

The pupil has failed to arrive for their lesson.

The pupil is not available for any reason – eg illness, school trip, appointment elsewhere, school closure etc. SMS will make every effort to reschedule lessons where possible but cannot guarantee to do so.

SMS will refund / make up lessons where:

The teacher is unavailable

If a pupil is away from school for more than 5 consecutive weeks in a term due to long-term illness, SMS will make every effort to refund up to one half term of tuition fees (doctors' certificate will be requested).

Refunds will only be made at the end of the academic year, once the opportunity has been given to make up for missed lessons by the teacher. In the event the pupil withdraws from lesson during the year, a pro-rata refund will be given for the number of lessons undelivered by the teacher.

Timing of lessons

Lessons take place in school during lesson/break time, as agreed between the instrumental teacher and the school. A timetable of lessons will be displayed in the school, and pupils are responsible for making their own way to the lesson room for the advertised start of the lesson.

Commencing lessons

Pupils will be allocated to a group as soon as possible. The availability of a teacher cannot be guaranteed, especially where a teacher is not currently available on the requested instrument at the school. Where a pupil commences tuition in the middle of a term, tuition will be charged pro rata according to the number of lessons remaining in the term. Instrument hire will be charged for the full term. It is assumed a pupil will continue with lessons until written notice of withdrawal is given.

Withdrawing from lessons

Lessons are booked one term in advance, and are assumed they will continue until written notice is given to SMS by the parent/carer. Notice of withdrawal must not be sent to the teacher or school. If a pupil wishes to withdraw from lessons, then notice must be given by the first day after the half term holiday to end lessons at the end of the term (e.g. first day after the autumn half term holiday to discontinue lessons in January). Fees must be paid up until the end of the term.

Additional costs

Pupils will need tutor books for their lessons. Parents/carers are responsible for purchasing books promptly at the request of the teacher. Other costs, such as entry for examinations (which are not compulsory) will also be charged to the parent/carer.

Pupils' responsibility

Pupils make a commitment to attend all lessons and to prepare for lessons by practicing at home every day. Pupils are required to make their own way to the lesson and to be punctual.

Instrument hire

Instruments are offered for hire subject to availability, and normally only for the first year of tuition.

Instruments are issued with guidance for their care and maintenance. The hirer is responsible for ensuring all persons coming into contact with the instrument are suitably instructed.

The hirer is advised to list the instrument against loss or damage under an 'all risks' policy, usually available as part of a contents insurance policy. The replacement cost of the hired instrument is listed on the inventory issued at the start of the hire.

All fees and other charges will be invoiced directly to the hirer, and must be paid within 14 days. SMS reserve the right to make an administration charge of £10 per term for late payment, and charge the full replacement cost for instruments which cannot be recovered.

The hirer is responsible for the purchase of consumable items – e.g. strings, rosin, reeds, lubricants etc

In the event of damage, accident or loss of the instrument(s), SMS must be informed immediately. If an instrument requires repair or replacement, SMS will make arrangements as necessary. Under no circumstances should the hirer carry out or arrange repair to any instrument.

The hirer is liable for the cost of all repairs and/or replacement.

At the end of the hire period the instrument and all accessories must be returned promptly.

Instruments must be collected and returned directly to SMS, not a school or teacher unless by prior agreement with SMS. Hire fees will be payable until the instrument has been returned to SMS.

Parents/Carers wishing to buy their own instrument are advised to consult their instrumental teacher first for advice.