

# Welcome to Hanford's Piano Studio

Handbook

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# Foreword

Greetings, future friend!

I'm thrilled to share that exciting changes are on the horizon for 2024! The Piano Program is being reborn and reintroduced in Term 3, promising a journey of musical and personal growth like never before.

It has been 12 years since the beginning of my studio and it has been a privilege to work closely with both budding and experienced pianists, uncovering the secrets to fostering excellence along the way. Can you guess what's at the heart of this journey? It's the continuous nurturing of each student's natural talent, achieved through personalised lessons, encouraging feedback, creative exploration, and achievable goals tailored to their unique abilities and passions.

But let's delve deeper: how do we reignite self-discipline when comfort sets in? It's about shaking things up, introducing new challenges, drawing inspiration from role models, setting clear milestones, and, most importantly, celebrating every step forward.

Our success isn't just about techniques and strategies; it's about the power of collective effort. Picture the impact of fearless leadership, the support of a community of peers, and the unwavering love of parents and caregivers—these are the pillars that elevate us.

As fellow seekers of knowledge, we value evidence-backed approaches and the resilience gained through shared experiences. The Piano Program embodies my vision of attaining musical and personal greatness, nurturing talent, fostering self-discipline, and embracing love and care as guiding principles.

Together, let's embark on this journey where growth, support, and love intertwine to create a vibrant musical tapestry of excellence and fulfillment. Are you ready to make music and memories that will last a lifetime?

Best wishes,

Hanford

# Snapshot of Hanford's Pedagogy



# Background

As a child, I **worked** through my graded exams until one day, I **decided** that piano playing was what I wanted to become **great** at. I continued my **studies** and obtained a Bachelor of **Music** with Honours at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, as well as a Master of **Teaching** from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. Attaining **successes** like the Joan Earle Classical Prize (Monash) and USCI International Gold Award (Malaysia) helped fuel my desire to continue **improving** while **performing** with orchestras like the Monash Academy Orchestra (2018) and Australian International Opera Company (2016) **grew** my performance **confidence**. After more than a decade of teaching experience, I can **understand** and work with a **diverse** range of students and parents. Currently, I am the treasurer for the Victorian Music Teachers Association and the 2024 Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference.

## Connection

Developing **honest** and **respectful** relationships with my students and their families is **important**. These kinds of relationships allow me to have candid **conversations** with you and your child so that we can work **together** as a team to set and achieve **goals**, discuss and **share** concerns, and motivate each other to do our **best** work. Becoming a **part** of my studio means growing and **achieving** together.

## Why Learn?

Learning to play the piano greatly **supports** brain development and offers a multitude of benefits including **building** proprioceptive and abstract **thinking** ability, developing **discipline** for goal attainment, and gaining insight into a longstanding **culture** of sound, movement, and art. Moreover, it is very **enjoyable** to be able to play the piano!

## How We Progress

In-person **coaching** is the core component of learning to play the piano at my studio where a **rubric** is used to measure and guide improvement. During these **weekly** sessions, we focus on acquiring playing **technique** and **repertoire**. Additionally, there are group opportunities to pursue further **theory** knowledge, apply theory learning through **composition**, foster community with **digital concerts and games**, develop musical appreciation and independence with **concert excursions**, and grow performance confidence with **studio recitals**. A points-based rewards system encourages **engagement** and is my way of **reinvesting** into my students and their families.

# Piano Program

**\$1800 per term** (P-Plate to Diploma)

\*Enrolment can be shared by a pair of students

## Weekly 60-minute Coaching

Unlock your child's musical potential with our weekly coaching sessions, tailored to their individual needs and learning style. I use a comprehensive rubric to assess your child's progress, ensuring the provision of targeted feedback and personalised exercises that address their strengths and areas for improvement. Through regular coaching, your child will build confidence, master essential musical skills, and achieve success on their musical journey, all while enjoying the process of learning and growing as a pianist.

## Online Portal

Welcome to the online portal, your support for musical exploration and growth! With this interactive platform, your child can access useful resources designed to enhance their musical journey. From lesson recordings and personalised feedback to a dynamic leaderboard and conversation opportunities, the online portal empowers your child to learn at their own pace, track their progress, and stay motivated along the way. Engage online and experience the joy of learning music in a fun, engaging, and supportive environment!

## Exam Preparation

Prepare for musical success with a comprehensive exam preparation process! I am dedicated to guiding your child through the intricacies of music theory, composition, and performance, ensuring they are fully prepared to excel in their music exams. With targeted practice materials, mock exams, and personalised feedback, I help your child build confidence, master challenging concepts, and achieve top scores on their music assessments. Enjoy working diligently through the exam preparation process and let it become an integral part of the musical journey!

## Theory and Composition

Theory is about understanding the structures that make up what is called music. Structure is what separates noise from music although arguably there is a perspective that music appears in the ear of the beholder which could very well be beautiful randomness. In these sessions, however, we study the structures laid out by great musicians before us, from hundreds of years ago, immersing ourselves in a pursuit of knowledgeable insight from a long-standing tradition. With theoretical understanding of Western Art Music, we engage in the creative endeavour of composing, bringing our imagined melodies and harmonies into reality using notational software.

## Digital Streaming Socials

Students need to be exposed to quality music in order to develop the ear and expand their musical palate. Inexperienced musicians are unable to immerse themselves in music for long periods of time. Spending time together fosters a sense of community and belonging.

I have thus combined music exposure with other entertainment. Students are also welcome to bring a book to enjoy or choose to explore one of the many interesting titles that are in my library. These sessions include:

- High Quality Digitally Streamed Concert
- Chess
- Spintronics
- Turing Tumble
- Multiplayer games
- Books
- Drawing and Colouring
- Snacks and Drinks

### Studio Recitals

Instead of producing one large annual recital, I have decided to provide monthly opportunities for students to practise their speaking introductions and raise their performance confidence. The more frequently one performs, the better practised their stress management skills. These pre-lunch recitals will only last for 30 minutes and students will:

- Verbally introduce themselves and their music
- Perform one or two pieces from their polished repertoire (repeats allowed and encouraged!)
- Hear other pianists perform, including their teacher
- Practise being vulnerable in front of others in a safe and welcoming environment
- Receive some constructive feedback and encouragement points

### Concert Excursions

A variety of local and city-based recitals and concerts to allow students to experience learning through immersion in cultural experiences, develop independence and a sense of adventure, and access growth beyond studio experiences. RSVP via email – 50% off student tickets.

# Term 3 Schedule

## Monday

4pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
5pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
6pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson

## Tuesday

4pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
5pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
6pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
7pm: *Theory and Composition*

## Wednesday

4pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
5pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
6pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson

## Thursday

4pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
5pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
6pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
7pm: *Theory and Composition*

## Friday

4pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
5pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson  
6pm: Solo/Pair piano lesson

## Saturday

Makeup lessons

## Sunday

Digital Stream Socials (first Sunday each month, 11.30am-12.30pm)  
Studio Recitals (last Sunday each month, 12pm-12.30pm)

Other: Concert Excursions (by email RSVP)



# Agreements

## Home Work

- Daily, spaced, focused, goal-oriented piano practice is recommended.
- Theory exercises should be completed each week to stay on track.
- Update/check-in with Hanford during the week via the portal as applicable.

## Student Absences

- No makeup, credit, nor refund.

## Teacher Absences

- Makeup, credit, or refund options will be provided.

## Book and Exam Costs

- Included as part of the enrolment fees.
- Book swapping system in place.

## Fee Schedule

- Fees paid upfront upon enrolment confirmation via invoice.
- Points can be used to offset costs for next enrolment. Please request.

*\*\* Handbook details may be modified at any time. Issued invoices are unaffected by changes.*