Deer Park School – Guitar Lesson Information and Expectations

Welcome to guitar lessons at Deer Park School. To make sure everything runs smoothly, here is some important information for both students and parents.

Key Information

- Lessons take place in the **practice room to the left of the office, past the instrument rack, as you walk into the Expressive Arts block**.
- The official timetable is displayed on the **notice board opposite the guitar rack, in a glass casing**.
- Students must check this board every morning, find their name and the day's date, and note their time.
- It is strongly recommended that students take a photo of the timetable for reference. Always check weekly in case of last-minute changes.
- When it is nearly time for a lesson, step in front of the door **no more than two minutes before your slot**. This lets me see you're ready. Don't step in front of the door too soon, as it could disrupt the previous lesson, but do wait nearby outside until your time.

Student Responsibility

- Students are responsible for remembering their lesson time and leaving class. I cannot always collect students.
- Keep a yellow card with **"GUITAR LESSON"** written on it. Hold it up when it's time to go. Sometimes a quick spoken request will still be needed.
- Class teachers must allow students to leave unless there is an unavoidable exam (e.g GCSE). If this happens, parents/students must inform me immediately, ideally with at least one week's notice.
- I cannot guarantee that swaps will be possible on the regular lesson day, but if enough notice is given we can explore alternatives. Otherwise, an alternative

format such as a video breakdown can be arranged, provided there is notice so I can prepare it within the student's prepaid lesson time.

Illness or Self-Isolation

- Lessons can still happen at the usual time via **FaceTime or WhatsApp**.
- Alternatively, students can send a **video question or email** (with parents cc'd) via WhatsApp, Google Drive or email. I will reply with a detailed video or written answer.
- If a student is too unwell to engage, I can create a **tailor-made pre-recorded video** that they can watch in their own time, focused on material that will benefit them specifically.
- Please let me know ahead of time so I can use the prepaid slot. If I need to cancel, an alternative session will always be offered.

Equipment and Preparation

- All equipment — such as books, plectrums, capos, footstools, electric guitar leads and tuners — must be provided by the parent/student.
- Students must have instruments and equipment in good working order. Very cheap guitars generally do not meet this standard.
- Recommended shops: The Skinny Dog Experience (Cirencester), Intersound (Dursley), A Remus Sound (Gloucester).
- Guitar rental is available from me at **£22 per month**, paid in advance. Damage must be covered by parents.

Nails

- Left-hand nails must be short enough to press the string properly.
- Set a weekly reminder to trim nails at the same time each week.

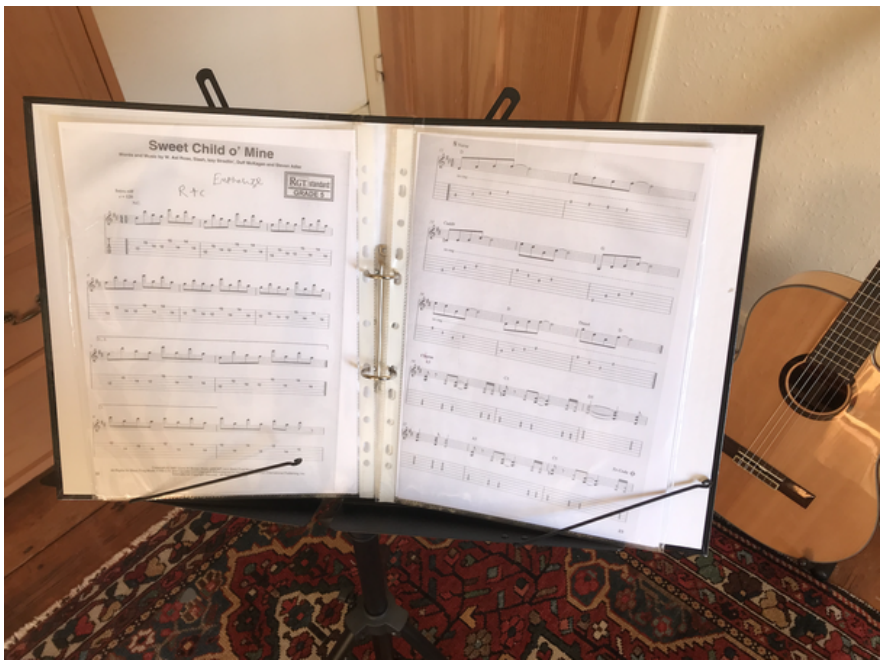
Practice

- Regular practice is essential: minimum **four sessions per week**, five if preparing for exams or learning more complex material.
- Practice means the material we agreed in lessons, not unrelated songs or random riffs.
- Consistency matters more than length. Accuracy and expression impress more than messy, half-learned songs.
- If practice cannot be committed to, progress will be non-existent. If you cannot provide a solid routine, it is worth reconsidering whether lessons are right at this time.

Make Practice Easy

- Keep your guitar on a stand, not hidden.
- Keep music at eye level on a stand.
- For electric guitar, keep the amp plugged in and ready.

Organisation

- Every student must have a **ring binder** with plastic wallets to store music neatly.
- Organise materials in the order we practise: warm-ups, main pieces, extras.
- Do not remove sheets unless needed in the lesson. Loose or crumpled pages are not acceptable.

Parent Responsibility

- Parents must create an inspiring environment with guitar-based music at home.
- Support and police practice by limiting distractions (games, social media, streaming).
- Use positive incentives as well as limits to encourage consistent practice.
- If these conditions are not upheld, progress will stall and lessons will lose their value.

Printing Digital Files

- Occasionally I have access to school printers, but due to a very busy schedule this is not always possible.
- At times I may need to send digital files instead. In these cases, it is the parent/student's responsibility to print them and bring them to lessons.
- I do not have a printer at home.
- Phones are not suitable for learning — physical copies are required, as we need to annotate them and keep them neatly in the ring binder.

Rotating Timetable

- The timetable at Deer Park runs on a **rotating system**.
- Lesson times stay the same for two weeks, then shift for the next two weeks, before returning.
- For example, a student might have their lesson at **10:10 for two weeks**, then at **12:15 for the next two weeks**, before returning to **10:10** in the following cycle.
- This ensures that no academic subject is missed more than once in a three-week cycle.
- If a student is missing the same subject twice in three weeks, please let me know straight away so I can correct it.

- Missing a favourite subject such as PE, Drama or Art is not considered an emergency. If a student wishes to swap, it is their responsibility to **speak directly with another student of the same lesson length** to see if a swap is convenient for both of them. If both agree, they should then let me know so I can simply switch the names on the timetable.

Summary

These expectations exist to make sure lessons run smoothly and students make the best progress possible. Thank you for your support.