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Online Instrumental and Vocal Lessons

Guidance for Parents, Carers and Learners

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During the current Covid-19 crisis Kent Music is offering instrumental and vocal lessons online during the period when it is not possible for students and teachers to attend schools and music centres. Learning online can be a very effective way of learning to play an instrument and to sing. This guide sets out how Kent Music's online teaching approach will work and what you need to do in order to sign up.

This guide sets out what is needed to make online and distance learning a fun and safe way to continue a musical education. Our privacy policy is available on our website www.kent-music.com/privacy-policy

By signing up for online tuition you are also agreeing to follow the guidelines set out in this document.

Table of Contents

<i>Getting set up</i>	2
<i>Inviting students to lessons - how it works</i>	2
<i>How to get the most out of a lesson - setting up a space for learning</i>	2
<i>Staying safe online - treating the lessons in the same way you would in school or music centre</i>	3
<i>What we expect of parents or carers, and their involvement in lessons</i>	4
<i>In conclusion</i>	5
<i>Appendix A – setting up Zoom on a PC or Mac (desktop or laptop)</i>	6
<i>Appendix B – Setting up Zoom on a tablet or smart phone</i>	7
<i>Appendix C - Troubleshooting</i>	7
<i>Appendix D – Free learning resources</i>	8

Getting set up

Kent Music uses Zoom for online music lessons. This means you don't need to use any personal details or phone numbers (as you would with Skype or other platforms). Instead, the teacher will send an email link to the parent or carer's email address, along with a date and time for the start of the session.

Comprehensive set up instructions for Zoom are here:

[Appendix A – setting up Zoom on a PC/Mac or laptop](#)

[Appendix B – setting up Zoom on a tablet or phone](#)

Inviting students to lessons - how it works

Our intention is for each student to remain with their current teacher but where this is not possible we will aim to provide you with another Kent Music teacher. All of our teachers have received recent child protection training and all have an enhanced check through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). Once you've signed up, the teacher will email the parent or carer's email address with a date and time – we will attempt wherever possible to schedule your lesson at the same time as you would have it in school or a music centre.

The teacher will email a link which the student should click when it is time for the lesson to start. The link will open a webpage and you then click on the "Join now" button. It may take a short while before the teacher also joins (and any other students if it is a 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.

The space should be somewhere:

- With room to play your instrument and space 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, if the internet connection drops, or if the learner is uncomfortable about anything)
- That isn't an inappropriate place that you wouldn't invite teachers and other students into (like a bedroom)

Staying safe online - treating the lessons in the same way you would in school or music centre

All the rules for behaviour that apply in a practice room lesson at school or in a music centre, still apply to online lessons. All teachers have been given comprehensive advice about delivering remote lessons safely.

- All our teachers are employees of Kent Music, have up-to-date training, are fully DBS checked and are experienced professionals
- All lesson invitations will go to parents so that they will log in for the children
- Parents may remain in the room if they wish, but no other children should be present
- With children aged over 14, the parents may choose to send them the link if they wish to as they are then taking responsibility for putting them in the lesson
- Teachers can mute participants and end the lesson at any time and have been instructed to end immediately if anything happens that they feel uncomfortable about
- If anything happens that you as a parent feel uncomfortable about you should report it immediately to Trevor James (Head of Education and Kent Music's Designated Safeguarding Lead) tjames@kent-music.com
- Our safeguarding policies can be found on our website www.kent-music.com/app/uploads/POLICIES-AND-GUIDANCE-ON-SAFEGUARDING-AND-CHILD-PROTECTION-1.pdf

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 wearing pyjamas) – students are asked to wear clothing that would normally be worn in public
- Follow the teacher's instructions
- Ask the teacher before leaving the session (e.g. to go to the toilet)
- Not take phone calls, message others, or use devices that aren't requested by the teacher for learning
- Not have other browsers or apps open during the online lesson to reduce the risk of distraction
- Not take screenshots or record video of sessions (as in schools, written permissions are needed to take photos or video of children and young people)

The background behind the learner will be visible to the teacher 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).

File sharing

File sharing by students is not available in Zoom, but teachers can share attachments in sessions (for example PDFs of music for students to learn).

If the learner or parent has any concerns

A parent/carer or responsible adult should be within earshot of the child during the online lesson. Students will 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 Kent Music's Safeguarding Policy, just as it would be in face-to-face lessons in schools or music centre centres.

Our safeguarding policy is on our website at www.kent-music.com/app/uploads/POLICIES-AND-GUIDANCE-ON-SAFEGUARDING-AND-CHILD-PROTECTION-1.pdf

Any safeguarding concerns can be addressed to Trevor James, Kent Music's Designated Safeguarding Lead tjames@kent-music.com

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 (e.g. inappropriate dress or language), the teacher will stop the session for that learner and then contact the parent or carer later to explain and to help resolve any issues.

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

Having the support of a parent or 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 is important for safety as well as for practical help. Parents are expected to be present at the start and finish 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.

In conclusion

Our Mission

- Kent Music is an education charity that develops musical opportunities to support the aspirations of children, young people, adults and teachers in Kent

Our Values

- Anticipating, valuing and supporting diversity and difference
- Maintaining high expectations for all learners and staff
- Understanding the needs of children and young people
- Reducing barriers to engagement
- Keeping creativity at the heart of our thinking
- Embracing openness, collaboration and partnership

Through our online tuition offer we are enabling students, whether old or young, to continue to learn to play their instrument or to sing. We are expecting our teachers to continue to deliver high quality and safe tuition, tailored to the needs of their students.

We are offering all our online tuition at a reduced rate, with 10% off fees. We hope this will help to maintain our offer to you during an otherwise uncertain time, making sure that all learners, whether young or old, continue their musical education and development at the high standard you've come to expect.

Terms and Conditions

Our terms and conditions are published on our website www.kent-music.com/terms-and-conditions

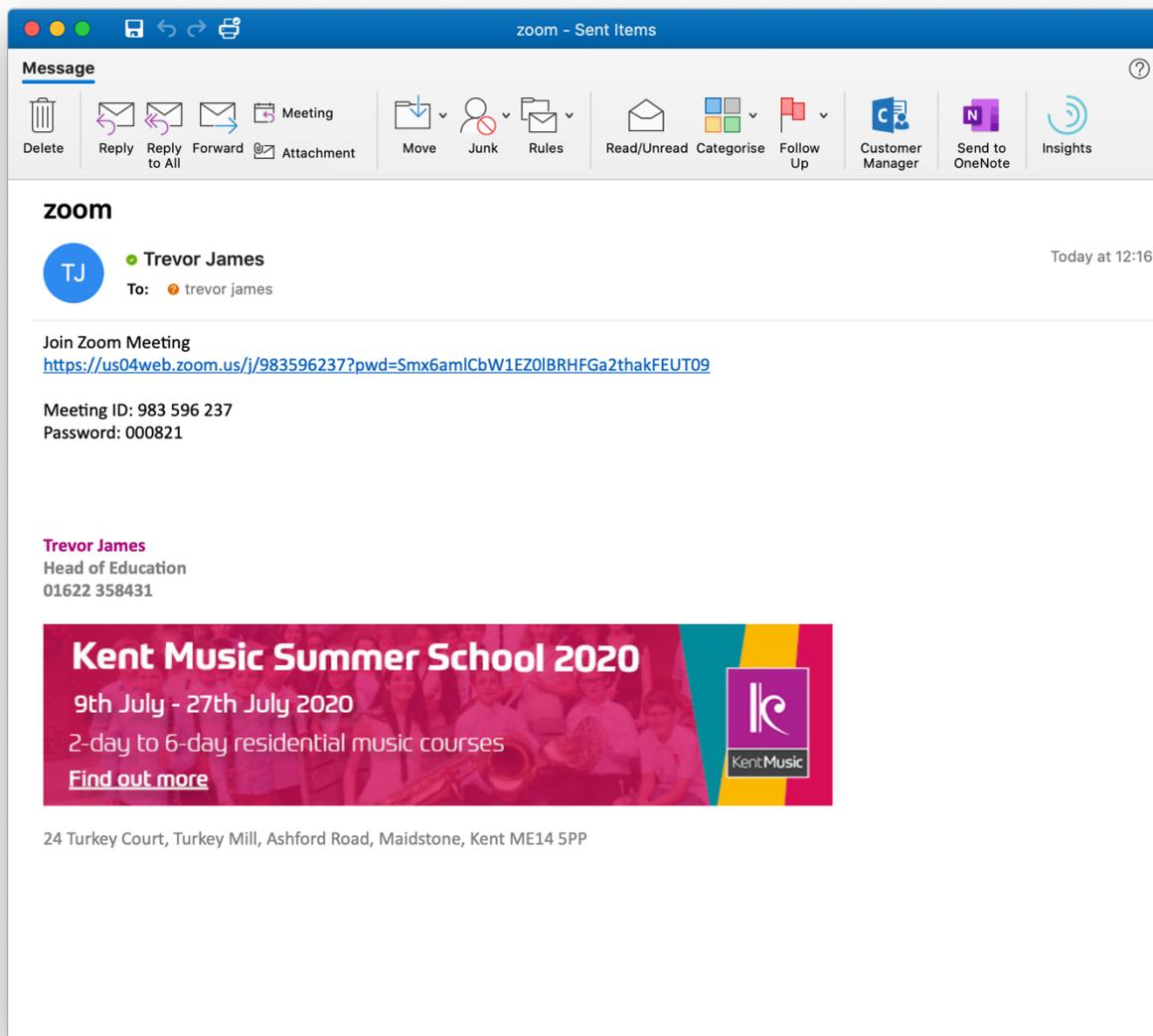
In addition, by agreeing to online tuition you agree to the guidance published in this document.

Appendix A – setting up Zoom on a PC or Mac (desktop or laptop)

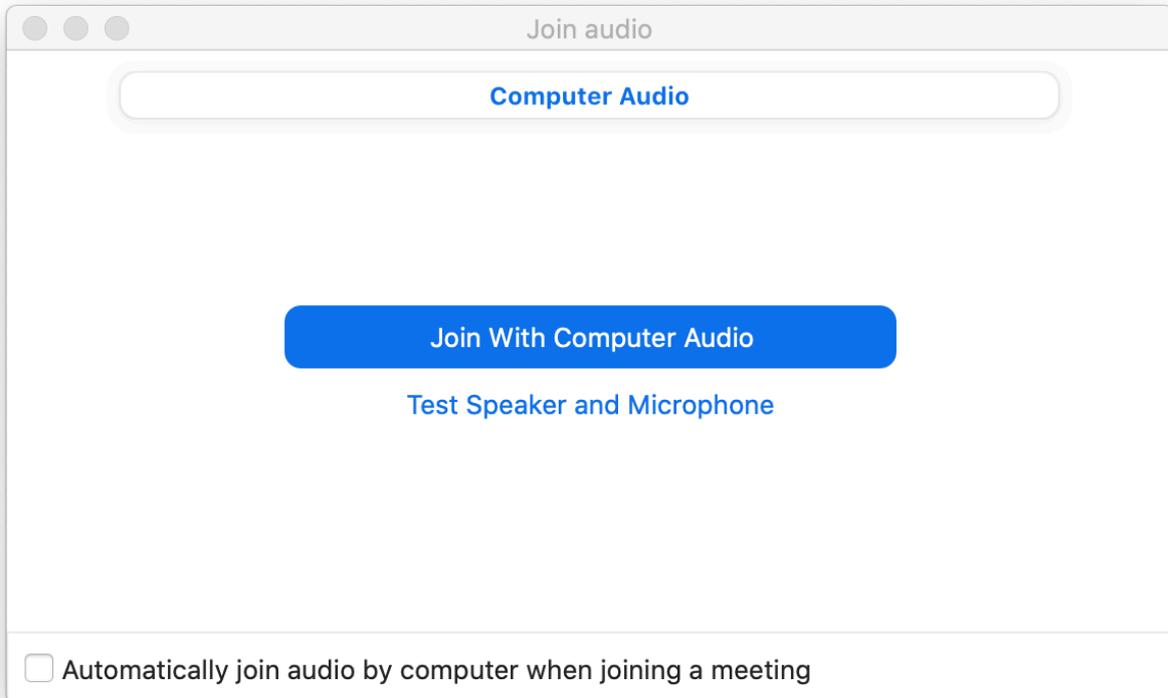
How to Set Up Zoom for Laptop/PC

You do not need to set up an account to join a Zoom meeting, though you will be required to install the software on your PC or Mac before you can start. Please do this in advance of the lesson.

The email you will receive from the teacher will have a web link, meeting ID, and password. Clicking on the link will open the Zoom software.



You will be given a choice of how to connect to the software. The default, if your computer has built in audio (microphone and speakers), is to use Computer Audio. You may wish to test this before joining the lesson (Mac screenshot).



The session should then begin.

Appendix B – Setting up Zoom on a tablet or smart phone

Head to your relevant app store and search for 'ZOOM Cloud Meetings'. Its icon is a blue square with a white camera in it.

Apple app link: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/id546505307>

Android app link: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=us.zoom.videomeetings>

Clicking on the link in the email from the teacher will open the Zoom app. The session should now begin.

Appendix C - Troubleshooting

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. Kent Music will test lessons with each teacher before they can offer teaching online for us. If your internet connection 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
- checking that other people in the house aren't using the internet at the same time (e.g. streaming video or TV, playing online games)
- test the speed of the internet connection, for example, here: <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 a 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.

Appendix D – Free learning resources

For some free online learning ideas and resources, please visit:

www.kent-music.com/news/keep-music-education-going-at-home

www.musicmark.org.uk/resources/home-learning-resources