

Music Readiness Student Policy

Enrollment Guidelines

- Fall and spring classes are on a 14-week term. There will be no classes during Spring Break in March, or Wednesday through Friday at Thanksgiving in November.
- The SOFA Calendar can be found on www.sasofa.org and the SOFA Bulletin Board. SOFA's holiday schedule differs from HISD and St. Andrew's Children's Place. In extreme weather, we follow HISD public announcements for cancellations. However, we do not take all of the holidays.
- All Music Readiness tuitions include a non-refundable registration fee of \$20.
- A deposit of \$100 or full payment is due at the time of registration to reserve your spot.
- Registration forms received after the registration deadline will be assessed a \$20 late fee.
- In the event that we are unable to place you in your desired class, you will be notified and given the option to (a) switch to a different class, if it is available, (b) be placed on a waiting list, or (c) be refunded the tuition.

Attendance

- Regular attendance is crucial to ensure your child's success.
- We understand that "things happen" with children in tow. However, the beginning of the class sets the tone, so please make every effort to be on time.
- Make-up Classes: Music Readiness classes may be made up in the same level if it is offered at a different time. If the instructor misses a class, it will be made up.
- Absences: Please notify the teacher if your child will be absent.
- Scholarship Students: Either of these offenses will result in a meeting with a board member and probation: 1) three tardies, or 2) three absences. Additional tardies or absences will result in loss of scholarship.

Parent Participation Expectations

- Join in all activities yourself, even if your child does not.
- Allow your child to observe or participate less actively, as you continue to model the activity for your child.
- Listen to the class CD often outside the class. Being familiar with the songs will help your child enjoy the activities in class.
- Wandering and apparently inattentive babies or toddlers are okay as long as they are not distracting others in the class.
- In the case of distracting behavior, please just stand and hold the child or step out briefly until the child is ready to re-join the class.

Music Readiness Presentation

- There will be an informal Music Readiness Presentation at the end of the semester in which each class demonstrates what they have been learning in class.
- All children enrolled in group classes are expected to attend. Please inform the teachers in writing or by email if you cannot attend the presentation.
 - Doris Sing dsing@sapch.org
 - Rachel Ong SOFAdmin@sapch.org
- Parents should dress appropriately to participate in the children's activities.
- Relatives and friends are welcome. Please inform teachers approximately how many will be with you so we can prepare the room accordingly.
- Plan to stay for the entire program.
- Wandering and noisy children are acceptable and expected. If the behavior of your child becomes distracting to other students, you may step out with them for a short while until they are ready to come back.

Frequently Asked Questions for Music Readiness Parents

Q: What is different about the Musikgarten program from other early childhood music programs?

A: Musikgarten is a sequential pathway to music literacy, spanning the first 9 years of a child's development. It is based on the latest scientific research in the areas of neuroscience, child development, music theory, and education. Like many others it is playful and fun, but it is the only comprehensive program of its kind.

Q: At what age should my child begin music classes?

A: No child is too young for the informal music learning of the Musikgarten class. Even the unborn in the last few months of pregnancy can hear and benefit from the activities. In fact, the younger they start and continue through the program, the more benefit they receive.

Q: What does my child get out of Music Readiness Classes.

A: When music and movement are a natural, joyous part of childhood, children benefit greatly in many areas of life. Language development, self-expression, memory skills, concentration, social interaction, fine motor skills, listening, problem solving, teamwork, goal setting, and coordination are all impacted by early music and movement education. What's more, as a child learns to play music, other areas of development — creativity, family bonding, self-esteem, confidence, emotional development — are also positively impacted.

Q: How do I know when my child is ready to move on to the next class?

A: While the same patterns and songs are repeated and built upon at all levels, the activities are different at each level to meet the needs of the age of the child. Your child may become disinterested or begin to act out in class as a sign that he or she is ready for more challenge and needs to move to the next level. This is particularly true in the Toddler classes at around age 3 to 3 1/2.

Q: How do I know when my child is ready to begin private instruction?

A: When your child can both chant and read the tonal and rhythmic patterns, keep a steady beat, and move appropriately to different types of music, (i.e. match movement to speed and mood of different types music,) he or she has internalized

the skills necessary for successful instrumental playing. There is no need to rush to private lessons, as the ensemble experience of the group is invaluable training and preparation for all musicians.

Q: Why not start on an instrument, rather than group classes?

A: While many programs do start children on instruments as young as age three, most children need more large-muscle movement activities than instrumental playing provides. The Musikgarten curriculum provides invaluable ear training and ensemble experience not present in private lessons. It is important that music training begin very young, but not necessarily beginning by studying an instrument. Students who begin in Musikgarten classes transition smoothly into private instrumental instruction with more self-awareness and confidence!

Q: When will I get materials for the class?

A: Your teacher will order the take-home materials after the first week. You may submit a check or cash directly to the teacher once the materials arrive.

Q: When can I bring my child to a Music Readiness trial class?

A: You may visit and/or join a Music Readiness class any time during the semester. Just call the office to set up a visit so the teacher will be expecting you. You may need to visit more than one to find the best fit for your child,