



Pilot Project – Individual Music Lessons at Elmwood – 2011/2012

The rewards children reap from individual music lessons are immense. Research shows that learning to play a musical instrument encourages concentration, develops expressive and creative abilities and teaches children to work closely together in groups. It improves self-confidence and most of all it gives children a source of pleasure and fulfillment which can last a lifetime.

After a number of requests from parents, Elmwood has decided to offer private, individual music lessons this year for students in Grades 4 – 12. The lessons will be taught by two qualified instructors: **Mr. Nicholas Gummeson**, Director of Elmwood Music and **Mr. James O'Farrell**, a well-known vocalist and saxophonist in the Ottawa area and a private music specialist for the past 20 years. You will find their biographies enclosed.

Mr. O'Farrell is able to offer lessons in woodwind instruments (saxophone, clarinet, flute), piano up to Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) Grade 6 and voice. Mr. Gummeson will be offering lessons in brass instruments (trumpet, trombone, French horn, baritone, and tuba), guitar (electric and acoustic), bass (electric and upright), piano (up to RCM Grade 6) and voice. Both instructors have experience in classical, jazz, musical theatre and popular music; allowing each lesson to be tailored to the individual needs and interests of the student.

Lessons will take place both during and after the School day and will be arranged, as much as possible, on a rotating basis, so that students do not miss the same class two weeks running. Students must supply their own instruments. These can be rented or purchased from local music stores such as Long and McQuade or St. John's Music. Pupils learning the piano must have one at home on which they can practice; an electronic piano is an acceptable substitute.

Regular practice at home is **essential** if lessons are to be of any value, as well as regular attendance at lessons. Students will be expected to contribute to the musical life of the School and will be invited to participate in one of the bands, choirs or ensembles, which meet every week. Rehearsals take place at the start of the School day, at lunchtimes or after School; these lead to concerts and other performances, inside and outside School. Students will also be encouraged to participate in regular recitals and will have the option of preparing for and taking Royal Conservatory of Music exams.

The cost for the lessons will be \$30 for a ½ hour lesson weekly during the school year for a total of 30 lessons. Lessons must be paid for in advance. The fee will be broken down into two installments of \$450: one due in September and the other due in February.

If you would like your daughter to start music lessons, please complete the enclosed form and return it to Mr. Gummeson. He will be happy to answer any questions you might have or to talk further with you about whether your daughter is ready to start individual lessons. He can be reached at ngummeson@elmwood.ca or by telephoning the school. Please take careful note of the enclosed terms and conditions where details of fees payable and notice periods are set out.

The Instructors

Nicholas Gummeson

Mr. Gummeson has been teaching private lessons in the Ottawa region for 8 years. After graduating from Ottawa University's School of Music in 2007, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Education the following year. In 2008, he accepted the position of Music Director at Elmwood School. Since September 2008 the high school music program has grown from 9 students to 41 students. The extra-curricular program has expanded from a single concert band to multi-level program, which includes both jazz band and concert band opportunities for each grade level in both the Middle and Senior School.

As a performer, Nicholas has spent much of the last decade as both a pianist in various jazz ensembles and a performer in a number of musical theatre productions. He has also worked as an arranger and composer in both vocal and instrumental idioms.

As a private teacher, he has taught piano, voice, trumpet, trombone, tuba, guitar, bass guitar, percussion and theory/harmony. In a private lesson, his students will experience a balanced curriculum, which includes theory, technique and performance. Through these three platforms, each student is given the chance to interpret, create and perform music at a level that is both comfortable and challenging for her ability. Each lesson is tailored to the interests of the student and can include any and all of the three major genres, classical, jazz and popular music.

James O'Farrell

Mr. O'Farrell has taught voice, saxophone and piano for over 20 years. He has worked as a private music specialist for Canterbury High School and Ecole Secondaire De la Salle for over 10 years, and regularly gives master classes at the University of Ottawa for their Jazz program, Commercial Arranging classes, and Collaborative Pianist courses. Many of his students over the years have gone on to study at some of the most prestigious schools in North America and embarked on professional careers.

James has been praised for his uncommonly beautiful voice, expressive declamation of text, and extremely dramatic stage presence. He has performed with Opera Lyra Ottawa (1997-2001) as a chorus member and singing small roles. In December 2000, he performed the role of Don Ramiro (Prince Charming) from Rossini's Cinderella with Opera Lyra's Young Artist Program. This led to many concert engagements with such groups as the Blackburn Chorus and Kanata Symphony Orchestra. In April 2003, James sang the role of Cavaradossi from Puccini's Tosca in concert with Calyx Concerts of Toronto. In March 2006, he performed as tenor soloist with Les Chanteurs de St. Therese in Montreal. In 2007, James returned to University of Ottawa to complete his Bachelor of Music.

More recently, James has performed with the University of Ottawa Orchestra. In 2008, for a television series on Bravo entitled "Death at the Opera," James sang excerpts from Tosca (Puccini) and Eugene Onegin (Tchaikovsky). He has performed as a soloist under the baton of David Curie, Michel Brousseau, Tyrone Patterson, Eduardo Mueller, David Chin, Rennie Rehger, and Louis Lavigueur.

Terms and Conditions

1. Parents must complete the attached form if they wish their child to have individual lessons.
2. The fee for music lessons is payable in advance in two installments of \$450 on September 15, 2011 and February 1, 2012.
3. The school will provide **thirty** 30-minute lessons in an academic year.
4. Individual missed lessons will not be refunded. Where a lesson is missed through either the absence of a teacher, or where the pupil is required at short notice for another school commitment, every effort will be made to re-arrange the lesson for an alternative time during the year.
5. Parents will not be reimbursed when a lesson is missed due to the absence of the pupil for any reason other than the one noted above (the teacher's time has already been committed).
6. Lessons missed due to a last-minute school commitment will be rescheduled a maximum of two times. Four missed lessons will result in the student not being invited to continue individual lessons in the next session.
7. Students must commit to 15 weeks of lessons. Lesson installments are non-refundable.
8. If students do not wish to continue with their lessons only the second installment can be cancelled if notification is received prior to December 1, 2011. Notification must be made in writing to Mr. Gummesson.
9. All pupils will be issued with practice books, which can be used as a means of communication between parents and teachers.
10. Music resources such as repertoire books will be purchased by the instructors and added to the student account.
11. Parents should feel free to contact Mr. Gummesson if they have any questions. He can be reached at ngummesson@elmwood.ca or by telephoning the school. Mr. Farrell can be reached at jofarrell@elmwood.ca.
12. Music staff will provide written reports to parents twice yearly. In addition, music instructors will be available for parent consultation during Parents' Evenings.



**INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS 2011/2012
Registration Form**

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Homeroom/SLG: _____

Yes, I would like to register my daughter for music lessons for the 2011/2012 School year.

Instrument or Voice	Current level (e.g. Beginner or approximate grade)

Elmwood School has permission to charge my student account the sum of \$900.00 (payable in two installments of \$450 on September 15, 2011 and February 1, 2012) for this activity.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please return this form to Mr. Gummeson by September 9, 2011.