

# **Piano at Vial**

Our Piano program is divided into three sections. Piano Enrichment, Pre-Academy and the Piano Academy. Piano Enrichment and Pre-Academy classes are during the school day and the Piano Academy classes are offered before or after school. The group your child can participate in depends on three things, 1) Your child's grade level 2) Your child's magnet status in GISD, dual language magnet, classical magnet or non-magnet and 3) The Level of your child's piano music theory and piano playing.

Let's start with the Pre-Academy.

## **Pre-Academy**

### **Who Goes to Pre-Academy?**

**ALL** Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students, dual language magnet, classical magnet and non-magnet, go to the Pre-Academy.

### **What does Pre-Academy do?**

Pre-Academy is designed to prepare students for group classes. In Kindergarten, students learn piano posture, hand position, clap rhythms, dynamics, piano anatomy, the music alphabet, and play simple pieces one hand at a time. In 1<sup>st</sup> grade we build on the foundation built in kindergarten and play songs with the music alphabet, two hands at a time with more dynamics, and begin to read notes on the grand staff.

### **When does the Pre-Academy meet?**

Your child will come to the piano lab during the school day, once a week for a 25-minute lesson.

### **Is a piano at home required?**

No, but it is recommended if you think your child shows interest in pursuing piano further past the Pre-Academy.

# **Piano Enrichment**

## **Who goes to Piano Enrichment?**

All Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade coded classical magnet or are non-magnet attend piano enrichment. At this time, Piano Enrichment is not available for students 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade that are coded for dual-language magnet and who are participating in the Classical Center at Vial's Dual Language program.

## **What does Piano Enrichment do?**

Piano Enrichment is designed to provide enriched music through piano. Skills learned in the Pre-Academy are further developed from year to year. This class is designed to engage the student that enjoyed the Pre-Academy but would not be interested in pursuing the Piano Academy's more rigorous curriculum.

## **When does Piano Enrichment meet?**

Your child will come to the piano lab during the school day, once a week for a 25-minute lesson.

## **Is a piano at home required?**

No, but it is recommended if you think your child shows interest in pursuing future classes in the Piano Academy.

# Piano Academy

## Who goes to Piano Academy?

The Piano Academy is our **audition based**, accelerated piano instruction. Any students in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade coded dual language magnet, classical magnet or non-magnet are eligible to audition for the Piano Academy.

## When are auditions for Piano Academy and how do I sign up?

The Piano Academy auditions are held at the beginning of the fall semester. Classes typically start at the beginning of September. The link for the signup is here (<https://tinyurl.com/y85v9fqd>). The link is typically available at the end of the school year in May.

## What does my child need to know for their audition?

The student that is ready for **the beginner class** should be able to:

- determine their left hand from their right hand,
- know their finger numbers,
- how to locate the two black and three black key groups on the piano,
- how to clap and speak rhythms with quarter notes in them,
- know the musical alphabet,
- and how to find and label the white keys on the piano.

The packet for the beginner class is located here <https://tinyurl.com/y576sryv>

The **intermediate student** should be able to:

- do all beginning skills,
- plus know how to read several grand staff notes,
- identify the starting position of songs that start in C-Position and Middle C Position by looking at music,
- Clap more advanced rhythms,
- and sight-read a piece at the level of the Faber Primer Level.

The packet for the intermediate class is located here <https://tinyurl.com/y4k424bs>

The **advanced student** should be able to:

- do all beginner and intermediate skills,
- plus know how to apply musical terms staccato and legato,
- know all notes on the grand staff (not ledger lines),

know added hand positions,  
recognize more difficult rhythms,  
identify intervals from a 2<sup>nd</sup> through a 5<sup>th</sup>,  
and sight read a piece at the Faber Level 1.

The packet for the intermediate class is located here <https://tinyurl.com/y4ktydnf>

### **What does Piano Academy students do?**

Piano Academy is designed to take the base knowledge learned in the Pre-Academy to the next level.

Beginning piano classes are group focused but at an accelerated pace. These students learn to read staff notes, play hands together and independently, and sight-reading with dynamics.

Intermediate students move into our self-paced accelerated groups. These students should be able to start to work on pieces independently with coaching from the instructor. These students will learn to play in multiple hand positions with more staff notes with flats and sharps, have a bigger vocabulary of music terms, and know how to apply them to the music.

Advanced students are expected to use phrasing in their playing with more note values, learn key signatures, know intervals, and play with greater degrees of dynamics.

All Piano Academy students are expected to participate in at least one recital per academic year.

### **When does Piano Academy meet?**

Piano Academy classes are twice a week for 30 minutes each day for a total of one hour per week. They are before school and after school depending on your child's audition results. Beginning classes meet in the mornings at 8am and Intermediate and Advanced classes meet after school at 4pm.

### **Is a piano at home required?**

Yes, a Piano is required at home along with the purchase of a lesson book and sight-reading book for practice. If you do not have a piano, we have a limited number of supply to loan for the school year that are lent out on a first come, first serve basis. Practice logs are also required to be filled in and shown to the instructor on the last Academy day of each week. There is a 100-minute a week minimum.

### **What else do I need for the Piano Academy?**

You will also need a way to access the Internet to view our class assignments, tutorial videos, and complete the recommended theory homework. The website format we use is Edmodo.com.

# **A Note for students with Private Teachers**

## **Will my child receive private lessons at Vial?**

No. All of the piano classes offered at Vial are group piano classes. Intermediate and Advanced students receive some one-on-one coaching.

## **If my child has a private teacher, should I stop private lessons and just let them take Piano Academy classes at Vial?**

It is up to you, but this is **NOT** something that I would recommend. If your child started to learn piano one-on-one, they would very likely need time to adjust to a class piano format where some independence is expected. There is also a possibility that we use a different method than what your child is accustomed to with their private teacher.

## **So why should I put them in the Piano Academy?**

Your child will benefit from the group format by learning to play in a group setting, have more performing opportunities, become more independent, motivated by their peers, while still enjoying their accelerated pace with their private teacher. It truly is the best of both worlds.

What if I have more questions?

Email Mr. Little at [mlittle@garlandisd.net](mailto:mlittle@garlandisd.net) and he'll answer all of your questions. Have a great day!