



Violin Lessons at ChildLight 2017-2018

Melissa Waterhouse, Violin/Fiddle Instructor (bio on reverse)

Learning an instrument is a fun and exciting experience for the young child. The violin is a great choice because it is available in smaller sizes for young beginners, it is a versatile instrument that is popular in any genre, and it is easy to learn in small steps.

Time & Location: Melissa offers weekly lessons during the school year, beginning on September 14th and continuing through the end of May. The lesson is typically 30 minutes long, and can be scheduled right after school dismissal, or another mutually agreeable time. Lessons are held in the music room at ChildLight.

Trial period: Students are able to test out a violin for a two or three-week trial period in late August or early September to see if they are interested. Trial periods after early September are dependent upon availability in Melissa's schedule. Short-term rentals may be available, depending on the student's violin size.

Payment: The violin schedule is divided into trimesters, with payments due at the beginning of each trimester. After the trial period, continuing students commit to the rest of that trimester. Students can keep their lesson slot throughout the year and do not need to re-register for each trimester. Please let Melissa know as soon as possible if the student will be stopping lessons at the end of the current trimester.

Two options are available for lessons:

1. One private lesson per week, 30 minutes. \$28/lesson.
2. One semi-private lesson per week, 30 minutes. \$18 per child/lesson (available only if two or more students can make the same lesson time.)

Cancellation policy: All lessons missed by the teacher will be made up or refunded. One lesson will be made up per trimester for an excused student absence, school cancellation, field trip or snow day. Additional absences cannot be guaranteed make-up lessons. Parents must contact Melissa by phone call or text at least three hours in advance of the start of the lesson in order to qualify for an excused absence.

Practicing: Parents should be prepared to practice with the student at home a few times a week. Students who practice every day will progress much faster than students who only practice once a week. Practicing an instrument is a wonderful opportunity to show a child discipline, patience, routine, and reward in the sense of accomplishment. A young child of three years who practices with a parent several times a week, even if for only ten minutes, will progress very well and will be able to play simple songs such as Mary Had a Little Lamb and Hot Cross Buns within just a few months. An older child of five years may be able to play these with just one month of daily practice and private weekly lessons. On the other hand, a child of any age who does not practice at home will not progress well, and the lessons will not amount to much.

The number and length of practice sessions during the week varies with each student. Melissa will work with the student and parent to find an appropriate practice schedule. Although daily practice is best, ten minutes a day for a few days a week is still good. As the student continues through the months, a few more minutes each session will help to develop new skills as well as polish old ones. The violin is a physical activity as well as a musical one; if the student practices sporadically, he may be sore. If the student practices regularly, he will stay in shape and will be healthy and feel his best.

Acquiring a violin: Melissa has a small rental fleet of fractional-sized violins. These outfits include the violin, bow, case, rosin, cleaning cloth, and a foam shoulder rest. Most of Melissa's rental outfits are \$10/month. Other rental and purchasing options are available from local stores and online retailers. PLEASE consult Melissa before renting/buying, as some instruments are just unplayable, and you don't always get what you pay for. Students with lesser-quality instruments never really get the chance to try out what the violin can offer.

Melissa's Bio:

Melissa is originally from Long Island, where she studied classical violin with Dr. Liana Laura Mount of the Juilliard School, and was first violinist with the New York Youth Symphony, performing in Carnegie Hall. She attended the Chamber Music Workshop for several years in Old Westbury, New York, studying chamber music, theory, sight-singing, chorus and orchestra under the direction of Paul and Patricia Rudoff. During summers, she attended orchestral camp where she studied with principal players of the Philadelphia Orchestra. She received her B.A. from the University of New Hampshire in 1999, where she studied with Robert Eshbach and was Concertmaster of the UNH Symphony.

Melissa performs regularly as a freelance artist for weddings and events, and is a member of the *Artful Noise String Quartet*. Her quartet performs several concerts each year for the community, as well as with many choral groups around the seacoast. She is also a member of the ensembles *Academy Strings*, *Victorian Strings*, and the *White Mountain Trio*. On the fiddling side, she was a founding member of the French and Celtic trio *La Madeleine*, has studied Celtic fiddling with Hanneke Cassel in Boston, and has attended the Ceilidh Trail School of Celtic Music in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. She has also attended the Berklee String Fling, where she worked with Christian Howes, Matt Glaser and Eugene Friesen.

Melissa has recorded for NHPTV, and many local songwriters and musicians, as well as for jazz guitarist Peter Mayer, with whom she has toured nationally and in the Cayman Islands. She is a past board member of the NH Chapter of the American String Teachers Association. Melissa started teaching as Dr. Mount's assistant in 1994 and offers a comfortable, supportive teaching environment for beginner through early-advanced students of all ages. She believes in teaching the whole child, and works with parents and students together to create a broad violin and music curriculum. She also teaches at Berwick Academy, MusicalArts in Dover, Little Tree Education in Madbury, and at her home studio in Dover, NH. She is a mother to two wonderful young boys, and in her free time likes to garden, cook, bake, read, hike, and spend time with her family.