



## Violin Lessons at ChildLight 2018-2019

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.

**Who is eligible:** All ChildLight students who have reached 42 months of age (3 ½ years).

**Time & Location:** Melissa offers weekly lessons during the school year, beginning in September 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 the violin for a two or three-week trial period in the summer to see if they are interested. Summer lessons can continue right into the school year if you would like. Trial periods after mid-August are dependent upon availability in Melissa's schedule, and are not guaranteed. Short-term rentals may be available, depending on the student's violin size. If you are interested in setting up a trial period for the summer, please contact Melissa as soon as possible for the best availability.

**Payment:** Private lesson payments are due each month, by the first day of the month. For semi-private lessons, the violin school year (Sept – June) is divided roughly into quarters, with payments due at the beginning of each quarter. Continuing students can usually keep their lesson slot throughout the year and do not need to re-register for each quarter. Please let Melissa know as soon as possible if the student will be stopping lessons at the end of the current quarter. Payments are made directly to "Melissa Waterhouse" by check. The rates below reflect the pricing for this school year. Rates generally increase by \$1 per lesson each September.

Two options are available for lessons:

1. One private lesson per week, 30 minutes. \$30/lesson.
2. One semi-private lesson per week, 30 minutes. \$20 per child/lesson (Available upon request, and only if two students can make the same lesson time.)

**Cancellation policy:** Any lessons missed by the teacher will be made up or refunded. One lesson will be made up per quarter for an excused student absence, school cancellation or snow day. Additional absences cannot be guaranteed make-up lessons. Parents must contact Melissa directly 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. Cancellations made through the ChildLight phone or email systems, or personally through ChildLight staff can not be considered for make-ups, as Melissa will not receive these in time to adjust her schedule for that day.

**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 several months. An older child of five years may be able to play these with just two months 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 more than a fun weekly activity.

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 out there are 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 Teaching Bio:

Melissa is originally from Long Island, New York where she studied classical violin for ten years with Dr. Liana Laura Mount of the Juilliard School. She was accepted into the New York Youth Symphony at age 14, and rehearsed and performed with them in Carnegie Hall every Sunday for several years. On Saturdays, she attended the Chamber Music Workshop 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 camps at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, and at Skidmore College with NYSSSA, where she studied with principal players of the Philadelphia Orchestra. She was a member of and frequent soloist with her school orchestras and school theater pit, as well as Concertmaster of the Gemini Youth Symphony on Long Island. 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, and has played in hundreds of concerts, musical theater shows, weddings and events. She is a member of the *Artful Noise String Quartet* which 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 *Friends with Strings*. 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, where she studied with Alasdair Fraser. 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 has experience with coaching and guest-conducting youth orchestras and chamber music ensembles both in New York and New Hampshire. 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 student, and works with parents and students together to create a broad violin and music curriculum. Her students have been members of community and college orchestras, have been accepted into music programs around the country, have placed first chair in district orchestras and summer camps, have been accepted into All-State, and have placed first in the NH Highland Competition. While Melissa enjoys preparing students who are serious in music and considering a musical career, she also loves to teach students young and older, who are just looking for a fun, creative outlet with the violin.

Melissa teaches at Berwick Academy, MusicalArts in Dover, ChildLight Montessori School, Little Tree Education and at her home studio in Dover, NH. She is a mother to two young boys, and in her free time likes to garden, cook, bake, read, hike, and spend time with her family.