

23 February 2021

To whom it may concern

I am writing to express my immense gratitude to the staff of Chorlton Music Centre for their incredible online music provision since last summer and to this day. Covid-related restrictions have been particularly hard on children who study music and my daughter is no exception. Before the start of Covid pandemic, she was a pupil at Chorlton Centre for three years, starting with just instrumental lessons and progressing to doing choir, aural, wind band and music theory.

Since summer 2020, all these have gradually shifted to teaching on-line, moving to regular weekly online provision from September. It has been an absolute live saviour, both for my daughter's continuous musical education, but most importantly, for her well-being. Being able to see her friends and beloved teachers, on a weekly basis, was extremely important, and sustained her love of music and her practice. While schools went back and forth from opening to lockdowns or short term closures due to Covid outbreaks, having the Music Centre steadily on-line was an anchor in the sea of instability.

I would like to specially thank the teachers whose dedication and care really made a difference. Liz Cheetham, who is teaching choir, aural and music theory, has been an exceptional teacher in making on-line learning enjoyable and educational, overcoming the difficulties many children have with on-line learning, especially when they miss their friends and the joy of making music together. Liz has kept the spirits up in all the groups she was teaching, balancing challenging learning with fun and play, and making Saturdays the highlight of the week. I am also grateful to Matt Burke who kept the wind band going, working with the children on several pieces each week, making sure they are both excited and challenged. Last but not least, my special thanks goes to Branwen Dale, the Centre manager. Branwen, together with Liz who is the Deputy Manager, has held the Centre community together, beyond the lessons. Crucially at the time of lockdowns and isolation, Branwen and Liz held regular online meetings for parents, children representatives, and BAME 11+ children.

As a teacher myself, I know first-hand how challenging it has been to sustain both learning and student well-being during this pandemic. As a parent, I am grateful beyond words for the teaching, support and care my daughter is receiving at Chorlton Music Centre.

Dr Adi Kuntsman, parent of Ria Kuntsman (studying "Saturday Sings Choir"; aural grade 1-2; music theory grades 1-3; and Wind band level 2