

Unexpected benefits of teaching online

- There's a need to use precise speech when referring to the music a student is learning, identifying bar numbers rather than pointing to the music, and I've found that younger children enjoy finding the exact bar and note on the page; it's a bit like a treasure hunt.
- Older students are writing in fingering and directions themselves, and this may be more effective than the teacher scribbling pencil markings on the music.
- Filming part of the lesson to aid practice. (Although this could be done before it's easier when teaching through technology already.)
- One outcome of lockdown has been that students have had more time to practise, and so have made more progress.
- The pace is often quicker. Whereas in traditional teaching, a discussion of a piece might fly off into talk of other music, students talk less in a video call, and so the focus is very much always on the practical; playing the pieces or scales in question.
- One issue in lessons with more advanced students is that a certain amount of pianism is lost, although this can be worked around by the student recording their performance and sending it to their teacher rather than playing live.
- After approaching the prospect of online lessons with a certain amount of scepticism, I now believe it's a valuable substitute for traditional means of teaching. With a little adjustment from both teacher and pupil, students are continuing their musical learning and ensuring this important part of their lives is still present.