



# THE SUZUKI SCHOOL

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a preparatory preschool

## PARENT HANDBOOK

School Year 2019-2020

Updated August 1, 2019

### *Suzuki Mission*

*“To develop in young children a life-long love of learning by honoring each child’s natural talent and ability in partnership with the parents”*

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August 1, 2019

Dear Parents,

We want to give your family a warm welcome to our community! The faculty and staff are thrilled to have the opportunity to teach and care for your child. We understand our responsibilities as partners with you in this endeavor and look forward to working with you to make your child's school experience an enriching one.

The Parent Handbook is designed to give you insight into the philosophy of our school, as well as to acquaint you with specific guidelines for the day-to-day operation of the school. Our objective is to promote an understanding between The Suzuki School and your family. Open communication between parent and teacher is the cornerstone of the Suzuki program.

Research has shown that the first five years in a child's life are crucial in developing the skills and enthusiasm required for life-long learning. Our goal is to help each child develop these skills to the best of his/her ability as each child demonstrates readiness socially, emotionally, and cognitively. Our program is designed specifically for the very young learner and offers countless opportunities to build confidence and mastery.

We hope you will enter wholeheartedly into this experience and will participate as your time and interests allow. Feel free to visit your child in the classroom at any time; we encourage parent volunteers to assist with certain lessons, special activities, and events. Please call or stop by the office if we can be of any help to your family. Working together, we will make these earliest learning experiences the foundation for a sound education.

Sincerely,



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## A. SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

### A1. THE PURPOSE OF OUR HANDBOOK

The purpose of the handbook is to explain to parents the policies of the school, our commitments to the family and the children, and resources that are available to each stakeholder in the parent partnership.

We have created the handbook to provide the information to parents to be informed on how the parent partnership is implemented, and the operating practices which support our mission of developing in young children a lifelong love of learning in partnership with parents. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the handbook.

### A2. SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Suzuki School operates as a year-round program and is open twelve (12) months per year except for certain holidays, teacher work days, and other dates specified on the annual calendar. The school is open from Monday through Friday from 7 AM until 6 PM. The school serves children as young as three (3) months of age and up to six (6) years of age or when the child enters an elementary program.

### A3. OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Suzuki philosophy was developed in collaboration with Dr. Shinichi Suzuki over thirty-five (35) years ago and is based on his approach to early childhood music education. Since that time, the school has enhanced this philosophy by incorporating emerging research and our own findings and experiences in early childhood education.

We are first and foremost a school, a place for the education of young children. This makes Suzuki somewhat unique in the landscape of early childhood programs. While many quality programs exist to provide childcare, this is not the profile of The Suzuki School. Our curriculum begins at birth because that is when education truly begins, and our unique approach is designed to meet all of the developmental needs of children aged birth to 6 years.

**The Mission of the Suzuki School:**

***"To develop in young children a life-long love of learning by honoring each child's natural talent and ability in partnership with the parents"***



The Suzuki School has certain values to which we adhere closely. We ask our leadership team, our teachers, and our parents to support these values:

1. We seek and value growth and learning in service of excellence.
2. We are committed to the well-being of our school community.
3. We believe children are prepared for life through holistic education.
4. We value emotional intelligence and honest consideration of others' perspectives.

## A4. ADMISSIONS

### Acceptance Criteria and Typical Timing:

Suzuki primarily accepts new families at either the start of the school year (on the first of August) or at the beginning of the Summer Session which starts the Thursday after Memorial Day. During other times of the year, students are accepted as attrition creates availability. Acceptances are based on a match of requested and available start dates, campus, birth dates, sibling status, application dates, and a determination by the school of how the family will fit with the school philosophy. Older children may be required to come in for an observation as a condition of acceptance before starting.

### Acceptance for Summer Session – New Families:

Families submitting an application for the Summer Session, which begins the Thursday after Memorial Day and runs through July are notified starting in late January as to their acceptance. Confirmation is required in the form of a perpetual security deposit in the amount of \$1,500.00, which must be received within seven (7) days of notification of acceptance.

**Please note:** Children enrolled for the Summer Session will be required to pay full tuition from the first day of the program regardless of actual start date.

### Acceptance for School Year (Beginning August) – New Families:

Families submitting an application for the upcoming school year will be notified by late April as to their acceptance. We do offer some early acceptances when an accurate projection of capacity can be determined. Confirmation is required in the form of a perpetual security deposit in the amount of \$1,500.00 which must be received within seven (7) days of notification of acceptance to ensure placement.

**Please note:** Children enrolled for the school year will be required to pay full tuition from the first day of the program regardless of actual start date.

### Limited Acceptance - New Families (during sessions):

During the course of the school year, we experience limited attrition. When this occurs, we accept children on the wait list according to the acceptance criteria above. The same

confirmation requirements apply.

### Admission of Siblings:

Families who are currently enrolled and wish to enroll a sibling into the twelve month program must complete an application and submit it in a timely manner. A perpetual security deposit in the amount of \$1,500.00 is due within seven (7) days of notification of acceptance to ensure placement.

### Changes to Anticipated Start Date – New Families:

If you wish to change the start date for your child after you have signed the tuition agreement and paid the security deposit, please contact the Admissions Director immediately at 404-841-3939, or email the requested change of the start date to [admissions@suzukischool.com](mailto:admissions@suzukischool.com). However, in this event, please understand that Suzuki may not be able to accommodate placement as of the newly requested enrollment date and that the deposit in this situation is non-refundable.

### Parent Interviews Prior to Admissions:

The Suzuki School prides itself on establishing strong partnerships with families from the start. A match in philosophy and expectations is of utmost importance to us in order to establish trusting relationships with our families. In order to ensure this happens, school leadership may ask parents to come in for a parent interview prior to being extended an offer for admissions. This time is meant to allow parents and school leadership to learn more about one another and to assess whether there is a good fit between parent and school.

## A5. CHANGES TO ANTICIPATED START DATE OR DECLINED OFFERS – CURRENT FAMILIES WITH SIBLINGS:

### Changes to Anticipated Start Date:

If you wish to change the start date for your child after you have signed the tuition agreement and paid the security deposit, please contact the Admissions Director immediately at 404-841-3939, or email the requested change of the start date to [admissions@suzukischool.com](mailto:admissions@suzukischool.com). You must provide a new requested start date, and you will be placed behind other sibling families requesting the same session with a pending application. The Suzuki School may not be able to accommodate placement as of the newly requested enrollment date and that the deposit in this situation is non-refundable. We do, however, remember that we allow current families to delay a sibling start by up to two (2) months from the offered acceptance date by paying half tuition for each of the months that were delayed.

### Declined Offers:

If a sibling family declines an offer which was extended for their child, the child is placed back on the waiting list only if a new date is requested in writing by the parents. If the parents do not provide a date, the application will be inactivated. Those children going back on the waitlist will be assigned a new application date and will be considered after sibling families with applications already submitted requesting the same enrollment time.

## Nondiscrimination Policy:

The Suzuki School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability in administration or education policies, or in employment.

## A6. PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

The parents of each child are required to complete an online pre-enrollment packet of information including contact information, medical emergency information, and authorization information. This packet **MUST** be submitted at least one week before the start of the child's first day of attendance. We **cannot allow your child's attendance** at the school until the pre-enrollment packet is completed as both The Suzuki School and *Bright from the Start*, the state licensing agency, requires that this information be complete on your child's first day of school.

All children are required to have a current immunization record on file at The Suzuki School in compliance with state regulations.

## A7. NEW PARENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Each incoming family is required to attend a New Parent Orientation Session; these are scheduled periodically throughout the School Year and the Summer Session. This informational presentation, which is hosted by a School Director, is designed to address in detail the operating practices and key policies of the School and to answer any questions that you may have. In addition, the New Parent Orientation addresses key policies associated with health and safety and will ask that you sign an acknowledgment that you understand and will adhere to these policies. Please note that we do not activate the PIN for the Automated Attendance System until the New Parent Orientation is completed.

## A8. UPDATE OF INFORMATION

Periodically, we request updated contact and emergency forms to ensure that all information remains current. It is crucial that the emergency contact information and medical information be correct. If, during the year, contact information changes, please inform us immediately. If the information on your child's Emergency Medical Information Sheet changes, you must request the form to update the information in order for EZ Care to be updated. Please note that we cannot accept email notifications since you are required to update the information in your child's permanent file.

## A9. ENROLLING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

Enrollment for children with special needs will be determined by the Suzuki Staff. Concerns which emerge after admission to the school will be addressed as they occur to determine the best course of action. We comply with the requirements of the Americans with

Disabilities Act in enrollment of these children.

## A10. PART TIME PROGRAM

The Part Time Program has been phased out in order to better honor all the children in the classrooms.

## A11. ENROLLING IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR AND SUMMER SESSION PROGRAMS

### Annual Summer Re-Enrollment Policy:

Summer is a time of transition for families as older children are graduating to elementary school, or families relocate. The start of the summer session is also a time that many new students are accepted into the school. As a result, each February you are asked to notify the school of your plan to attend The Suzuki School during the summer by paying a \$100 non-refundable summer registration fee which is included in the February invoice. This payment guarantees placement for the summer and if it is not paid, this space may be offered to another child. Graduating students who are staying for the summer session must stay for the entire session.

### Annual School Year Re-Enrollment Policy:

The new school year starts at the beginning of August. In order to plan enrollment for current and new families, we need for the current families to inform us of their plans for the upcoming school year in February. Our first priority is to ensure that each current family is assured a place for the upcoming school year. The February invoice will include a \$100 non-refundable fall registration fee. If the registration fee is not paid, the child's space may be offered to another child and your child's placement will not be guaranteed.

***Please see Section B10 for information on withdrawing your child mid-session and the notification requirements for doing so.***

Additional instructions for those who have applied for their child to attend a private school and are awaiting notification of acceptance:

If you have applied your child to a private school, you will typically receive notification of the status of the acceptance during the first week of April. If you are using The Suzuki School as your "backup" in the event your child is not accepted into private school, we will ask that you still complete the school re-enrollment process in February regarding summer plans. However, we will grant you until **the week after the published date of acceptances** to inform the school on the plans for the next school year.

## B. FEES

### B1. Tuition Fees

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Tuition Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in The Suzuki School and at the start of each school year unless a Perpetual Tuition Agreement has been signed. Tuition can be paid in one of three ways:

1. Checks: Each campus is supplied with a check drop box in the lobby. Please be sure to remit your check by the 5th of each month to avoid any late fees. Make your check out to the Suzuki School and please remember to write your child's name in the memo section.
2. ACH: We offer parents the option to pay via ACH with no additional cost. A link is provided in your monthly billing email right above the invoice attachment if you wish to use this option. Our service provider uses the Federal Reserve's electronic payment network used by financial institutions nationwide.
3. Credit Card: We also offer parents the option to pay tuition using credit card acceptance. Please note that there will be an additional fee for this service, and this amount will be added to your invoice when you select the credit card option. We are passing on our actual cost, which is currently estimated to be 2.99%.

Invoices are emailed to each family at the end of the month for the following month's tuition. Please be sure to supply us with the best e-mail address so that invoices may be received in a timely manner. Receipts will be available upon request.

Tuition does not include fees for extracurricular activities such as ballet or private music lessons. Please remember to mail tuition checks or other correspondence related to financial matters to The Suzuki School, 443 E. Paces Ferry Road, Atlanta, GA 30305 irrespective of the school location that your child attends.

The Suzuki School offers a multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled during the same school year. The youngest sibling pays the full tuition rate; the next youngest child's tuition is discounted at ten percent (10%) which only applies if the youngest sibling is attending full time.

The School operates solely on tuition. Annual tuition adjustments are effective in August of each year. Should you complete the application process prior to August 1st of any given year, you should be aware that a tuition increase will go into effect on August 1st and will not reflect the tuition rate which you have been shown previously.

No tuition credit will be given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for

closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, pandemics, or acts of God.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WE DO NOT RECEIVE MAIL AT 600 PEACHTREE BATTLE AVENUE!**

## B2. NON-PAYMENT OF TUITION

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at The Suzuki School; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying tuition by our deadlines, you should discuss the matter with the Finance Department or School Director immediately.

Tuition is always due in advance on the first of the month and is considered late if not received by the 5th, at which time a \$50 late payment fee will automatically be added to the account. If the adjusted account is not then cleared up by the 15th, an additional \$50 fee will automatically be imposed. If this twice-adjusted balance is not cleared up by the 25th, we will email a notice of de-enrollment effective at the end of the month, and we will proceed to offer the spot(s) to families on our waiting list. In this event, a final invoice will be provided and the balance will be immediately due and payable.

NSF Fees: A \$35 fee will be charged for tuition checks returned by the bank. Returned tuition checks will not be re-deposited; therefore, parents are responsible for re-issuing a second check.

## B3. SECURITY DEPOSIT

As of August 2018, when enrolling in the school, parents are required to pay a security deposit of \$1,500 which is treated as a perpetual deposit. Suzuki will hold this deposit so long as the child attends Suzuki. This deposit shall be: (a) returned to Parent within 15 days subsequent to child's last day at Suzuki, regardless of tenure, so long as Parent has followed all notice requirements as specified in the withdrawal notification section, or, (b) applied to Parent's last month's invoice, again so long as Parent has followed all notice requirements as specified herein, or, (c) applied to any balance owed should Parent default on any payments due, including payments due during the required notice period as specified herein. In no event shall any interest accrue on the perpetual deposit, regardless of the length of time held by Suzuki.

## B4. SUMMER AND SCHOOL YEAR REGISTRATION FEES

**Upcoming school year:** At the beginning of each calendar year we ask parents to re-enroll their child for the upcoming summer and fall sessions. Although we are continually assessing fit and working on strong partnerships with parents, during this time, the school takes special time to consider our students and families in order to assess whether parents continue to be supportive of the Suzuki mission and approaches. This process is in place to

ensure that the school feels that it is a good match for each family's needs. If there are concerns regarding the partnership between family and school during this time or any other time, school leadership will meet with the family to discuss. The school then reserves the right not to extend re-enrollment for the upcoming sessions or to terminate enrollment at any time if it is deemed necessary for the well-being of the child, family, or school. The School Year Registration fee of \$200 is due with the February tuition payment for the upcoming summer and school year sessions. This non-refundable fee applies to both the summer and school year (fall) sessions.

Summer session only: If a child is graduating at the end of the summer, they may opt to register for the summer only, upon paying the \$100 summer placement fee. This fee is also due with the February tuition payment. Summer includes the full months of both June and July.

## B5. LATE PICK UP FEES AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR OR WHEN THE CHILD IS SICK

### **End of School Day:**

The Suzuki School closes each night at 6:00 PM and on certain days earlier for meetings or events. After 6:00 PM, families will be charged additional fees for late pick up. We bring any single child remaining in a classroom to the lobby after 6:00 PM, and the classroom is closed at this time. A late fee charge of \$1 per minute per family after 6:00 PM (or the closing time if earlier) will be added to the next monthly invoice of families who arrive to pick up their child (ren) after this time.

For those families who are chronically late (defined as more than two times in a one month period), the late pick up fee will increase to \$5 per minute for the remainder of the month. The period of time for determining the days starts over each month on the 20th of the month (therefore the time period will be the 20th through the 19th of the next month).

Parents who are chronically late to pick up their child, especially when it extends into the evening hours, may be required to withdraw.

When a child is deemed sick at school:

- The school contacts parents to pick up their child when the child shows contagious illness symptoms. We first will contact parents via phone, and if not reached, will text or email the parent. **We require that parents pick up their child within one hour of first being contacted.**

*Effective June 1, 2013, if the parent does not pick up within one hour of being first contacted (e.g. when the first voice, text or email message was left, or conversation occurred), they will be charged \$1 per minute for each additional minute and this will be added to the monthly invoice. Parents who repeatedly pick up after one hour may be asked*

*to withdraw their child since it puts the community at risk.*

## **B6. FULL STEAM AHEAD**

The School closes throughout the year to provide teachers and staff an opportunity to replenish. These closings occur in the spring (spring break), Memorial Day week, summer (around the 4th of July), around Thanksgiving and Christmas. During this time, we offer Full STEAM Ahead if there are enough faculty members willing to staff the classrooms to a limited number of families. Limited Care is only offered based on staff availability and when offered, it is from 8 AM to 5 PM at an additional daily fee of \$75.00 per day.

The children enrolled in this program will be cared for by Suzuki teachers and substitutes who will receive additional compensation for each day worked taken from the fee charged for this service. Please understand that the Tuition Agreement anticipates closing for such breaks so that both faculty and children may enjoy this time with their families.

## **B7. DIAPER SUPPLY REPLENISHMENT**

We notify parents that they are low on supplies and that they are responsible for providing in a variety of ways (post-it note, on cubby, daily sheets, verbal communication at drop off/pick up). It is imperative that parents replenish important supplies like diapers and extra clothing promptly. If your child is out of diapers and you are unable to replenish them in a timely manner, we will purchase diapers for you and charge an administrative fee of \$50 to cover costs associated with staff time to pick up items and the cost of the diapers.

## **B8. REPLACEMENT WET BAGS**

The school provides each family with a wet bag free of charge when their child is learning to potty train. These wet bags meet the child's need for order, allows them to independently clean up after themselves, to learn and practice with zippers, and it gives them responsibility and ownership in the toiling and dressing process. In addition, these bags contain smelly messes and make it easier for parents to take them home! It is the parent's responsibility to clean the bag, when needed, and bring it to school each day.

In the event the wet bag is misplaced, broken, or if a parent would like to purchase additional bags, an additional fee of \$10 per bag will be added to the student account.

## **B9. PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL POLICY AND ASSOCIATED FEES**

Families may face extenuation circumstances that cause them to withdraw during the school year and not at the end of the school year or end of the summer session. If there is an



extenuating circumstance necessitating a mid-session withdrawal, Parent may withdraw his/her child(ren) between September 1st and the last day of April of any year by providing a minimum two-calendar-month written notice. Such written notice must be delivered no later than the first day of any month, and the withdrawal date must be the last day of the 2nd month thereafter, as Suzuki does not allow any mid-month proration's. In the event of such withdrawal by Parent, Parent shall pay all tuition and fees due through the date of termination at the time of delivery of such notice. In the event that Parent fails to provide the two calendar month written notice, Parents are required to pay, as liquidated damages, an amount equal to two (2) months' tuition.

**Outside Enrichment:** If your child is withdrawn during a session and is enrolled in an outside enrichment program, we will not be able to allow your child to continue in this enrichment due to regulatory compliance requirements.

## B10. TEMPORARY WITHDRAWALS

We allow parents to withdraw their child for a minimum of one (1) non-interrupted month and a maximum of two (2) non-interrupted months and reserve their space by paying half (½) of the tuition, in advance, for the period during which they will be gone. This program is only sustainable if parents adhere to the required notice requirements. Parents may request this only one time per year, even if it is done for only one month since it does have an impact on a classroom and the acclimation of a child. In addition, the temporary withdrawal must start at the beginning of a month. We require at least 60 days in advance for temporary withdrawals using the withdrawal notification application on the parent portal. Parents who do not provide 60 days notice, cannot avail themselves to this program.

# C. COMMUNICATION

## C1. OUR OPEN DOOR POLICY AND COMMUNICATION

In order to have integrity of communication with parents, we ask that you address all feedback and concerns directly with the school. This is a fundamental part of our open door policy, and it works. We strive to always be transparent with our parents on issues facing classrooms and how we are addressing them. We ask parents to also be transparent since this is a key element in a successful partnership.

We view communication with parents as an extremely important element in our partnership with them. We employ a variety of methods to communicate to parents – email, posters, letters, newsletters, automated call system, the parent access section of the website, texting etc. Schools have a tremendous amount of information to communicate to parents. We ask that you please read this important information in a timely manner!

Memos, notes, and other forms of communication will be sent home several times a week. Please check your child's cubby daily to keep abreast of new information. Each Friday, we send out an informational email to all parents. We also use OneCallnow, an automated voice delivery system, for time sensitive information. The Parents Only section of our website contains important information and forms as well as the current menu and weekly email blast. Parents may access this section with the password "Practical Life." Parent Information Boards are located outside of each classroom door. Please take time to read them consistently for important information relating to your child's day.

## C2. STAFF DIRECTORY

See Addendum for campus specific contact information.

The School operates with an open-door policy. We will always take the time to talk with you if you have questions or concerns. Feel free to stop by the Front Office and discuss any observations, suggestions, or concerns with the leadership team. If you would like further discussion, please schedule an appointment or ask to immediately talk to the School Director or her designee.

## C3. PARENT DIRECTORY

A parent directory is provided in the parent access section of the Suzuki website and is updated periodically throughout the year. The directory lists the families and children currently attending the school who have given permission to provide their e-mail only. Please realize that The Suzuki School Directory is for the express use of the families enrolled in the school and must not be used for any other purpose.

## C4. EMAIL AND CELL PHONE TEXTING

Email communications are one of the primary ways in which we communicate at Suzuki. We use email to send announcements to parents about upcoming events and the PVA, to send out the weekly email blast, to send out electronic copies of the monthly statements, and to communicate with parents on administrative matters. Most importantly, in the event of an emergency, we use email to notify all parents simultaneously of a problem (e.g. water main break in Buckhead). As with the directory, we will not distribute or sell your email addresses to third parties.

The Suzuki School utilizes cell texting in the event of emergencies to contact parents, including in the event of illnesses. For this reason it is important to always have a current cell phone number with the associated carrier information for each parent.

## C5. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Two planned parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in October and April/May of each

school year to discuss your child's progress. These conferences will be scheduled by your child's classroom teachers. See the school calendar for further information.

Parents are encouraged to meet with their classroom teachers if they have concerns any time throughout the year. We ask, however, that these appointments be made in advance, as each teacher has classroom responsibilities that must supersede his/her ability to converse with parents. In addition, there are times when certain issues should not be discussed in front of the children. The administrative staff is always available to meet with you. We thank you for your cooperation regarding this matter.

## **C6. COMMUNICATION REGARDING EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

When it is necessary to close the school due to inclement weather, pertinent information will be made available at [wsbtv.com](http://wsbtv.com); please click on the closings icon where school closings are listed in alphabetical order. Closing information may also be obtained through WSB TV, Channel 2, or AM 750 on your radio dial. We will make every effort to post this information no later than 6:15 AM, but we cannot guarantee a time by which it will show on the "school closings" scribe on your TV.

Should the school be required to close for other reasons, we will attempt to send out an email, followed by a onecallnow message. If children are not picked up by the specified time, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick-up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be notified so that pick-up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call of the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the school. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

Please note that the school makes its best efforts to always be open during the scheduled hours. However, in the event of inclement weather, we follow the direction of the Department of Transportation – and not simply the condition of the area streets of Atlanta. Many of our teachers and staff travel long distances, so their safety, as well of that of the families, is taken into consideration. There is not a tuition credit granted to parents in the event that the school is closed for Emergency reasons or inclement weather since the teacher salaries and operating costs are still incurred.

## **C7. PARENTAL ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS AND THE FACILITY**

Access to Student Records: Custodial parents have complete access to student records including academic records. If required, we can provide photocopies of these records (we cannot release original documents). Please understand that only legal guardians may

request the files (in writing). We have access to the files for one (1) year after a child has been withdrawn.

Please be aware that we are not allowed to share independent school recommendations with you, according to strict guidelines provided by the schools. Sharing this information would not only jeopardize your child's acceptance, but also the acceptances of other Suzuki children to that school.

Access to Facility: Custodial parents and authorized pickups are entitled to access of any area of the facility where children are allowed access.

## **C8. COMMUNICATION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Please feel free to contact your child's teachers during the school day. You may contact the Level I teachers at anytime throughout the day; however, in Levels II-Primary, you may contact the teachers only during the nap period. We ask that you not contact teachers during teaching or planning periods (as noted on the classroom schedule) as this can be very disruptive to the classroom routine. In addition, you may email each class level. Email will be checked by the teaching team at minimum of three (3) times per week; however, please note that all emails that require immediate attention should be sent to the front desk staff. Please do not send time sensitive information via email. Email addresses for each campus level and front desk may be found in the Addendum.

## **C9. COMMUNICATION CONCERNING ROUTINE MATTERS AT THE SCHOOL REGARDING YOUR CHILD**

From time to time a child may incur an injury, illness, adverse reaction to a medication, allergies, or an altercation/incident with another person. In this case, the parent is contacted by phone by a school representative. Depending on the severity, this may be followed up in writing, and regulatory agencies may be contacted. Accident and Incident Reports are signed by the parent and a copy is maintained at the school.

# **D. PARENT RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

## **D1. PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

The mission of the Suzuki School is "to develop in young children a life-long love of learning by honoring each child's natural talent and ability in partnership with the parents." This

mission statement recognizes the importance of a strong parent partnership. Dr. Suzuki recognized that “good teachers at home and at school provide the very best learning environment for small children.”

The school and parents must partner to provide the appropriate support for each child in his or her journey at Suzuki. This journey starts when you decide to enroll your child at the school and attend information sessions; it continues when you go through the school’s New Parent Orientation. When you partner with the teachers and support staff while at Suzuki, your child will receive the best possible guidance in their development during the first five years. We provide regular on-going parenting training support and discussion groups, online resources, guest speakers, and other information sessions designed to increase parents’ ability to provide the best experiences for their children as well as to gain increased insight into their development. As partners in your child’s education, we expect parents to participate in these opportunities.

For each child to be supported successfully, the school staff and parents rely on a relationship built on mutual trust and support. The teachers and support staff collectively are involved in addressing any concerns you may have. We require that parents and teachers bring any concerns to each other in a forthright and timely manner so that they may be addressed. In this parent partnership families and teachers must each be honored. On our part, we promise to respect families’ customs and practices and invite your involvement with the school. We ask that Suzuki teachers be recognized as early childhood educators rather than caregivers. We hire exceptional educators of young children, provide ongoing training and development for them and we require parents to recognize them as professionals.

## D2. HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL AT SCHOOL

The following suggestions will be useful in helping your child make an easy adjustment to school routines and expectations:

- Establish and maintain routines with your child so that he/she will know what to expect during the day - young children require and thrive on consistency and predictability
- Make sure your child receives adequate sleep each night. Research shows that children at this young age should sleep for a minimum of twelve to fourteen (12-14) hours within a 24-hour period, and that this sleep plays a critical role in their development
- Offer your child breakfast each morning and encourage him/her to eat.
- Keep school personnel informed of any stressful situations at home.
- Your child’s growing independence is essential to their overall development. Encourage your child to put away toys and personal items at home. Assign your child meaningful tasks (putting their dirty clothes in a hamper, helping to set the table, watering plants, etc) that keep the home running smoothly. Allow him/her to

take more and more responsibility on self-care tasks as you and the teachers note his readiness to do so.

- Encourage your child to use his/her words and use an enriched vocabulary.
- Be kind, yet firm when dealing with your child. Firmness means using appropriate parenting principles; kindness means maintaining dignity and respect for yourself and your child.
- Involve your child in working out a solution to a problem, whenever possible.
- Refrain from using your cell phone while dropping off and picking up your child: your attention given to your child is a powerful message and fulfills an important need for them
- Always take note of the words and the tone of voice you use with your child. Do not talk down to him. Do not criticize. Do not use sarcasm. Do not use words that shame, intimidate, or discourage them. Words can't be taken back and can scar the soul of the young child.
- Never do for a child what he/she can do for him/herself.
- Allow him/her to enter his/her school him/herself, without being carried, as soon as he/she can walk confidently. Encourage he/her to say his/her good-byes to you as soon as he/she enters his/her classroom, and allow him/her to put away his/her belongings herself.

### D3. SOLICITATION OF OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY

It is the policy of The Suzuki School that parents and staff may not solicit each other either on the premises or through use of Suzuki-provided contact information. Please do not place brochures, magazines or "gifts" in the lobby area for any ventures that are not Suzuki-related and approved by a school director.

It is the policy of the Suzuki School that parents cannot solicit teachers for employment opportunities outside of Suzuki. If it is determined by Suzuki that a parent has solicited staff for employment, the family may be immediately terminated from the school. Please refer to the Tuition Agreement for additional financial penalties. We value our teachers and their continued employment at the school for the benefit of all families.

From time to time, parents solicit the school to provide goods or services including but not limited to, office supplies, credit card services, enrichment services, consulting services, etc. Please understand that we have long term relationships with vendors. In addition, we are concerned about the potential impact of a parent as a vendor interfering with the parent partnership. For this reason, and other reasons, we don't hire parents as vendors.

### D4. NO BABYSITTING ALLOWED POLICY

As of June 1, 2015 the Suzuki School no longer allows Suzuki personnel to babysit for families who attend the school, no matter which campus. Parents who ignore this policy and solicit faculty are subject to having their children dis-enrolled from the school.

## D5. PROBLEM RESOLUTION

If you have a complaint regarding the classroom or learning environment we encourage you to speak with your child's teacher. If this does not resolve the issue, or if the complaint is concerning the school, please bring it to the attention of the Director. If you feel that the Director has not adequately addressed the issue, you can reach out to the President, CFO, or another Campus Director. If you wish to be anonymous, or have concerns about confidentiality you can contact a hotline which has been established with an outside company. That phone number is (844) 331-2432.

## E. CONFIDENTIALITY AND EMPLOYEE PRIVACY

### E1. CONFIDENTIALITY

Within The Suzuki School, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of The Suzuki School who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents, and/or children will not be shared with parents, as The Suzuki School strives to protect the right to privacy for every family. Confidential information includes but is not limited to the following: disability information, HIV/AIDS status, or other health related information of anyone associated with The Suzuki School. Please note, that from time to time, pictures of children who have experienced accidents or injuries, or who have a symptom which may appear contagious will be sent to the nurse on staff at the school.

Outside the school environment, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when you have given us express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

### E2. PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO IMAGES

The Suzuki School utilizes digital photos and videos of students, teachers, and school activities for internal communications with parents and for teacher training, as well as for external marketing and publicity purposes.

Internal Communications: The forms of communications to parents or for teacher training that may include a photograph of your child include the following: the weekly email blast, classroom specific emails, Instagram classroom updates (which are private and protected), and videos of classroom activities that are either posted in the blasts, classroom

communications, or on the Lobby flat screen TV above the parent resource table. Additionally, these images may also be posted to a private online image hosting website -- which is password protected -- and may be used for internal training materials, as well as other forms of communication specifically directed to the parent or teacher community. All teachers and children who are at Suzuki are included in internal communications regardless of whether there is a Photographic Release on file. Please recognize that for the privacy of other families, our pictures are copyrighted and, as such, may not be used for any purpose on any public site or in any public manner. Unfortunately, we cannot provide you with any video copies of your child in the classroom since there may be other children included in the images.

Internal Communications regarding health status or accidents: From time to time, photos are taken of accidents, injuries, or unknown markings on a child to be sent to the school nurse. Whenever possible, we ask that the parents send these images, or they are sent by an individual on the support team. These images are used to help guide the nurse on a course of treatment or next steps.

Marketing and Publicity Communications: In order for a child to be included in marketing communications such as permanent pictures on the website, on marketing collateral, or for publicity reasons, the parent must provide a Photographic and Video Release.

### E3. TEACHER PRIVACY

The partnership between Suzuki teachers and parents plays a crucial role in our mission as it facilitates the proper communication between the home and the school. As we enter into the "digital age," we realize that we must re-evaluate new methods of communication -- text messaging, online business networking groups (such as LinkedIn), social networking sites (such as Facebook), email, and other emerging technologies -- as well as the resulting implications for family partnership.

As a school community, we believe that the relationship between families and teachers must always be a professional one. Since many families and teachers use technology for various purposes and communicate differently in their professional and personal roles, we ask that social networking sites in particular not be shared by Suzuki personnel and Suzuki families. Some of our teachers and parents are not comfortable denying requests to be invited into a group; some view this request as an invasion of privacy. In either case, such communications can easily cross a subtle line between the professional relationship and the personal one and can therefore become an obstacle in the teacher-parent partnership. We have instructed our teachers on professional and personal etiquette in this matter -- they may not request or solicit parents to join their online networking groups, and we ask the same of our families.



## F. HOURS OF OPERATION / SCHOOL CALENDAR

### F1. SCHOOL HOURS

The Suzuki School opens at 7:00 AM and closes at 6:00 PM. Children may arrive no earlier than 7:00 AM and should come no later than 9:00 AM on a routine basis. If your child is going to be late or absent, we would appreciate a call to the school so that we may inform the teachers.

### F2. STAFF MEETINGS AND STAFF TRAINING

Staff meetings are held in the early mornings throughout the school year and are over by 7:45 AM on these days. The school will open its doors at 7:50 AM on these days.

From time to time during the school year, we also host staff training sessions and may have half day training sessions or close the school in the late afternoon. Staff meetings are necessary to establish the day-to-day operations of the program and must be held when all teachers are available to participate. The specific dates will be listed in both the summer and fall enrollment packets and will also be listed on the activity calendars that are available on the parent portal. Reminders will be posted throughout the school and in the weekly email blast the week before the meetings are to be held.

### F3. HOLIDAYS AND OTHER SCHOOL CLOSINGS

For detailed information, please refer to The Suzuki School Year Calendar which can be found on the Suzuki website. When an observed holiday falls on a weekend, we will be closed on the following Monday, in accordance with other school, government, and business closings. Please note that from time to time we need to adjust the school calendar, and we try to give as much notice as possible.

### F4. LIMITED CARE OPTIONS DURING CLOSINGS

Limited Daycare will be offered for an additional fee for certain business days throughout the year and is staffed by Suzuki personnel and long-term substitutes. Limited Care is offered when there is enough staff willing to work on these days and is therefore published a couple weeks in advance. Spaces are filled on a first-come, first-served basis up to a limited number of children.

## G. MEDICAL AND HEALTH POLICIES

### G1. IMMUNIZATIONS

All children must meet state standards for immunization. A medical exemption is applicable when the child has a long-term condition that does not allow immunizations to be done (a doctor's note is required). The school does not accept religious exemptions since it puts other children who cannot be immunized at risk. This policy went into effect February, 2015.

The law further requires that an updated "Certificate of Immunization" must be on file for every child enrolled in the School. We require a Certificate of Immunization prior to enrollment. Our campuses are required to notify the State Department of Health and the local Health Department in cases of student absences due to serious communicable diseases.

Immunization certificates must be readily available in the event of a disease outbreak. The diseases, which must be kept updated on the "certificate of Immunization," include the following: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella Zoster. If immunization records are not up-to-date, a parent may be required by the state regulatory agency which inspects the records to withdraw their child from the school until the up-to-date records are submitted to the school.

### G2. HEALTH AND MEDICATION POLICIES

In order to provide a happy and healthy experience at school for each child, we must ask that parents observe the health and medication guidelines outlined in a separate health and medication policy which can be accessed on our website or at the School.

### G3. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Please notify the Front Office when your child or any family members are exposed to communicable diseases. This will allow us to watch for symptoms and enable us to notify all parents within twenty-four (24) hours of any in-school illness listed on the DHR Communicable Disease Chart, posted in the lobby area. We notify parents of communicable diseases in several ways: on a whiteboard outside the particular classroom, by sending a letter home to parents in the affected classroom or adjourning classrooms (if more detailed information is needed), and school wide if it is highly contagious or serious. Your confidentiality in this, as in all matters, will be maintained. In addition, on the parent access section of the website, we have posted the Childhood Infectious Illnesses Communicable Disease Recommendations Chart which is published by Bright from the Start (this

information was prepared by Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta). The schools closely follow the guidance provided in these documents.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This helps the school to monitor trends around contagious symptoms that may emerge. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis.

## G4. MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a medical emergency, these steps will be taken:

- If it is a minor medical emergency such as an adverse reaction to medication, minor allergic reactions, or other minor medical emergencies, the parent is immediately contacted to get direction on the next steps.
- If an ambulance service is deemed necessary, 911 is called. All children are requested to be taken to hospitals closest to the campus, which may be found in the Addendum for each campus. Note; The cost of such ambulance service is the responsibility of the parent.
- The parent(s) are then informed by phone, if not already done so.
- If the parents are not available, the emergency contacts are notified unless it is a minor medical emergency.
- All procedures are written up at the conclusion of the episode and sent to Bright from the Start
- A representative of Bright from the Start may contact you to ensure that the proper procedures were followed

The school has acquired student accident insurance, which covers out-of-pocket medical costs up to \$1,320. This typically covers expenses incurred in the deductible portion of the insurance policy. A short claims form must be completed by the parent and directed to the controller. The school will then submit this form as well as any other associated medical bills to the accident insurance company for approval and subsequent payment.

## G5. CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES OR OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide written documentation to the school concerning their allergies, asthma, and other medical conditions. The parents are asked to provide us with detailed written instructions before we start administering treatment. ***Failure to provide us with appropriate emergency medication or associated paperwork will require us to exclude your child from care until the proper medication and paperwork is in place to ensure the safety of your child while in our care.*** You will need to have the physician complete the first part of the Allergy and Asthma Action Plan. The following two (2) forms must be completed in their entirety:

### **Allergy and Asthma Action Plan:**

A signed copy of this form must be on file, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment, or when the allergy is discovered. This form is also used to document asthma or other food restrictions such as gluten intolerances. Please do not use this form to request food preferences such as "no juice" or "no sugar."

### **Waiver and Release of Claims for Medical Conditions INCLUDING Allergies, Asthma, and Special Needs:**

Parents must also execute a "Waiver and Release of Claims for Medical Conditions" form. This form acknowledges that Suzuki cannot provide specialized care to the child based on the child's condition, and that said Parent will release and hold harmless the School and its employees if they exercise the normal degree of duty, skill, and care.

If you are requesting that we administer an EpiPen to your child on an emergency basis, please also complete the following form:

### **Waiver and Release of Liability for Administering Emergency Care to Children with Severe Allergies:**

This form is also a waiver and release form and must be signed by the parent and the school. This form is for those parents that are asking us to administer emergency care for children with severe allergies that may include use of an EPI-PEN.

### **PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE FORMS SHOULD BE UPDATED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS BY THE PARENTS AND THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN.**

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

When a child is moved up from one classroom to the next, a parent is responsible for ensuring that the new teachers are aware of any allergies and courses of treatment. In addition, if special equipment is provided, the parent is responsible for moving it from one classroom to the next. Please talk to your child's teachers to make sure that appropriate signage detailing your child's allergies/condition is displayed in the classroom.

## **G6. SEMESTER CHANGES/MOVE-UPS - STORAGE AND TRAINING REGARDING MEDICATIONS**

We require that all medications be returned to the family any time your child is to be moved to a new class level. When a child is moved from one classroom to another, his/her parent is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that the teachers are aware of any allergies, food restrictions (such as vegetarian), and special medical conditions

- Relocating any equipment and medications to the new classroom
- Training of the teachers in the classroom on the use of the equipment and the specialized needs of the child. Please verify that the written training instructions that you developed are in the classroom. Depending on the nature of your child's special needs, you may need to train all the classroom teachers since their schedule is based on rotating hours
- Periodically verifying that the medical equipment you provided is in good working order
- Ensuring that all signage is posted about your child's allergies or special medical needs and that this information is accurate
- Providing periodic updates to the Front Desk staff, including any new allergy updates
- Ensuring that all medications are current and not expired

## G7. AUTHORIZATION TO DISPENSE EXTERNAL PREPARATIONS

When you enroll your child at Suzuki we ask that you provide a one-time authorization of non prescription external preparations which can be applied. This is the Authorization to Dispense External Preparation Form and it includes:

### **First Aid Ointments:**

- Emollient ointments such as Neosporin, Aquaphor, insect bite and anti-itch, or similar ointments (OTC ointments to facilitate healing or sooth chapped or irritated skin).
- Wound cleaning such as Bactine or similar ointments (OTC ointments or sprays used to clean scrapes, bites, etc)
- Band-Aids

### **Baby Related:**

- Non-Prescription Diaper Ointment (such as A&D, Desitin, Vaseline, etc)
- Baby Powder (applied only in the infant rooms)
- Baby Wipes

### **Skin Protection:**

- Sun Screen
- Insect Repellant

# H. DROP-OFF / PICK-UP / PARKING LOGISTICS

## H1. GENERAL DROP-OFF

All parents are required to come into the building and to bring their child directly to his/her classroom, notifying the teacher(s) that the child has arrived. Dropping off in the parking lot or at the door is **STRICTLY FORBIDDEN!** Please do not leave other children, your purse, or any valuables in your car when bringing your child into the building. For your own protection, **LOCK YOUR CAR** regardless of the time of day or length of time that you plan to be inside the school. When entering the building to drop off a child, you must log in through the Automated Attendance Tracking System. It is important from a security perspective that you do not allow anyone to walk in with you!

**Hand Washing:** We ask you to wash your hands and those of your child when they are being picked up in the afternoon. The teachers will inform you which sink is to be used for hand washing.

**Picking up at Enrichment Activities:** If you are picking up your child from an enrichment activity, we ask that you stop by the Front Desk to get a name badge. We do not allow the vendors to be placed in a position of releasing children to parents or authorized pickups since they are not in the position of being familiar with our family community.

## H2. LATE ARRIVAL

The learning portion of the day at The Suzuki School begins at 8:30 AM depending upon the particular classroom schedule. Please understand that it is important that parents get their children to school on time since it is highly disruptive to the classroom when children arrive during instructional times. In order to honor both your child and the other children in the classroom, it is extremely important that children in Pre-Primary through Primary come to school each day before 9:00 AM. On the occasional days when this is not possible, your child must come into the classroom in a manner that does not distract the teachers or the class. Parents must not interrupt the teachers or the children in any way. Should the parent wish to give a message to the teacher, inform the Front Desk (for time sensitive communication) or send an email. These are the only appropriate method of communication with the teacher at this particular time.

Some campuses have chosen to have parents drop off at the front desk when arriving after 9:00 AM. This may mean that parents have to wait until a classroom faculty member is

available to pick up your child from the lobby. To avoid potential delays with your drop off, please plan to arrive by 9:00 AM on a routine basis. Please understand that late arrivals are highly disruptive to the classrooms, to the Front Office, and to the instructional period. If a family cannot comply with the requirement of having their child at the school before 9:00 AM on a consistent basis, they will be asked to schedule an appointment with the School Director. Continued violations of this policy can lead to disenrollment of your child, as this is an important part of our teaching philosophy and this is viewed as a philosophical mismatch between school and parent. Unfortunately, the school cannot be highly flexible on this issue since it impacts not just the individual child but also the learning environment. Therefore, if a family regularly ignores this policy, The Suzuki School reserves the right to reconsider a child's placement in the school.

### H3. AUTOMATED ATTENDANCE TRACKING

Each campus tracks attendance for the safety of students. As such, we employ methods that you can explore in your attached Addendum.

### H4. PICK UP

Children staying the full day must be picked up no later than 6:00 PM each day. Any child staying later than 6 PM will be charged Late Pickup Fees (See Section B6).

Parents or authorized pickups are required to come into the school and to go directly to their child's classroom for pick-up. Always notify the teacher(s) that you are leaving with your child. Once a parent has left the classroom with a child, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on Suzuki premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child, and they are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care. Please do not leave from the playground exits since doing so creates an unsafe environment for the children, and alarms will sound!

### H5. AUTHORIZED PICKUPS

If anyone other than the custodial parent must pick up your child (including another Suzuki parent), he/she must be on the Authorized Pick-up and Emergency Notification Master Control Form and must present a picture ID. If you require someone who is not on this list to pick up your child, you must call the school and submit written notice of your request to the office personnel (please do not email these notifications as we may not be aware that they have been sent!). This designated individual must also present a picture ID before we will release your child to his/her care.

If a child is picked up by someone other than the parent or a frequent authorized pick up,

this infrequent or occasional pick up is required to either use the Automated Attendance System or stop by the Front Desk to sign in. We have three (3) classifications for authorized pickups: "frequent," "occasional," and "one time". They are described as follows:

### **Frequent Authorized Pickups**

Those who pick up a child at least weekly and are assigned a unique PIN. They are not required to stop by the Front Desk during drop off or pick up. The Front Desk Personnel will make the final determination that an individual is assigned the "Frequent Authorized Pickup" status.

### **Occasional Authorized Pickups**

Those who pick up a child less than weekly. They are required to stop by the Front Desk and must wear a name badge which clearly indicates that they are an authorized pickup and lists both their name and the child's name. Upon greeting the occasional authorized pickup, the teacher must confirm the information on the identification badge – i.e. the correct child is being picked up, or that their name matches the name of the person you were expecting (if the parents had told you this ahead of time).

### **One Time Authorized Pickups**

Individuals who are not indicated as an on-going authorized pickup but may be doing so for the one (1) occasion only (for example, in the event of an emergency or impromptu playmate). Please note that these individuals must also have a name badge issued by the Front Desk – even if they are a Suzuki parent.

If someone comes to the classroom or playground who has bypassed our safety steps, the teacher must send them to the Front Desk. **NOTE: The teacher may NEVER release a child to an unfamiliar person who does not wear a badge, even though he/she is told that the pickup is authorized and/or familiar to others on the Suzuki staff.**

### **Sibling families**

If there is more than one child attending the school and the Authorized Pickup Information is different, than the information from the most recent child enrolled will be used.

## **H6. CAR SEATS**

We provide limited car seat storage at each campus. We must reserve this space for families who share the responsibility for dropping-off and picking-up. The Suzuki School also owns a number of backup car seats for emergencies and depends on parents to return them. Parents or other caregivers who need to borrow a school-owned car seat must leave a deposit of \$20 with the Front Office; this deposit will be refunded when the car seat is returned.



## H7. PARENTS' RIGHTS IN CUSTODY OR PARENTING DISPUTES

Some families find themselves in situations where separation or divorce is imminent or final. Although the circumstances differ with each family, in some instances, this can result in a hostile situation with one or both parents involved and it can frequently have an impact on the relationship of the family with the school.

### **Separation or Divorce in Process:**

We recognize that the period when working through a separation or divorce can be highly stressful and may create tremendous anxiety for both the parents and for the child who is attending Suzuki. It is important that during this time, that this situation is communicated to the Campus leadership. Please be mindful that we cannot become involved in this conflict or nor can we take sides with one parent over another. To that end, we cannot honor requests to provide statements on behalf of one parent or another as part of a custody hearing or case, as well as any other requests that put our partnership with either parent at risk. Our focus must remain on the child, and we ask that each parent honor our relationship with the other and not place constraints around this, unless it is CLEARLY defined in a court order. Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in the care of The Suzuki School, as provided by law.

### **Parent Partnership and Communications:**

We cannot become a communication intermediary or be asked to resolve differences between parents concerning the welfare of their child. This includes but is not limited to resolving payment disputes, determining who is allowed to pick up their child, seeking permission of additional attendees at parent-teacher conferences, documenting our observations of the child for litigation, notifying one parent of the other's actions or whereabouts, contacting parents when their child is present/not present, etc. We will use our best judgment as an equal partner to each parent, but we cannot allow ourselves to be placed in a position of negotiation between parents or in having to consult an attorney to interpret a court order that is not specific in its direction.

### **Custody Orders:**

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (such as but not limited to Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), The Suzuki School must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. We must have the entire order – not just sections that a parent/guardian feels are appropriate. The School personnel will then complete a Child Custody Order Summary and require parents with access to the child at school to sign the form.

For custody orders only, the orders of the court will be followed unless both custodial parent(s) request in writing a more liberal variation of the order. If at any time one of the

parents decides to challenge the more liberal interpretation, we will revert back to the court order. "Liberal interpretation" refers to flexibility in matters such as custodial parents picking up on days other than their own, etc.

### **Violation of Court Orders:**

The Suzuki School reserves the right to dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon the school property and chooses to do so. If parents do not consistently adhere to a court order, or if it is so complex that the school cannot comply with it, we may exercise our right to ask that your child not attend the school. The Suzuki School cannot have a child at the school when the child's parent is prohibited access and chooses not to follow the court order. Furthermore, if at any time the Suzuki School in good faith believes that a volatile situation may exist between parents for any reason, Suzuki reserves the right to prohibit that child's attendance at Suzuki, and in such a case, any unused but paid tuition and/or deposits will be returned subject to court certification of ownership of such unused tuition and or deposits.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Suzuki School, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Suzuki School cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Suzuki School suggests that the parent keep the child home from school until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. The Suzuki School staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise. In addition, we cannot put our staff in the position of trying to physically stop a non-custodial parent from accessing his/her child. In this event, our remedy is to call the police.

Digital Images: Also, in the event a court order is in effect, we require that 3 digital images of the non-custodial parent be provided to the school in addition to three (3) pictures of the parent. These pictures are available to show to the teachers and to the police if a situation arises where that parent comes to the school.

Authorized Pickups: The Suzuki School system for tracking authorized pickups is established by family and does not have the ability to track separate authorized pickups for each parent. As a result, the authorized pickups must be approved by both parties as a condition for the children being enrolled at the school. Please understand that the Front Desk staff is not in the position to monitor that authorized pickups are arriving on the correct day.

## **I. TRANSPORTATION**

The school does not provide transportation services for children or families at the school.

## J. SUPPLIES AND ATTIRE

### J1. INFANT SUPPLIES AND UNIQUE REQUIREMENTS (Level I and younger Level II)

**The Suzuki School will provide the following for infants:**

- Cribs, playpens, swings, walkers, etc.
- Sleep sacks, sheets
- Bibs
- Burp cloths, wash cloths
- Play equipment
- Table food (*if appropriate*)
- Diaper changing supplies
- Whole Milk (12 – 24 months)

**The Suzuki School does not provide the following items nor provide the following services:**

- Formula/Breast Milk (*all bottles must be marked with first and last name, as well as current date*); unused formula will be disposed of after a 24-hour period

Please note: We only allow plastic bottles for safety purposes. If you provide breast milk, we have special bands to put around the bottle indicating as such.

- Jar baby food (*please label*)
- Infant cereal
- Diapers
- Swaddling blanket (if you bring a swaddling blanket it must be accompanied by a completed Suzuki School form by the physician authorizing its use.)
- Extra clothing (please ensure that you dress your child in clothing that can get stained!).

We do not allow Wubbanubs, parents to bring in blankets, or any items which may pose a choking hazard into the School.

Please understand that we have very limited space for each diaper bag or book bag in the designated cubby for your child. We require that all bags be no larger than twelve (12) inches by twelve (12) inches and must fit into the cubby.

If you have a young infant, we require that you introduce your child to sleeping in a crib and using a baby bottle before starting at the school. In addition, infants' needs are addressed according to the Montessori philosophy which is not congruent with some sleeping techniques used by families (such as Mom's on Call and Baby Wise). In this case, the Montessori philosophy will be used at school.

## J2. SUPPLIES – TODDLERS (Older Level II through Pre-Primary)

### **The Suzuki School will provide the following for toddlers:**

- Whole milk until 2nd birthday
- 1% milk after 2nd birthday
- Breakfast snack
- Afternoon snack
- Hot lunch
- Sleeping cots and sheets (single or double)
- Diaper changing supplies
- Educational materials, equipment, and media
  
- Wet bag for children who are potty training.

### **The Suzuki School will not provide the following:**

- Diapers
- Extra clothing (please ensure that you dress your child in clothing that can get stained!).
- Blankets (for certain classrooms) for naptime (parents – do not forget to take home and wash these weekly! If you forget to bring a blanket, we will provide one for your child). Also, please make sure that the blankets are small and can fit in a small grocery bag. A blanket the size of a receiving blanket and which is not thick is ideal.

Please understand that we have very limited space for each diaper bag or book bag in the designated cubby for your child. We require that all bags be no larger than twelve (12) inches by twelve (12) inches and must fit into the cubby.

## J3. SUPPLIES – PRE-SCHOOLERS (Primary)

### **The Suzuki School will provide the following for preschoolers:**

- 1% Milk / Apple Juice
- Breakfast snack
- Morning snack
- Afternoon snack

- Hot lunch
- Sheets (single or double)
- Diaper changing supplies
- Educational materials, supplies, equipment and media

**The Suzuki School will not provide the following:**

- Diapers
- Extra clothing (please ensure that you dress your child in clothing that can get stained!).
- Blankets for naptime (*parents – do not forget to take home and wash these weekly! If you forget to bring a blanket, we will provide one for your child*). Also, please make sure that the blankets are small and can fit in a small grocery bag. A blanket the size of a receiving blanket and which is not thick is ideal. ***This will not be applicable through the Ponce City Market Campus.***
- Backpacks or school bags. Please understand that we have very limited space for each diaper bag or book bag in the designated cubby for your child. We require that all bags be no larger than twelve (12) inches by twelve (12) inches and must fit into the cubby.

## J4. APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

**All Children:**

The children are very active at Suzuki – both in the classroom and on the playgrounds. When on the playground, we encourage them to climb, slide, jump, run, skip – all to develop their large motor skills. It is important that children are addressed so that it does not interfere with their ability to develop these large motor skills, or that it does not contribute to an injury. For girls, we ask that parents not dress them in large billowy dresses – they are a tripping and falling hazard when climbing. In addition, the shoes that a young child wears should be form fitting, appropriate sized, and with traction. We require that all children wear shoes that are closed toe, form fitting, and that provide traction. The following types of shoes are prohibited for children to wear during the school day: crocs, flip flops, or open-toed sandals.

**For Children Learning to Walk:**

Many of the children in Level II and the young children in Pre-Primary are learning to become confident walkers. We work very closely with them on their walking skills and confidence in walking. We cannot reiterate enough the importance of wearing proper shoes at this age – form fitting shoes, shoe soles that do not slide, proper arch support, and preferably shoes that go around the ankle. We strongly recommend that you make the investment to purchase Stride Rite or Buster Brown shoes since they are engineered for this age group and meet all of these requirements. We strongly recommend that you purchase shoes that have been fitted for your child’s foot and refrain from purchasing shoes that your child will “grow into.”

**Special Clothing:**

- Please do not send your child in clothing that is “special” since they can be very messy, and also we at times use cleaning products that have Clorox in them. We would not want for their special outfit to get ruined!

- If your child requires special attire such as custom shoe inserts, please make sure that you inform the school of these.

### **Additional Clothing and Supplies**

- Parents should always maintain a supply of formula/solid food and diapers for those children who require them and a change of clothing should be provided for every child and kept at school. If a child is toilet training, you will need to bring additional clothing. We do not allow children to “borrow” clothing from other children, and we do not keep extra clothing available for emergencies.

## **J5. LOST AND FOUND**

All clothing and personal property should be marked clearly with the child’s full name. Unmarked articles will be placed in a “Lost and Found” area. Periodically, these items are displayed in an attempt to find owners; after a specified period, remaining items are donated to charity.

## **J6. POLICIES ON OUTSIDE TIME IN EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS OR DURING HIGH POLLUTION DAYS**

Typically, children do not go outside when the temperature or wind chill factor is 32 degrees or below. However, they may stay out for a short period of time when it gets cold, as it is important that the children get the fresh air and exercise. For this reason, it is important to provide proper clothing in very cold weather, including a warm jackets, gloves and a hat.

The school closely monitors pollution alerts and may adjust outdoor times when the air pollution counts are high. The school nurse is responsible for determining when pollution levels are too high for children to be outside. She will inform the campus directors by 8 AM that day.

## **K. PVA AND EVENTS**

### **K1. PARENT EDUCATION, SPECIAL EVENTS, FAMILY PARTIES, ETC.**

The Suzuki School offers special events periodically throughout the year. Parent education will include workshops to orient parents to our philosophy and teamwork approach to education as well as other topics of interest. Special events during the year include cultural celebrations, holiday events, and campus specific occasions. You will be made aware of these events ahead of time so that you may arrange your schedule

accordingly.

## K2. FOOD FOR CLASSROOM PARTIES

Because we have both regulatory requirements on foods which cannot be served in addition to children with food allergies, we take extra precautions to ensure their health and safety while in our care. To that end, we severely limit foods which can be brought from home for classroom parties. As a general rule, our chefs will provide a pre-set menu of food to ensure food consumed at parties complies with our health and safety guidelines. Teachers will call on parents to participate in other ways, perhaps through bringing decorations or craft activities for children, or they may just invite you to attend!

## K3. BIRTHDAY PARTIES

We feel it is important to recognize the birthdays of our students; however, it is difficult to hold parties here at school, where our focus is on learning and development. Please be aware of our policies concerning birthday celebrations:

- Birthdays will be recognized in a classroom-sponsored monthly celebration in an effort to reduce the number of party food and treats. For this special day, birthday boys and girls will be recognized with frozen vanilla yogurt.
- Invitations for a birthday party (*held off school premises*) may be passed out here at school if *every* child in the class is invited. **Please understand that we are dealing with young children whose feelings are very easily hurt if they are left out of the group.**
- If you are planning a smaller party and cannot invite all class members, we ask that you mail your invitations rather than passing them out in the classroom. Participating parents' addresses are listed in The Suzuki School Directory, available on the PVA. See the Parent Access section of The Suzuki School website for a current list of PVA committees and PVA guidelines.

## K4. PVA

The parents of Suzuki launched a Parent Volunteer Association, or PVA, in 2005. There is no charge for being a member of the PVA, and it is an excellent way to not only participate in activities for your child's classroom but to also get to know the other parents in the school.

# L. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

## L1. NAP TIME, BEDDING AND SAFE SLEEP POLICY

In Level I, the children nap according to their own schedule. Beginning in Level II, one (1) scheduled nap time is offered during the day. All children are required to rest during the planned rest period, even those in Primary. Once your child starts in PrePrimary, you will be required to bring a blanket for your child if the classroom does not have dual sheets. All blankets must be smaller than 36 x 45 inches and not bulky!

Sleep Safe Policy: Bright from the Start (BFTS) regulations require that parents of infants acknowledge that they have read the Sleep Safe Policies required by OCGA 20-1 A-1 and that the parent understands them. Parents sign the acknowledgement as part of the authorization package when enrolling their child. Here is a summary of the safe sleep protocols:

1. Infant is placed on their back to sleep unless center has been provided a letter by a physician authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant which includes how the infant should be placed for sleep and a time frame for which the instructions should be followed.
2. No items to be placed in or on the crib with an infant, not limited to toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys or other soft items.
3. Center shall not attach or allow any objects to be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, not limited to, crib gyms, toys, mirrors or mobiles.
4. Appropriate sleep clothing to be provided by parents or guardian. Sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets that fit according to the commercial manufacturer's guidelines and will not slide up around infant's face may be used. (Please note that the Suzuki School provides sleep sacks that conform with this requirement).
5. Swaddling shall not be used unless a written physician's statement is provided including instructions and timeframe for swaddling.
6. Individual crib or cot bedding provided by center with daily changing/ cleaning practices.
7. Infants who fall asleep in other equipment, on the floor, or elsewhere will be moved to a crib to sleep.
8. No positioning devices or wedges can be used.
9. Cribs shall be in compliance with the CPSC and ASTM.
10. Crib construction shall be in good repair and free of hazards.

## L2. TAKING AGE APPROPRIATE RISKS

At Suzuki, we diligently work to keep children as safe as possible. However, healthy and productive children must be involved in age appropriate large/small motor activity



involving discovery and risk-taking in order to achieve optimum physiological and psychological development. Research has confirmed that children acquire life skills when they conquer fears and develop resiliency. In addition, these types of sensory-rich exercises are essential to neurological development in the first five years.

The ability to climb a rope ladder, ride a bicycle, kick, throw and catch a ball, climb steps and roll down hills, run and jump, spin and twirl all develop balance and coordination. A strong Early Childhood program offers the student numerous occasions involving an element of acceptable risk throughout the week so that confidence, judgment, imagination and the use of precise movement is fostered.

### L3. UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF A MONTESSORI PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

The Montessori system of education includes an emphasis on using real materials in the learning process, which may be contrary to what parents have probably experienced in a more traditional educational setting. These materials, used primarily in the Pre-Primary and Primary programs, include but are not limited to:

- The use of glass items (vases, pitchers, plates, glasses, etc.).
- The use of polishes, such as shoe polish and brass polish.
- The use of needles, chopsticks, and toothpicks for practical life lessons
- The use of cutting implements (knives, vegetable choppers, graters, apple slicers, etc.) for the food preparation exercises.

In addition, the Montessori environment has:

- Flexible morning snack schedule in PrePrimary and Primary which is incorporated with practical life lessons.
- Mixed age grouping that would sometimes include ages 0-3 year olds and 2.5-6 year olds.

The Suzuki School has designed a safe Montessori environment which may be different than a parent's expectations at home, or if there was one-on-one care. However, a Suzuki parent must agree that freedom of movement and choice is a vital part of developing coordination, confidence, and learning about natural consequences and that it is an important and foundational principle of the Montessori curriculum.

### L4. MOVE UPS/CLASS PLACEMENT

Children are placed in classrooms based on attaining developmental milestones and classroom availability. As a result, most move ups occur at the start of the summer session and the start of the new school year. ***The readiness of a child to move up, or the placement of a child in a particular classroom are at the sole discretion of the school, without exception.*** Please note that children may exhibit certain

behaviors at home that are not exhibited at school. Class placements are determined based on space availability, age distribution, and gender. On rare occasion, children may be moved to a new classroom in the age range to accommodate changing attendance patterns, to address dynamics between children, or because the classroom designations have changed. Please note that the age distributions can vary slightly in class levels between campuses due to different capacities and age ranges.

Occasionally, parents request that their child be placed in a certain classroom based on their perceived needs: friendships, location, diversity, or familiarity with the teaching team, etc. Please understand that we cannot and do not make adjustments to class placements for these parental requests, **without exception**. Our experience has consistently demonstrated that in spite of the parent anxieties, their concerns are overcome so that both the child and his/her parents have a successful relationship with the new classroom and teachers. Please do not make assumptions as to where your child is going to be placed and recognize that, until you get it in writing from the administrative offices of school, it is not final.

Most children leave Suzuki to attend private school or public school Kindergarten in the Primary Level. In addition, a few children leave Suzuki to attend three (3) - or four (4)-year old programs in private schools where they will progress to the elementary school level. When these children leave to attend their next school, availability is created to move children up to the next level. From year to year, it is not possible to precisely determine the number of children who will leave to attend private schools, so it is difficult to precisely plan the move up dates for your child.

Our teaching approach is designed to meet the needs of each child based on his/her readiness and mastery of concepts – no matter what class level your child is placed in. If your child does not progress to the next level with his/her friends, we will still, through our teaching approach and through the materials which are available to all teachers, be able to meet his/her needs.

For a few parents, the move up process is a stressful time if their child is not progressing on an accelerated path. We encourage these families to meet with the Campus Director to discuss their concerns. Please remember that children who attend Suzuki are in an enriched environment and virtually always excel in their next school environment. We also encourage parents to remember that while their child may be the oldest in a classroom or cognitively advanced compared to their peer group, other factors such as social and emotional development and maturity are just as important. The teachers are in the unique position to understand the developmental progress of all the children in the class, and they have additional information that is used to develop the appropriate move up plan for all the children.

***Please remember that when your child moves up from one level to another, you must communicate any special requests for your child – dietary restrictions or preferences, health considerations, etc. - to your child's new teachers. Please do not rely on your child's current teachers to communicate this information for you.***

## L5. CLASSROOM RATIOS

The Suzuki School staffs each classroom to maintain certain teacher-student ratios except during teacher break times and during certain staff meetings when the ratios may increase. In addition, each classroom is staffed with an additional teacher so that we rarely use substitute teachers. The room is staffed in the morning based on typical attendance patterns of the families. It is crucial that each family use the automated attendance system each day when checking in so that we can monitor attendance and adjust staffing levels accordingly. In the evening, we also staff according to normal attendance levels. Therefore, it is important that you always check your child out each day as well. Please understand that from time to time, certain teachers may leave the classroom to go to the Front Office, to check email, or to attend meetings and that this may affect the classroom ratios. However, Suzuki-stated ratios will be maintained for the majority of the day; state ratios are maintained at all times.

Teachers are generally scheduled to take their breaks during the children's nap periods. Since all the teachers in the classrooms cannot take breaks during nap periods, they may, at times, also take break during the children's lunch periods or during the afternoon hours.

## L6. MULTI-AGE CLASSROOMS

The Suzuki School reconfigures classrooms each year based on the student census and age distribution of the children. The infant rooms (Levels I and II) operate with a narrow age span of less than one (1) year. The Pre-Primary and the Primary Classrooms operate with broader age ranges (up to twenty (20) months). ***Bright from the Start*** requires that we notify parents concerning placement of their child in a classroom where the age range includes children less than three (3) years of age and children older than three (3) years of age. This may occur in either the Pre-Primary and Primary classrooms at any campus.

## L7. VOLUNTEERS

From time to time, parents and grandparents may choose to volunteer in a child's classroom. This can be done as long as the parent or grandparent is with the child. Due to federal regulations, any other volunteering activities (e.g. with nanny, cousins, family friends) is prohibited unless the individual has passed a national fingerprint check and is cleared by Bright from the Start.

## L8. HYGIENE

**Hand Washing Hygiene:** We ask that you wash your hands and your child's hands when they are being dropped off. The teachers will inform you which sink is to be used for hand washing. In some classrooms, the teachers may ask you to allow your child to wash their hands without your assistance.

**Diapering Hygiene:** The Suzuki School posts diapering procedures in each classroom. The main steps are:

1. Prepare for Diapering Before Bringing Child to the Table
2. Avoid Contact with Soiled Items and Always Keep a Hand on the Child
3. Clean the Child's Diaper Area
4. Put on a Clean Diaper and Wash Child's Hands
5. Clean and Disinfect the Diapering Area
6. Wash Your Hands and Record in the Child's Daily Log

**Cloth Diapers:** Some parents may opt to use cloth diapers as opposed to disposable diapers. Cloth diapers must include an absorbent, disposable inner lining (*in order to ensure that organic matter doesn't pose a health hazard by sitting in the classroom all day*). Diapers must also include an outer shell that is waterproof and prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the inner and outer covering must be changed as a unit (*meaning we cannot reuse the outer portion for more than one change*) and the inner lining disposed of during each change. Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to provide the inner and/or outer shells.

**Toilet Training Hygiene:** The Suzuki faculty work closely with the parents to toilet train each child when the child is developmentally ready. The school follows strict hygiene practices and closely supervises children at all times. Children must always be honored during this process. We ask that parents bring extra clothing during the toilet training phase; this would include several changes of underwear and/or pull-ups, several pairs of pants or shorts, a couple of shirts or tops, and several pairs of socks. Teachers may also request a second pair of shoes from time to time.

All children must be reliability toilet trained at school before being accepted into the Primary Classrooms. While your child is going through the toilet training phase, please be aware that sometimes clothing articles may not be salvaged due to a need to maintain a hygienic and healthy environment.

**Meal Time Hygiene:** The teachers and children are required to observe the highest hygiene standards during meal time. This includes washing hands before and after each meal and ensuring that teachers properly handle food in a hygienic manner. All excess food placed in common containers is discarded at the end of meal time.

# M. MONITORING AND MANAGING A CHILD'S PROGRESS WHILE AT SUZUKI

## M1. BI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

The school conducts bi-annual parent-teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring. We use assessment tools as part of the conference, and a progress report will be provided. If you wish to have other conferences, please consult your teacher.

## M2. COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MONITORING CHILD PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Suzuki School supports every child entrusted to our care with the understanding that the path to development is a highly individualized one for each child. Because the first five years are a time of intense physical, cognitive and emotional growth, a child may exhibit behaviors that require additional resources and methods to support his ongoing development. These can take the form of assessments, outside consultations, and more in-depth observations. In keeping with the philosophy of the school, it is crucial that each parent partner with us through this process so that the needs of the child are met in a timely, knowledgeable manner. We know that for most parents, a lack of understanding may lead to deep concern and a feeling of being overwhelmed. Our goal is to minimize these feelings while supporting the child and his family to the best of our ability.

### **Assessment**

The Suzuki School practices a comprehensive approach to monitoring student progress and development; this includes the utilization of a variety of resources (*detailed below*) to support and honor the children entrusted to us. Our assessments are completed to:

- ensure shared expectations and observations between parent and teachers
- track each child's developmental progress
- identify red flags which can be best addressed with early detection and intervention
- ensure adequate support is in place if a child is experiencing challenges with regard to development or academic progress.

Should the Suzuki staff identify a potential developmental concern with a child, we will share with you our observations in an informal conference; at this time, a request for an external

assessment with a timeframe requirement may be required. This type of assessment is necessary as our teaching and administrative staff does not have the education or expertise that the young child may need to help her with any developmental challenges that she may have.

## **Routine Assessment Instruments: Infants and Toddlers (Infant Room, Toddler Room, and Pre-Primary)**

Specifically for infants and toddlers, we use the following tools to routinely track academic progress and development:

**Transparent Classroom:** This tool is a system to track academic progress in students in a Montessori environment. The teachers track throughout the year the Montessori lessons each student has been introduced to, are practicing, or have mastered. At each bi-annual conference, a print-out summary will be provided to you so that you can see and discuss with the teacher those lessons your child is working on at school. Parents may also login and see their child's documentation and development at any time (*you will receive an invitation from your child's teacher*).

**Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ):** This developmental screen is administered to students near Parent-Teacher Conferences each spring and fall and is meant to identify any potential red flags for atypical development. Parents will also be asked to fill out a copy to bring with them to the conference so that the observations from home and school may be compared and discussed. If concerns emerge from this screening, our first step is simply to rescreen the child. If concerns persist, parents are provided with resources and support to ensure that the child is developmentally on track (*see below section on Additional Assessments*).

## **Routine Assessment Instruments: Early Childhood (Primary)**

Specifically for early childhood, we use the following tools to routinely track academic progress and development:

**Transparent Classroom:** This tool is a system to track academic progress in students in a Montessori environment. The teachers track throughout the year the Montessori lessons each student has been introduced to, are practicing, or have mastered. At each bi-yearly conference, a print-out summary will be provided to you so that you can see and discuss with the teacher those lessons your child is working

on at school. Parents may also login and see their child's documentation and development at any time (*you will receive an invitation from your child's teacher*).

**Minnesota Executive Function Scales (MEFS):** This screening tool measures a child's executive function skills against a national norm. Executive function refers to the neurocognitive skills that are most vital to academic and life success and are centered on attention, impulse control, working memory, and cognitive flexibility. If concerns emerge from this screening, our first step is simply to rescreen the child. Again, if concerns persist, parents are provided with resources and support to ensure that the child is developmentally on track (*see below section on Additional Assessments*).

It is important to note that parental permission is not obtained for Routine Internal Assessments, as this is a function of general classroom support and not a formal evaluation.

### **Additional Internal Assessments:**

From time to time, the school faculty may find that they are concerned about a particular child's development or may observe a child experiencing challenges in our classroom environment. These concerns/challenges can include any behavior that is outside of the norm of what is typically expected or appropriate for the age of the child including, but not limited to:

**Behavior issues in the classroom:** Consistent tantrums past the age (1 year to 2 years) that are considered typical, chronic and recurrent biting, physical aggression towards teachers or peers, aggressive use of, or chronic breaking of, school materials, inability to conform to and consistently follow classroom or school rules. This last is especially relevant if the safety of the child or other students is in question.

**Developmental concerns:** A perceived deficit in any area of development including cognitive ability, speech/language development, motor development, social-emotional, or physical health.

**Academic concerns:** A concern over a child's academic development, ability to focus on Montessori lessons, rate of progress, or age appropriate success in academic subject areas such as reading, writing, and math.

When concerns arise, we may use a number of additional tools to provide more information so that together, parents and Suzuki staff may better discuss observations and concerns together in order to formulate the best plan for addressing them. The additional steps include, but are not limited to:

**Consultation with Suzuki School faculty:** We have on staff several well trained individuals who are available to assist when a challenge or concern arises with a student. These

individuals may be someone you are with whom you are familiar, someone who works primarily at your assigned campus, or a faculty member from another campus. These professionals will provide expertise and additional context to help determine the potential root cause of observed challenges and will work with teachers and parents to provide support needed to ensure your child's well-being and success.

**Consultation with retained outside specialists:** We have retained consultation services with experts from the Elaine Clarke Center's Pediatric Early Awareness Referral program and the Montessori Teacher Education Institute of Atlanta. On a routine basis, we may confer with specialists who assist us in providing additional information and, when appropriate, interventions to support the student. These recommendations are based on classroom observations and are limited in scope. Interventions can range from simple classroom changes to support a wide range of learners to a recommendation that we meet with the parents and pursue further evaluation with outside resources.

**Gesell Developmental Observation:** Internally, several members of the Suzuki faculty have been trained on administering the Gesell Developmental Observation, a developmental assessment meant to identify potential areas of developmental delay in any area. From the website: *The Gesell Developmental Observation-Revised (GDO-R) is a comprehensive multi-dimensional assessment system that assists educators, and other professionals in understanding characteristics of child behavior in relation to typical growth patterns between 2½ to 9 years of age. The GDO-R uses direct observation to evaluate a child's cognitive, language, motor and social-emotional responses in five strands: Developmental, Letter/Numbers, Language/Comprehension, Visual/Spatial, and Social/Emotional/Adaptive.*

## What happens next?

If we have made an internal determination as to whether additional outside intervention and support is needed to ensure a student's success in our environment, we will discuss our observations and concerns with the child's parents. During this time, we will provide our verbal recommendations for the next steps; these may include discussions to ensure a consistent approach at school and home or may address the need for outside referral and evaluation. It can also include, but is not limited to, other strategies such as: enrollment in specified parent education series relating to the area of challenge, a shorter school day for the child, requiring the child to be taken home each time after the behavior emerges, withdrawal from the school for a period of time (or permanently if a different environment is in the best interest of the child), or a requirement for a dedicated support person while the child is at school. In this last instance, *the dedicated support person is referred to as a "shadow" and the cost of providing this additional resource will be the parents' responsibility, added to their monthly tuition).*

Parent education is crucial for every Suzuki family and our school offers an array of parent education offerings throughout the year to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities of child growth and development. We strongly encourage parents to take advantage of these



sessions to gain parenting support as well as a clear understanding of the philosophical foundation of the Montessori system of education. Should developmental challenges emerge, parents may be asked to attend a particular offering so that we can ensure a consistent approach between home and school for the benefit of the child.

If outside referral is recommended, the child is most often seen by one of the practitioners listed below. These individuals frequently arrange to visit the student at school, and we encourage this! Please note – whenever an outside therapist or specialist visits the school, they must complete paperwork, including a background check, to ensure mandated safety protocols are followed (*contact Suzuki's Assistant Director of Health and Safety to secure the proper paperwork*). Further, if an outside referral is recommended by the school, it is the responsibility of the parents to secure and pay for any such services.

Outside referrals and evaluations include professional assessments from any of the following practitioners:

**Elaine Clarke Pediatric Early Awareness Referral Program (or one such as this):** When referred out to this program, the professionals assist with providing a comprehensive evaluation for children with developmental and/or behavioral concerns from mild to severe. A multi-disciplinary team made up of a Child Development Specialist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist and Physical Therapist take a comprehensive look at a child's development, define strengths and challenges and empower parents with knowledge, resources and referral information to promote optimal development for their children. From this evaluation, recommendations may be made to secure appropriate services to support the child's individual needs in the classroom environment and at home. Please note that we most commonly refer parents to this program because they provide a holistic approach to assessment and provide direction on which type of therapy/interventions will be most beneficial to the student and family. Further, they have already been given security clearance to be in our school (*so that evaluations are not unduly delayed*).

**Developmental Pediatrician:** Developmental pediatricians can provide diagnostic and intervention recommendations to address any potential disabilities or developmental delays a child may be experiencing.

**Speech Assessment:** We partner with Lauren Weiskopf and Associates to provide speech screenings twice a year in the spring and fall to students 2.5 years of age and older. If there are concerns, your teacher may ask that you participate in these screenings. Speech/Language Pathologists can determine whether speech therapy is needed and can provide those services to students as deemed necessary.

**Physical Therapy:** Physical Therapists can assist with any issue having to do with pain, strength, joint range of motion, endurance, and gross motor functioning.

**Occupational Therapy:** Occupational therapists assist children with physical, cognitive, and

sensory issues in order for them to be as independent and self-regulatory as possible.

**Child Psychologist or Counselor:** Psychologists and counselors who specialize in working with young children can assist in helping children learn to cope with life events like parental divorce, traumatic events, illnesses, etc.

**Behavior Specialist:** Behavior specialists assess what a particular behavior is communicating and assists parents and teachers to put strategies in place in order to systemically change behavior that is maladaptive.

It is important that the appropriate type of specialists evaluate the child, and frequently this will require that the specialist visit the school to see your child in the classroom environment. So that the child is seen in his or her normal state, and to reduce anxiety, parents should not coach the child ahead of time and that the therapist observe in a non-obtrusive manner.

## Concern Management

When concerns arise and are communicated to parents, the Suzuki School expects that the family will address such requests in a timely fashion. As noted in our Suzuki Mission Statement, we value the partnership between educator and parent. We believe that in order for children to be successful while in our environment and after they leave Suzuki, parents and school must both have a continuing dialog and a trusting relationship. On occasion parents may not agree with the concerns, observations and/or recommendations offered by our staff and so do not act on them in a timely manner; we understand and empathize with this fully. Other parents may consult with a specialist who does not evaluate the child or does not visit the child in the school environment which may be needed to properly support the child. In these cases in order to maintain a learning environment that provides for every student and for our teaching staff, we must then assess the appropriate direction to take with the child and his parents so that all students and staff in the classroom may be supported. This direction may take the form of continued conversations, further observations, one-on-one support for the child (*at cost to the family*), or, as a last resort, alternative child care arrangements.

## M3. OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Suzuki keeps an updated list of resources for you and your family to use in the event of behavioral issues. Please contact your campus' Director or Assistant Director for a complete list.

## N. MENU AND BEVERAGE CONSIDERATIONS

### NI. MENU

Each week, we publish a menu for the upcoming week which will also be found in the parent access section of the website. Parents may access this section of the website with the password "**Practical Life.**" From time to time, we must substitute menu items due to availability of ingredients. **When this occurs, we note the changes on the menu posted in the foyer.** Please note that we do not update the menu on the website for substitutions, so it is important that you check the menu changes in the foyer. Many children go through a phase of being a "picky eater." We find that many of them grow accustomed to the food served at the school if they are allowed time to acclimate.

***\*\*Northside families: See Addendum for important menu considerations applied at the campus.***

### N2. RESTRICTIONS ON FOODS DUE TO ALLERGIES AND INTOLERANCES OR KOSHER REQUIREMENTS

Due to the extreme nature of some children's allergic reactions to nuts, in particular peanuts and products containing or made in the same facility as peanuts,, The Suzuki School prohibits nut products, peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products on The Suzuki School property and/or at The Suzuki School-sponsored events. These nut allergies can be so severe that exposure to nuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. In some cases, an allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling nuts on someone's breath or touching nut oil residue left on a countertop without actually ingesting nut products. Please keep in mind that some fast food products are cooked in peanut oil, such as Chick-Fil-A, and some beverages such as Almond Milk cannot be served at the school.

Although we work diligently to provide a nut-restricted school, we cannot guarantee that there will be no nuts or nut products at the school. We ask everyone (parents, teachers, students, and visitors) to adhere to the policy, but we cannot guarantee 100% compliance. If you have a child who has a known nut allergy or who you suspect may have a nut allergy, please inform the school in writing and periodically verify that proper signage is present for your child.

We also encourage you to visit the kitchen staff and inquire about food being served, including reviewing the packaging of items to see if they were produced in environments where nuts may have been present. The school does not knowingly serve products with Aspartame, saccharine, or Jell-O.

### N3. MENU CUSTOMIZATION REQUESTS:

The Suzuki School prides itself on its healthy lunch menu. We strive to prepare and serve fresh, local, organic products *as much as possible*. We create menus that provide a balanced, nutritious meal. We know that some children require time and encouragement to develop a palate for different foods, and we understand that preparing them to accept these foods is a lesson in itself. If, at any time after an acceptable acclimation period, we feel that a child is not eating enough – though this very rarely happens - we will partner with you to find a solution that will meet the need of the child as well as the need of the classroom environment.

If you arrive to school after breakfast or lunch is served, please do not allow your child to enter the classroom with outside food or drinks. You are welcomed to sit with your child outside the classroom to finish your breakfast or lunch food.

Whether for Food Allergies, Food Intolerances, or Family Preferences, all food substitutions must comply with the following:

- Respect and comply with the above nut-free guidelines,
- The Northside campus's kosher guidelines,
- Must be in a single-serving container,
- Must be clearly labeled with child's name and the date
- Must meet USDA guidelines,
- Substitutions must replace "like with like" (ex: a protein with a protein)

If a child has **food intolerances or allergies**, we must have an Allergy or Special Medical Conditions Plan on file at the Front Office that was prepared by the physician (please talk with our Nurse to receive our packet to be completed by the physician). Children with an allergy or special medical condition will have a poster in the classroom listing the conditions.

Each week the parents should review the menu and indicate the foods to which the child has an allergy or medical condition. You can bring in a substitute for these items only (for example a vegetarian meat substitute or gluten-free products).

For all **family preference situations** (i.e. non-medical substitutions)- the parent must replace their child's **entire** meal or snack menu and we will not serve the child any Suzuki menu item for that meal or snack. Please understand that we can accommodate these types of parent requests as long as the teachers can still easily serve all the children in a reasonable time and orderly manner and also properly supervise the children.

### **Milk Substitutes:**

Parents who bring in milk substitutes need to be aware that not all milk substitutes are considered "creditable" by ***Bright From The Start***.

**Creditable substitutes include:** soy milk, organic milk, goat's milk or lactate free milk.

Non-Creditable substitutes include: rice milk, soy drinks (*which are different than soybean milk*), and coconut milk, and therefore cannot be used as a milk substitutes.

When a parent requests that their child be given a creditable milk substitute, it is the **parents' responsibility**, and not the responsibility of Suzuki, to keep up with the milk substitute's supply at the school. Unless a doctor's note is provided, ***Bright from the***

**Start** requires that we serve the school milk if the milk substitute is not provided by the parent, or runs out.

## N4. BREAKFAST SNACK

The Suzuki School serves the children a breakfast **snack** from approximately 7:45 – 9 AM. *This snack is not meant to provide your child with a full breakfast and therefore parents should plan to feed their child prior to arriving at school to ensure they have enough to eat each morning.*

Due to the high disruption to the classroom when parents and children arrive after 9am, we will not be able to serve the breakfast snack after 9 am. If your child comes to school after the scheduled snack time, we ask that you feed him/her before coming to school. Please do not ask teachers for exceptions to this policy.

## N5. LUNCH

Lunch is served between 11 AM (*for those young children taking a nap at 11:30*) and 12:30 PM for the older children. You may pack a lunch for your child if they have an allergy or food intolerance to a certain food – **see above**. The lunch is served family style in each pod with the teachers sitting with the children and helping them to serve the meal.

## N6. AFTERNOON SNACK

Children are served an afternoon snack after the mid-day rest period. At this time they are also served a beverage: milk, juice, or water in accordance with USDA guidelines.

## N7. LATE AFTERNOON SNACK

A late afternoon snack will be provided between 5:00 and 5:30pm. This snack generally consists of Goldfish, Animal Crackers, Graham Crackers, or a similar food. At this time they are also served a beverage: milk, juice, or water in accordance with USDA guidelines.

# O. SECURITY, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

## O1. SECURITY PROTOCOLS

The school has several important security measures including security monitoring system (*after hours*), direct link to the fire department, key pads on all doors (*ingress only*), and

an automated attendance tracking system. We also hire security guards to direct traffic in peak AM and PM hours at both locations.

Our parent communities have been great partners in keeping our schools safe, and we appreciate the efforts that parents have made to protect the children and staff. Always adhere to these important security protocols:

1. **Unauthorized persons and tailgating:** There are several types of individuals to whom we cannot allow access. These include not just “suspicious persons”, but in addition, and more likely, parents in a custodial disputes or disgruntled ex-employees. And in both of those situations it is likely that parents may have seen the now-non-authorized person before and so would have no suspicion as to their entry authorization. Because of this possibility, it is important that you **not hold the door open for others**, even if you recognize them as parents or teachers. This is going to be difficult for all of us to do because we believe it may seem rude, silly, or inconvenient. However, this is the primary manner in which an unauthorized person can enter the building. The general message here is “we’re not being rude, we’re just being safe!” Please help the person in front of you follow this guideline by not grabbing the door and tailgating in!

If you see someone standing at the outside door who may not have a code, or who is having difficulty getting the code punched in, whether you have seen them before or not, please do not enter your code and let them in! In this case you should just let them push the intercom and ask for help from the Front Desk staff, who will handle the situation. After that person either enters the building via “being buzzed in” by the front desk, or leaves, you can then enter your code.

2. **PINS: Please do not share your PIN or access code with your child or with authorized pickups!** We sometimes hear children yelling these numbers across the hallway or outside, and from time to time, parents give their numbers to other adults who we have never met! We cannot emphasize enough that we do not want parents teaching their children the PINs for EZ Care or the access code for the doors.

3. **Suspicious Activities:** Please let us know immediately if you see suspicious activities or persons outside. This can sometimes be awkward, but it is better to be safe than sorry.

4. **Authorized Pickups:** You may recall that we differentiate between “frequent” and “occasional” authorized pickups. The Front Desk staff and the classroom must be fully familiar with the frequent authorized pickup, and this person must pick up weekly to obtain the “frequent” designation. Occasional authorized pickups should always bring in their photo ID in case our regular staff is not at the Front Desk. Occasional authorized pickups must sign in each time they enter the school.

5. **Play dates:** From time to time, you may pick up a child for another parent at Suzuki for a play date or in an emergency situation. If you are not recognized as a frequent authorized pickup for that child, you must stop at the Front Desk, sign in the authorized pickup log and obtain a name badge to help the teachers

know that you are authorized to pick up that child.

6. **Secure in Place and Lockdowns:** The school has protocols for both “Secure in Place” and for “Lockdown”. Under “Secure in Place”, all exterior doors are locked so that the keypad does not work and there is no access allowed into the building except for parents and for teachers who are granted access by the Front Desk staff, and normal activities will continue to take place in the classrooms. Under “Lockdown”, the exterior doors are locked so that the keypad does not work, no access is allowed into the building by anyone (*including parents and teachers*), and the teachers and children seek refuge in pre-specified areas.

7. **Reunification during an evacuation:** If the school must be evacuated, we will attempt to send a mass communication using the normal methods (*one call now or an e-mail blast*). Most likely, in the event of an evacuation, city authorities (*police, fire departments, etc.*) will be providing direction. Please remember that during the reunification process you will be required to check out your child in an orderly fashion and provide valid identification.

8. **Contact information:** It is important that you provide the school with written documentation in the event of a change in address, phone numbers, or emails as soon as they occur. This is required under your Tuition Agreement and is a critical part of our emergency preparedness.

9. **Supervising your child at drop off and pickup:** Please remember to actively supervise your child before drop off and after pickup, especially when you are talking to other adults. It is very easy for children to slip out of the exterior doors or out on to the road if you are not paying close attention! You are fully responsible for your child once you have picked up your child, or another child from the classroom, and they deserve your full attention!

10. **Children accompanying parents:** If your child has an older sibling who accompanies you at drop-off or pick-up time, you may not leave that child in the lobby as the Front Desk staff cannot supervise that child. In addition, we have instructed teachers not to release a child to an older sibling – parents must pick up their children.

## O2. NATURAL / SECURITY EMERGENCY PLANS

For The Suzuki School’s plans in the event of a natural or man-made emergency, please request a copy of our Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan identifies the courses of action we will take in the event of an emergency. Key information to know concerning the Emergency Preparedness Plan includes the following:

- In the event of an emergency, the primary manner in which we communicate to parents is OneCallNow. Therefore, it is very important that we have up-to-date phone numbers from you at all times.

- In the event of a tornado, the faculty and children follow the tornado evacuations plans posted in each classroom.
- In the event of a fire, the evacuation routes in each room are followed.
- The school does periodic drills for fire, tornado, shelter-in-place, and lockdown.
- In the event of utility failure and severe weather, the severity of the failure will be assessed and appropriate actions will be determined and communicated to parents.
- Should we evacuate the children for any other reason, parents will be notified via OneCallNow and/or email. Routes followed are posted in the classroom and throughout the building.

### O3. WEAPONS SAFETY POLICY

To ensure the safety of the children and the employees, no firearms (*loaded or unloaded*) are allowed on the premises of the school. If you have any firearms in your automobile, they must be locked while on the premises of the school. Children are not allowed to bring knives, play guns, play swords, or any other dangerous instruments to school.

### O4. YOUR ROLE IN KEEPING OUR ENVIRONMENT SAFE OF HAZARDOUS ITEMS

We all must play an active role in keeping our environment safe for our children. Some items are unsafe because they affect the health of a child, and some are not appropriate because they affect the safety of the child. When you are dressing your child or packing the bags for your children, please be aware that anything that says “keep out of reach of children” or that can cause physical harm to a child or choke a child should not be sent to school.

If your child brings a diaper bag or book bag to the School, please check it each day to make sure that it does not have any medication, sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitizer, sharp objects, small objects that can fit in a child's mouth, money, or any other item deemed hazardous to a child. Also, be cognizant of how you dress your child and whether they may have items that are hazardous typically due to choking hazards – for example, small barrettes, safety pins, certain necklaces, certain earrings, pennants, etc. If you are not sure if an item is appropriate, please stop by the Front Office.

We ask that parents exercise extreme caution while on the school premises in handling or transporting medications or other items which may be dangerous to children. This includes items that may be inadvertently dropped or that may be accessible when a parent sets down his/her purse or briefcase in reach of children. We ask that under no circumstances should dangerous items be brought into the school in your handbags including but not limited to adult medications, handguns, knives, mace, adult scissors, etc.

Finally, we ask that you also not bring hot beverages into the building! While we know



that it is very cold outside during the winter, we do not want to take any chances - the hot drinks can easily be spilled on a child.

## 05. INGRESS/EGRESS PROCEDURES

See Addendum for campus specific ingress/egress procedures and designated parking areas.

**Safety Procedures:** The Suzuki School employs a security guard at all locations during peak hours. Should he be directing traffic, we ask that you follow his directions. Please do not leave your children unattended in your automobile while picking up or dropping off. Please be aware that the security guard cannot watch your child for you since they have other responsibilities. Also, please do not leave any valuables in your automobile (*locked or unlocked*) at either of school locations. We are not responsible for any valuables left in your automobile that are lost or stolen. Finally, we ask that all cell phones be turned off while entering and exiting the parking lot. It is very easy to be distracted while on the cell phone and not notice a child who has darted in front of a car. Newly designated persons authorized to pick up or drop off your child must stop by the Front Office with picture ID.

## 06. PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS / ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP

The staff of The Suzuki School will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent if a parent or other caregiver arrives to pick up a child and appears to the staff to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not allow the school to deny a custodial parent access to their child if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, the staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and/or Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the staff of Suzuki to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff will contact child's parents to notify them of the situation.

## 07. MANDATED REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The State of Georgia requires by law that any director, teacher, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children less than eighteen (18) years of age. Georgia Code Section 19-7-5 requires the report of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

Any school administrator, teacher, or related professional who has reasonable cause (*a set of facts which would cause a reasonably prudent person to conclude that abuse or neglect will occur or has occurred*) to suspect child abuse or neglect or who has reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that the abuse or

neglect will occur, is obligated to report the case immediately (*as soon as possible but no more than twenty-four (24) hours*) by telephone or personal visit, to local County Child Welfare Agency, the office of the County Sheriff, or the City Police Department.

As mandated reporters, the staff of The Suzuki School cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include but are not limited to the following:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Withholding appropriate foods or liquids from a child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

## **O8. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF STAFF, VENDORS AND VOLUNTEERS TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE**

The Suzuki School takes the safety of the children and staff as a high priority. All employees and vendors are required to pass a Criminal Background Check. The staff and vendors are also provided with training and protocols to keep children safe from child abuse at school. We employ a diverse group of employees and enrichment vendors, and we require that they adhere to practices designed to keep the children safe. This diversity includes gender, country of origin, sexual identity, and ethnicity. Wherever possible, we require that two (2) adults (either male or female) are always present when toileting children or with children, and if this is not possible, when teachers and children are one-on-one, we require that they be visible and working in a transparent manner.