



# DOMINELLI

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Dominelli School of Music's Preschool Program! We would like to thank you for choosing us as the first place for your child to develop a love for education. Our commitment is that the children will receive quality and loving care. We will also build up the children's self-confidence and self-esteem with praise and positive redirections.

It is our goal to provide a variety of exciting, stimulating activities each day so that your child can develop socially, emotionally, physically and mentally to the very best of his/her ability. This handbook has been prepared especially for you, the parent of the child enrolled in our Center. You will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained here. By reading this handbook you will feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. We suggest that you keep this handbook for reference throughout the year. Whenever you have questions, please feel free to call or stop by the office. My staff and I look forward to working with you and your child.

Thank you,  
*Brandy Dominelli*  
Brandy Dominelli  
Owner  
Dominelli School of Music

## **PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES**

The Dominelli School of Music provides a clean, safe, healthy environment where every child can develop emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially. We are committed to providing safety and security for all children. Our preschool program encourages learning and growth through play in an environment designed so that children may strengthen muscles, build coordination, stretch their imaginations, and have fun.

We believe that children should be allowed to grow at their own pace and to learn in ways that help them become confident in themselves as learners. Our goal is to provide all of the children with a clean,

safe, comfortable, and nurturing environment. Respect toward self, others and the environment will be emphasized. We believe in the value of both structured and non-structured activities. Structured activities will include the use of a preschool curriculum, regular reading times, circle times, arts and crafts, and musical activities. Outdoor play and center times are some of the more flexible activities we have. It is our goal to create an environment and program where the child's natural desire to learn is stimulated through meaningful, appropriate, and playful learning experiences, one that meets the needs of each child as an individual.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DOMINELLI SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

The Dominelli School of Music has a program for every age and skill level. The following are some of the many programs we offer: Half day preschool program, Kindermusik classes for babies, toddlers, and preschooler, summer camp, group music lessons, private music lessons, adult music lessons, and more.

## **CURRICULUM**

Children participate in a variety of activities including the following:

### **Kindermusik**

**Listen and move. Play and grow. This is Kindermusik, the most trusted music and movement program.** Kindermusik International® is the world's leading provider of music and movement programs for young children, enjoyed by over 1.5 million families in more than 70 countries.

The Kindermusik curriculum, based on the principals of Kodaly, Suzuki, and Orff, is taught by the best educators in the best schools and studios world-wide. Music is the best vehicle for early childhood development and learning. So, we want to empower parents and teachers to instill a lifelong love of music and learning in their children. As we say, a good beginning never ends.

**Psychologists, neuroscientists, and experts in early childhood development have demonstrated that music does more for children than bring them joy; it helps their brain cells make the connections needed for virtually every kind of intelligence. Kindermusik's curriculum is built on this research.**

When young children are consistently engaged by music in an age-appropriate, socially accepting environment, they benefit at many levels:

**Early Literacy.** They gain the phonological processing, spoken language, and comprehension skills that are the foundation of reading.

**Quantitative.** They build the spatial-temporal and reasoning skills required for math, science, and engineering.

**Social-Emotional.** They develop social and emotional skills that are essential for school readiness—like

the ability to regulate their responses and relate to others in complex ways.

**Physical.** By moving and dancing to music and playing simple instruments, children improve their gross and fine motor skills. Activities that encourage freedom within a fun and friendly structure spark their creativity.

**Creative.** Activities that encourage freedom within a fun and friendly structure spark children's creativity and provides inspiration.

And of course, they develop a lifelong love of music.

### **What To Expect In Kindermusik Portion of Preschool Classes:**

**Singing and vocal development.** It may sound like a foreign language when a child sings "ta" and "ti," but this is the language of professional musicians and composers and getting young children ready to read and write simple rhythm patterns.

**Movement.** See children dance expressively to music, giving them the practice they need to coordinate their body movements to the sound of music. This kind of musical play not only improves musicianship, but physical coordination as well.

**Reading and writing.** Young children will learn melodic direction, rhythmic notation and eventually even compose music of their own.

**Focused listening.** Children will learn to identify a range of orchestra instruments and their sound qualities, while also gaining an early awareness and knowledge of composers and masterworks in Western arts tradition.

### **Jolly Phonics**

#### **What is Jolly Phonics?**

Jolly Phonics is a fun and child centred approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics. With actions for each of the 42 letter sounds, the multi-sensory method is very motivating for children and teachers, who can see their students achieve. The letter sounds are split into seven groups as shown below.

#### **Letter Sound Order**

The sounds are taught in a specific order (not alphabetically). This enables children to begin building words as early as possible.

#### **How does Jolly Phonics work?**

Using a synthetic phonics approach, Jolly Phonics teaches children the five key skills for reading and writing. Complemented by Jolly Readers and Jolly Grammar, it provides a thorough foundation for teaching literacy over three years in school.

### **The Five Skills Taught In Jolly Phonics:**

**Learning The Letter Sounds.** Children are taught the 42 main letter sounds. This includes alphabet sounds as well as digraphs such as sh, th, ai and ue.

**Learning Letter Formation.** Using different multi-sensory methods, children learn how to form and write the letters.

**Blending.** Children are taught how to blend the sounds together to read and write new words.

**Identifying The Sounds In Words (Segmenting).** Listening for the sounds in words gives children the best start for improving spelling.

**Tricky words.** Tricky words have irregular spellings and children learn these separately.

### **Monthly Themes**

The program has general monthly themes that are established and coordinated center wide from infants to school age, designed to promote developmental skills, and to enrich all children's understanding of their world. The themes have educational, social, cultural, and emotional value.

### **Circle Time**

Circle time provides the children with the opportunity to interact with each other as a group. During this time, we will learn calendar skills, weather skills, sing songs, play games, read stories and learn about each other. During this time, the teacher will prepare children for the day and review the letter, number, theme, and color of the week.

### **Arts and Crafts**

The majority of our projects are focused around music, the holidays, and theme units. Arts and Crafts projects stimulate a child's mind to be creative. These activities also assist in the development of fine and gross motor skills. Children also achieve a sense of pride and accomplishment through the development of projects. Our program is filled with hands-on learning activities as well as open-ended art activities. Open-ended art allows the child to explore the use of various materials and processes and enjoy what happens. Craft projects are designed to help the children develop their creativity and the use of specific skills. Uneven or lopsided projects are to be expected from children of this age. The children are in the process of learning. It is the "process not the product" that is important. Please keep this in mind and treat all of your children's projects as masterpieces!

### **Letters and Numbers**

Children will learn to recognize, identify, and eventually write the numbers and letters. We will

concentrate on one letter and number each week. During this time, many of our songs, crafts, and games will focus on the letter and number of the week.

### **Specials**

Specials will include math, science, and star of the week activities. Math skills will focus on number recognition, counting, sequencing, patterns, charts, and addition. Science will consist of simple science experiments usually focused around the theme of the week. Star of the week activities will include show and tell, ask the star, and learn about the star of the week.

### **Manipulatives**

Manipulatives develop organizational skills like sorting, counting, comparing, classifying, matching, and shape recognition. Children integrate concepts through more physical involvement. By using more senses, children form more associations and learn.

### **Sensory Experiences**

Children will be provided with a wide variety of hands on, concrete, real world sensory experiences appropriate for the child's age and stage of development. They will learn about all of their senses and how to use them.

### **Computer Skills**

Appropriate for each child's age and developmental level will be introduced and reinforced.

### **Kindergarten Readiness**

Children will be taught the necessary skills to ensure success in kindergarten.

## **SPEECH PATHOLOGIST**

The Dominelli School of Music preschool has a registered speech pathologist on staff who will meet with the parent's prior to the first day of school in a workshop to discuss developmental milestones, activities to work on at home, and ways to improve your child's language development. All students will have the option of an assessment during this workshop to find out the current status of your child's speech development, and identify what we at the school and the parent at home can work on with each individual child.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Your child's safety is a top priority at The Dominelli School of Music. Children must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure. Children may be released only to those persons authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Identification will be required when someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up your child.

## **ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Enrollment is open to all children ages 3-5 years. The proper paperwork must be completed and submitted for enrollment. Medical reports and emergency contact information must be current at all

times. The registration fee and first month's tuition is due upon enrollment in the Dominelli School of Music Preschool Program.

### **WAITING LIST POLICY**

Applicants who wish to have their name placed on the Dominelli School of Music Preschool Program waiting list must submit a completed enrollment form. No registration fee is required at this time. Admission will be granted on the basis of availability. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone when space becomes available.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Parents should notify Little Scholars if a child will not be attending or will be late on a particular day.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

The Dominelli School of Music has a comfortable waiting area where parents can relax when dropping off their children or picking them up.

Separation can be stressful for both the parent and the child, especially in the early days. Please help us to make this time less stressful by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Please do not attempt to sneak out without saying goodbye to your child.
- Give your child a good-bye kiss and explain that it is time for you to leave and you will return later.
- As difficult as it may be, make your good-bye short and sweet, even if your child is crying. The longer the goodbye, the longer the child will cry.
- Dominelli School of Music Teachers are trained to handle these difficult, but normal occurrences. They will comfort your child and involve him/her in an activity. Ninety percent of the time, your child will have stopped crying before you get out of the parking lot of the facility.
- Do not linger around after you have said goodbye, this can confuse your child and prolong the crying.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE**

Children will be released only to those persons listed on the Authorization and Consent Form. Identification will be required of any person picking up the child. The Director/Lead Teacher should be notified in advance, in writing, if someone other than the parent is to pick up your child.

### **HEALTH POLICY**

Child Health Policy: Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in preschool setting. Parents need to have alternate care available for when this occurs. Examples of health symptoms that require

exclusion from the center include (but are not limited to): If your child has had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours, please do not bring your child to preschool. Should your child become sick at Preschool we will make every effort to contact you or your emergency contact to pick up your child.

Administering Medication: Whenever possible, we ask that all medication be given to children at home. We understand that this is not always possible. If medicine must be administered during Daycare, the following policy applies:

- Prescription and orally administered over-the-counter medication may be administered only upon written permission of the parent and written instructions from a health care provider stating that the provider may administer such medication or prescription and specifying the circumstances, if any, that the medication must not be administered.
- Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and, for prescription medication, the prescriber's name and license number.
- Medication must be stored according to the instructions on the label in a place that is inaccessible to children. Medication must be returned to the parent when no longer needed.
- If a child develops symptoms which indicate a need for over-the-counter medication, including topical ointments, while in care, such medication may be given under the verbal consent from the parent for that day only. The provider must document that verbal instructions were and approval were given by the parent.
- Staff must document the dosages and time that the medication was given to the child.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

All teachers at the Dominelli School of Music manage behavior in their classrooms in a non-punitive, age appropriate manner. All staff receive ongoing training in the areas of discipline and behavior management. They are trained in the process of positive discipline, which instructs children as to what they should do rather than telling them what not to do. For example "We walk inside the building" rather than "No running".

Teachers will quickly intervene if a problem does occur and redirect the child to a more appropriate activity. Language is utilized to help the children begin to identify their feelings and learn to deal with them in a healthy and safe environment.

School age children will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills. Staff will assist children in creative problem solving by helping children to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate

in a classroom appropriate manner without reinforcing their negative behavior. Teachers will assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behavior, and give children choices in solving problems.

Staff will use positive enforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors. Children will be redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate. An example is when a child is doing something that could hurt others, themselves, or destroying property and choosing not to use problem-solving techniques. Teachers will continue to be an active listener and support the child with conflict resolution. Parents will be notified of the behavior management strategies used and receive an incident report. Individual behavior management plans will be implemented. If a child's behavior is unmanageable within a group setting, parents will be consulted and an individual behavior plan implemented.

No child shall be subject to physical corporal punishment, humiliated, frightened, verbally abused, or denied food, rest or bathroom facilities. Children will never be disciplined for toileting accidents, sleep habits, or food consumption. Any violation of this discipline policy should be reported to the Director immediately. All staff employed by the Dominelli School of Music are selected with the greatest of care and are highly trained in early childhood education and development.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Dominelli School of Music realizes that children have different eating habits and tend to be finicky eaters. Because of this, we prefer that parents provide their child so they can be sure that their child will eat. Parents are asked to bring in a nutritious snack every day in a lunchbox clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **What To Bring**

Please provide your child with a backpack to carry his/her belongings. It makes for a much easier arrival and departure. Children may only bring in small toys from home on his/her designated day, limited to a size that will fit inside the backpack. Please keep in mind that teachers will help the children to be careful, but cannot be responsible for loss or damage to items brought to school. Toy guns and weapons are prohibited.

### **Clothing Suggestions**

Our outdoor play area is used as an extension of the classroom, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits. In order for your child to enjoy participation in the program, please have him/her dress for the weather. If it has just rained, please send boots for the puddles; if it is raining lightly, waterproof outer clothing is needed; if it snows, please send snow suit, hat, gloves, and boots. In general, durable clothing that can withstand the energetic activity of young children is the best bet. If the day is extremely cold, send an extra sweater and hat. We will probably be outside for a brief time. Children need to run around, have some large muscle activity, and get some fresh air. We ask that you leave a complete set of extra clothing, especially socks, at all times. Also, if a child is newly toilet trained, it is helpful to keep an extra set of underwear on hand. Please replace the items when they become soiled. When buying indoor or outdoor clothing for school, make sure the child can put them on

himself/herself. If you are using shoe boots, please send slippers or sneakers so that your child won't have to keep his/her boots on indoors. This way your child can enjoy the Program without being concerned about his/her clothes.

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. The teachers are not responsible for lost or damaged articles.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

There will be many times and ways you can get involved in your child's preschool experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Chaperoning on field trips
- Lending objects for units of study
- Coming and talking about your job, when asked
- Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here (see monthly newsletter)
- Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"
- Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties
- Coming in to read to the class
- Volunteering to help with projects or games

Please speak to your child's teacher about becoming involved and he/she will set up a schedule for you.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Birthdays are a special time and we like to celebrate them by holding birthday parties for each child. You are welcome to bring a special snack for your child to share at school. You are welcome to join your child during his/her birthday party. If you choose to send party bags to school, please make sure there is one for every child in the class. Gifts for the birthday child are strictly optional. If you choose to provide a gift for the birthday child, please make it an inexpensive one.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

As part of the Dominelli School of Music Preschool, field trips will be planned occasionally. Prior to each trip, information will be sent home detailing the date, time, cost, location, chaperones, etc. The permission slip must be signed and returned to the teacher in order for the child to attend. We welcome parents to join us for trips.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is extremely important in order to ensure the success of your child. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher or the Dominelli School of Music Owner. It may not be possible for you to have a long conversation with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up times as the teachers are responsible for supervising all of the children in their care. If you have a special concern, a meeting or phone conference may be arranged. Dominelli School of Music Preschool provides many opportunities for parents to receive information on the progress of their child as well as the activities and events at our Center. The following details the types of communication that parents will receive:

- **Weekly Reports:** Parent's will receive weekly information on the activities the children worked on this past week, and what to expect in the week to come. You will also receive login information for the Kindermusik Digital Home Materials, which contains activities that can be done at home to further your child's musical experience.
- **Parent Conferences:** Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled two times per year, or more often by request. This conference will summarize each child's progress in our program. Conferences will be scheduled in November and May. Parents are welcome to schedule a conference at any time.
- **Information Board:** Information about upcoming activities and events will be posted on the information board in the lobby. Please check the boards regularly to keep informed about our upcoming events.

#### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

If an emergency arises, a qualified staff administers first aid care, calls the parent, and if necessary emergency medical personnel. Staff will accompany the child to the nearest hospital where emergency treatment is administered. The staff will remain with the child until the parent arrives. In the event neither parent can be reached, the child's physician will be contacted. It is essential for parents to provide information on where you can be reached, physician name and phone number, signed emergency waivers, and updated emergency contacts and waivers.

**All Dominelli School of Music staff are certified in Childcare First Aid and CPR.**

An accident report log is kept at the front desk with detailed information on any injury to a child. An incident report is kept in the log, in the child's file, and a copy given to the parent within 24 hours of any injury.

#### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PROCEDURE**

All staff are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect.

#### **WITHDRAWAL**

Written notice prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month is required for withdrawing for any reason. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged for the last month.

### **TERMINATION**

Dominelli School of Music reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if financial commitments are not met or if it becomes apparent that the program is not equipped to meet the psychological or developmental needs of the child. Written notification will be given to the parents to allow for ample time to find alternative care. The staff/director will make every effort to resolve any problems prior to termination. Documentation will be provided upon request prior to suspension or termination. Parents and children are given advance notification when suspension will take place based on child's behavior.