

Studio Lesson Policies 2026

Violin and Viola Lessons



Sterling Music For All

www.sterlingmusicforall.com

<http://SMFA.duetpartner.com>

Sterling, VA 20165 571-340-1922

[Click here for Suzuki Early Childhood policies](#) or [Scroll down to pink highlight](#).

Keep reading below for Violin and Viola Lesson Policies

How can I support my child:

- Please provide a quiet space for practicing at home, with positive encouragement.
- **If your child is less than 12 years old and you are in the Suzuki violin program or has a disability, I require that you attend their lessons.**

Scheduling Lessons:

- You can schedule all your lessons using: www.duetpartner.com
 - This website will show you all open slots and lessons are available on a first come first serve basis.
 - Please note, if you choose to pause lessons for a month your slot may be taken by another student, but you can find alternative times on the website above.
- Lessons are never more than a month-to-month commitment, but you can sign up as far in advance as you wish.

Group Lessons:

- Suzuki philosophy and method is different from traditional lessons in various ways such as the mother tongue approach where we learn by ear, reviewing songs for quality and GROUP classes.
- Group class aids in building community, musicianship, practice motivation and learning to play in an ensemble.
- Suzuki students are required to join in 10 group classes per year.
- Group classes are 1x/month.
- The group class fee will be \$125 for the school year. This will be added to the September billing. We will not have group class over the summer.
- Group classes are a supplement to private lessons not a replacement.

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- We will keep a consistent repertoire list of pieces so students can prepare ahead. Students should only prepare the pieces they have learned in lessons. We will begin with pre-twinkle players with their parents and then Twinkle and above will play up to the last piece they know. Students are encouraged but not required to stay past the pieces they know to listen and at times may be included in the class.
- Non-Suzuki students are not required to attend but may join at \$10 per class if they learn the repertoire.
- I will refund you if I must cancel a class or the weather causes us to cancel but there will not be makeups.
- I may invite parents to participate at times, please be responsive to the requests – remember, your child is always learning from you! Please do not give your child reminders during group class. Your child's attention needs to be focused on the group leader or teacher.
- Please be aware of your child's behavior and needs during class - if you feel they need a break for a brief time please take them for a break and return. If I see they need a break then I'll ask them to take a break with you and come back shortly.

Studio Closures:

- I send a monthly email regarding any planned studio closures at the start of the month.
- You can also visit the calendar monthly for studio closings by logging into your account at: <https://smfa.duetpartner.com/>
- If there are school closings due to inclement weather, I will contact you via phone and/or email.

Late arrivals:

- I will always start and end lessons on time to be respectful of your time and I ask that you do the same for me.

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- I ask that you arrive five minutes before the lesson is supposed to start and if you drop your child off, that you return five minutes before the lesson is scheduled to end.
- We will end at the expected ending time, regardless of how late you are. If you are more than 15 minutes late, we will cancel the lesson.
- Late arrivals will only receive the remainder of the lesson time that day and will not be refunded for the time lost.

Emergencies:

- Emergencies happen but when they do, there are multiple ways to contact me:
 - Text or call me at (571-340-1922) or
 - Email me at sterlingmusicforall@gmail.com
- I will do my best to make exceptions for emergencies or if you cannot get to me due to inclement weather.

Sick Policy:

- I do my best to ensure my studio is sanitized and clean for you and I will cancel a lesson if I am not feeling well.
- If you are not feeling well, please do not come to the lesson and let me know as quickly as you can. I will refund you or attempt to schedule a make-up lesson.
- I follow the Federal mask mandates and Loudoun County mandates. Masks are welcome anytime.

Practice:

- Progress cannot be made on an instrument without consistent practice, and everyone needs encouragement and help making sure they're staying consistent!
- A little practice each day is better than one long practice session per week – try not to get overwhelmed (or overwhelm your child) by long practices.

Consistency is critical to success.

Here are daily practice times based on your personal goals and to make

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progress:

If you play the violin for fun

- Ages five or below: 15 minutes –can be split into 5-10 minute chunks if needed
- Ages six to eight: 30-45 minutes
- Ages eight to ten: 45-60 minutes
- Ages twelve to adult: 60-90 minutes
- End your practice session immediately if you have pain while playing!

If you want to be a professional violinist

- Age five: 30 - 45 minutes
 - Age eight: 90 - 120 minutes
 - Age ten: 2 hours
 - Age twelve: 3 hours
 - Age fourteen to eighteen: 3 - 4 hours
 - Performance major in college: 5 hours
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- Listening to quality players is essential to knowing what a good player sounds like and further developing your own sound. If you are studying Suzuki violin the more you listen to the CD the faster you will make progress.

Keys to Success:

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- The Suzuki philosophy always comes first: The Suzuki method combines music teaching with a principal that “character is first, ability is second.”
- Follow the assignments I give you. If you don’t then I cannot guarantee success.
- The more you listen, the faster you will learn by heart.
- The more you review the faster you will learn new pieces. Review builds technique, puts it in the unconscious part of the brain so that the conscious part can learn new technique
- Come to group class-it refills the well of motivation to practice, builds community and is fun!
- Be positive in lessons and in home practice. Your mind is your most powerful asset so use it for positivity. Keep it fun!

Fees and Payment:

- The fees listed below are valid for 2026 and cover both in-person and virtual lessons.
 - \$40 for ½ hour
 - \$60 for 45 minutes
 - \$80 for 1 hour
 - \$100 for 10 required 60-min. group lessons, 1x/month, added to September billing.
 - Families with 2 or more children taking lessons receive \$5 off
- Your first music lesson is free, with no obligation to continue.

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- Tuition is due at the first session of each month.
- Students are required to pay for all sessions in each month based on the mutually agreed schedule decided at the start of the month.
- Tuition must be paid by the first lesson of every month, but no later than the 15th of each month. Failure to pay by the 15th will result in a late fee of \$25.00.
- If paying by check, make the check payable to “Nicole Fainsan.”
 - Checks can be mailed to my home address or brought to your lesson.
 - There will be a \$37 charge for bounced checks.
- Online payments are accepted using PayPal through your student account, through Venmo @Nicole-Fainsan-1 or Zelle at 571-340-1922.

Termination of Lessons:

Although rare, I may terminate lessons for the following reasons:

- If a student misses 6 or more lessons in a year.
- If a student has 3 or more no-show's or cancellations without notice, in a year.
- If the student is not practicing at home on a regular basis – I can only help you succeed if you're willing.

Recitals:

- There will be at least one recital per year.
- Students who wish to play will pay a \$20 fee. Date and location to be announced.
- If a professional accompanist is needed the student will pay the pianist and a reduced lesson rate to equal no greater than your usual 30 minute rate if I am also present.

Clicking “I agree” when registering constitutes a signature of agreement to these policies.

Name of Parent/Guardian, pronouns: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

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Stop reading here for Violin and Viola lesson policies.

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Tuition:

- Rolling admission is available. Tuition will be prorated for families joining mid-semester. Tuition will be as listed on my website and dependent upon the number of weeks in the session. Each class is 60 minutes.
- Payment is due at the first class and not more than 15 days after. Late payments will incur at \$25.00 late fee. After your registration is confirmed, you will receive a bill via email.
- Please make checks payable to “Nicole Fainsan.” Checks can be mailed to my home address or brought to your first class.
- Online payments are accepted using paypal through your student account. You can also pay through Venmo @Nicole-Fainsan-1 or Zelle at 571-340-1922.
- There will be a \$37 charge for bounced checks.
- This class is ideal with a one to one ratio of parents to children. One sibling within the 0-4 age range can join with permission at a rate of 25% off class tuition.

Refunds, Withdrawals and Credits

- Refunds for withdrawal are available before the start-date of your registered session, or within three class sessions after its start-date. Withdrawals request can be made verbally in person or written via email or text. This policy is not waived nor extended for any reason. Missing the refund policy period will result in credit. Unclaimed credit after one year is donated to sterling Music for all. Credit can be transferred to another family.
- Requesting a refund to withdrawal within the window of the 3 class period is solely the responsibility of the registrant.
- Non-attendance does not constitute a cancellation of registration (i.e. dropping a class), and students will be responsible for tuition and fees not paid, except in cases of cancellation or discontinuance of classes by SMFA.



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- Credits for group classes are valid for one year from the date the credit is issued and once credited, cannot be refunded.
- When a class time is canceled due to insufficient enrollment or other center-related reasons, tuition fees will be refunded in full using the same method you paid. In the event that a class is cancelled mid-session, you will receive a prorated refund for the remaining sessions. If no classes have occurred then the student will receive the full tuition as a refund. Refunds take 1 to 2 weeks to be processed.
- We do not offer credits for missed classes.
- If classes are cancelled due to inclement weather I will contact you and arrangements will be made for future makeups.

Drop Ins

- The drop in rate is \$10 for the first drop in and \$35 per drop in class after that to be paid at the time of drop in.

Medical Withdrawals

- Sterling Music for All offers medical withdrawals with refunds or credit on a case by case basis with a doctor's note. SMFA credits are valid for one year from the date issued and once credited, cannot be refunded. Basis for withdrawals include injuries or illnesses that impede a student's or caregiver's abilities to successfully participate in the class.

Caregiver involvement is critical:

- All students **must** be accompanied by a grown-up: a family member or an assigned caregiver. This is not a drop-off program. The class works best with a one-to-one ratio of caregiver to child. Please contact me if you would like to bring 2 children. It is critical for the adults to participate. The children learn from you

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and each other and you can help them become enthusiastic music-makers by participating fully. You will be an excellent model regardless of your musical ability—a sense of mindful attention is all that is required.

Sing rather than socialize:

- At first you may not know the songs but as you learn them please sing along. We especially ask the adults to be quietly attentive and avoid side conversations between activities. This is a time to listen, for often a child will spontaneously sing into the silence. Talking will only distract your child from the musical experience we are so carefully creating. There will be time to socialize before and after class.

Cell Phones:

- Please refrain from using your cell phone during class. Occasional pictures are of course great (you are welcome to tag #sterlingmusicforall) but if you must take a call or text, please step outside.

Timeliness:

- Class will begin and end on time so please do your best to arrive on time. The doors will be open 15 minutes prior to class if arrive early and want to wait while we set up. We'll have a few instruments out that the kids are free to explore. If you are running late (we know this happens especially with little ones) please slip in quietly and join the current activity. No refunds will be given for missed class time.

Toys, Food and Drink:

- Please leave toys at home so your child can focus on the class. Please feel comfortable to nurse or bottle feed your baby in class. Snacks are allowed but please avoid sharing due to allergies and be as neat as possible as a courtesy to the rental space. In addition, due to the large number of peanut allergies in young

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children, please do not bring any foods containing peanuts to class. Drinks can be kept in your bag for a quick sip.

Guests:

- Visiting adults are free. Please contact us prior to bringing another child to class. Due to the class size restrictions and caregiver child ratios this has to be carefully considered.

You still belong if your child cries or disrupts the class: (We've all been there!)

- If your little one is showing age-appropriate behavior during learning such as crying or running around, remain punitive-free and calmly take them outside until they (or you!) feel ready to join back in. There is no judgement of toddlers acting like toddlers, even if it can feel tough or tiring for grown-ups. With consistency they will get the routine and we understand little ones may have good and bad days.

Mobility for all:

- This class has a lot of motion for adults and children. We sit on the ground, stand up and move in a circle. Accommodations can always be made as needed. There are chairs available if sitting on the floor is challenging.

If You're Sick, Stay Home.

- Please do not come to the class if you're sick.

Recitals:

- There will be at least one optional recital per year. Students who wish to participate will pay a \$20 fee. Date and location to be announced.

Clicking I agree with the policies before registering constitutes a signature.

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Name of Parent/Guardian, Pronouns _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____