



# Preschool Family Handbook



Merryhill  
School®

# Table of Contents

<b>I. Our Philosophy</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Mission & Goals .....	4
Nondiscrimination.....	5
Ethical Standards.....	5
Guide to Terms .....	5
<b>II. Forms &amp; Authorization to Pick Up</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Enrollment Forms.....	6
Authorized Pick-Up/Drop Off.....	6
Late Pick-Up.....	6
<b>III. Consistency of Care</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>IV. Curriculum</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Proprietary Curriculum .....	8
Assessments.....	8
Developmental Progress.....	9
Confidentiality and Privacy.....	9
<b>V. Communications</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Electronic & Mobile Communications .....	10
School Events & Activities .....	10
Bulletin Boards .....	10
Monthly Folder .....	11
Family Reports .....	11
<b>VI. Guidance and Discipline</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Behavior Guidance .....	12
Forbidden Methods of Discipline.....	12
Family Conflict Resolution Procedure.....	14
<b>VII. Health</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Our Commitment to Health and Safety.....	15
Medical and Immunization Records.....	15
Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitizing.....	15
Diapering.....	16
Food and Nutrition .....	16
Bottle Feeding .....	16
Breastfeeding .....	17
Illness .....	17
Medication Administration.....	17
Clothing & Personal Belongings .....	18

Sunscreen .....	18
Allergies .....	19
Abuse and Neglect Reporting .....	19
<b>VIII. Security &amp; Safety .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Building Access .....	20
Infant Sleep Safety .....	20
Accidents & Injuries .....	21
Fire and Other Safety Drills .....	21
Weather Emergencies .....	21
Lockdown .....	22
Vehicles on School Grounds .....	22
<b>Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>24</b>

*Information contained in this Preschool Family Handbook may be updated throughout the year. Families will be notified of any changes. This Handbook is not an all-inclusive list of school policies and procedures. We follow all state licensing regulations and guidelines.*

# I. Our Philosophy

## Mission & Goals

Our preschool offers the perfect balance of learning and play in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for children. Our caring teachers are dedicated to creating lifelong learners. Through the implementation of our curriculum, evidence of learning is found throughout our school. We develop productive Family-teacher partnerships, keeping families involved and connected to what their children are learning and discovering.

Our school and staff members hold themselves to high standards of ethical behavior, based on the shared belief that childhood is a unique and valuable stage of life and that each child, family member, and colleague should be respected for their unique qualities. We base our work on knowledge of how children learn and develop, and we recognize that children are best understood and supported in a context of family, culture, community and society.

We have an obligation to provide care and education in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. Furthermore, we are responsible for communicating, collaborating and cooperating with each family to bring home and school together to foster each child's development. To meet the diverse needs of individual families, we cooperate with agencies responsible for child welfare and we assist families in gaining access to allied professionals.

Our schools are guided by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards. By specifying standards of excellence for instruction and for the arranged learning environment, the curriculum helps children develop confidence in their ability to learn. They begin to develop self-understanding, self-worth and self-discipline. They also begin to gain an understanding and appreciation of the world around them, including individuals different from themselves.

Our goal is to provide a loving, safe environment and an exceptional educational program to help children develop:

- A healthy self-concept
- Social and emotional awareness
- Cognitive, physical and language skills
- Independence
- Sense of responsibility to self and others
- Security
- Feeling of accomplishment
- Trust in peers and adults
- Enjoyment of the learning experience

We also strive to help Families by communicating:

- Realistic, age-appropriate expectations for their children
- Methods of child guidance and clarifying values
- Sensitivity to cultural differences
- Ways we can partner with each family for the benefit of their child

## Nondiscrimination

Our school does not discriminate in employment or the provision of educational services on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, disability, citizenship status, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

We are committed to providing an excellent education to all of our students and are proud to serve a diverse community of individuals, including those with disabilities. As part of that commitment, our school makes its programs and services available on a non-discriminatory basis, including to students with disabilities as defined under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). In accordance with the ADA and as set forth in our ADA policy, we will make reasonable modifications necessary to afford students access to our programs and services. Please contact your School Leader for more information on our ADA policy.

## Ethical Standards

Our school and employees strive to create a school culture based on the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (available on the NAEYC website).

## Guide to Terms

We strive to use language that embodies our Culture of Care which emphasizes relationships in schools and workplaces, **and for that reason we use language that supports diversity, inclusion, and belonging.** Throughout this handbook, we use “us” and “we” to refer to us, the School. Where a “School Leader” is referenced, this could be a Principal, Assistant Principal, Head of School, Preschool Director, or another similar title at the School. “Family” or “You” to refer to you as the parents, legal guardians, and other trusted adults that care for your children. We use “Child” to refer to our students, your children.

Please note we also refer to an “Addendum” for additional information that may be more specific to your school or state. Not every school will have an Addendum. To the extent there is more specific information for your school listed in the Addendum, please follow that.

## II. Forms & Authorization to Pick Up

### Enrollment Forms

Families must complete and submit all required documentation, including application form, tuition agreement, emergency contact form, immunization record and physician's form for their Child. These forms must be kept current throughout your Child's enrollment. Registration paperwork and fees must be submitted annually. Please refer to this documentation for additional tuition policies and procedures.

### Authorized Pick-Up/Drop Off

It is very important that your Child's emergency contacts are always kept current. If you have moved or have changed your home or work telephone number, please update the information on our online Family portal, and/or notify the School office immediately. It is our responsibility to ensure we release a Child only to those adults who have prior authorization. Please also review the list of emergency contacts for your Child on the online Family portal and update as needed.

You must sign each of your Children in and out daily when arriving and departing from School at the front entrance. Additional persons authorized to pick up your Child must also sign them in and out using the same system. Over time, you will get to know teachers and other staff members at our School. While you are learning names and faces, it will be helpful to initiate introductions by greeting the teachers and clearly stating your name and your Child(ren)'s name(s).

If someone other than the previously authorized individuals will be picking up your Child, we must have verifiable written permission from the Family. Photo identification is mandatory for anyone unknown to the staff. A Child will NOT be released without confirming the identity and authorization of the person picking up.

If there is a court order or signed Family agreement in place regarding who has responsibility for a Child on certain dates and times, the Family needs to provide it to the School so we can follow that schedule.

### Late Pick-Up

If a Child has not been picked up within 15 minutes of closing time and the Child's Family has not contacted the School, the School Leader will attempt to contact all family members or emergency contact persons listed for the Child. If the Child remains at the center after 30 minutes, we will comply with local regulations for next steps. Fees may be charged for late pick-ups as described in the tuition agreement and fee schedule, or in the Addendum following this handbook, and repeated late pick-ups may result in discontinuation of enrollment.

# III. Consistency of Care

When children are grouped in similar age levels, the maximum child group sizes and ratios of staff persons align with state licensing requirements.

Lead and assistant teachers have primary responsibility for a single group of children. During the day, we stagger staff schedules so that children, especially infants, have as much time as possible with their regular teacher and classroom assistant. During opening and closing times, some age ranges (other than infants) may be combined, with the teacher in that classroom assuming the responsibility of care until the Family arrives for pick up.

To the extent possible, teachers stay with the same group of students for the entire academic year. Children transition to the next age group based on chronological age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. Children who are moving up gradually spend more time in their new classroom.

# IV. Curriculum

## Proprietary Curriculum

Our school employs a proprietary curriculum (“Curriculum”). Our Curriculum is an integrated series of programs for children ages six weeks to five years that engages the young learners’ senses, mind and body and values the individual child. Each program takes advantage of a child’s readiness to learn with activities that are fun, challenging, easily understood and meaningful.

Our Curriculum is built upon Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), which provide teachers in our general education program the flexibility to differentiate instruction based on developmental stage.

The Curriculum spirals to review and build upon prior skills before advancing to higher-level content and includes opportunities for students to be curious and ask questions. It is built around the following principles:

- Well-rounded content
- Literacy focus
- Center-based learning
- Goals & assessments
- Personalized learning
- Social-emotional focus
- Family communication
- Effective instructional practices

The Curriculum, when implemented with fidelity, is customized to support and enrich each child’s unique learning needs. The program places emphasis on small groups and individualized instruction. This is how teachers ensure all children succeed in attaining developmental milestones and academic, social and emotional development.

The Curriculum provides Families daily insights into their child’s cognitive, emotional, and social development and embeds clear, consistent tools for ongoing Family communication.

## Assessments

Assessment is the process of gathering information about children’s developmental strengths and progress to inform learning goals. Our Curriculum promotes a systematic assessment protocol to gather information about each child’s progress over time. Children at every age and grade level are assessed on an ongoing basis to drive instruction and to make lesson-planning decisions.

We use ethically and developmentally appropriate assessment methods that are embedded within children’s daily activities, inclusive of families, and are culturally and linguistically responsive. Assessment tools may include notes of observations, rubrics, checklists and maintenance of a portfolio for each student.



## Developmental Progress

Teachers plan lessons to meet an individual Child's cognitive, physical and emotional needs. They provide materials and activities that encourage children to explore their environment and develop social skills, problem-solving skills and new ways of thinking.

Every staff member strives to routinely assess the developmental needs of the Children. If these observations reveal possible developmental delays or special needs, they are brought to Families' attention, along with suggestions for Families to reach out to pediatricians or other support professionals for further assistance. School leadership and families formulate a constructive plan to work with the Child, consisting of two or three interim goals, along with timelines and follow-up discussions to the extent possible.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

Our program staff receive ongoing training and agree to follow the ethical responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality when conducting assessments of Children. All information contained in your Child's records is confidential, and anyone not directly involved with the care of your Child or affiliated with state licensing, protective services or other government agencies will not have access to your Child's records without your prior written consent. Families have the right to add information, comments, data or other relevant material to your Child's records as appropriate. Additionally, you may request, in writing, the deletion or amendment of any information contained in your Child's record and we will consider that request in accordance with any applicable court order or signed Family agreement. We are happy to provide you reasonable access to your Child's on-site records.

We ask that you not post any recordings you take at School or at School-related events as they may include other Children or School staff who have not given their permission or consent. Posting recordings, on the internet or in any other public forum requires written permission from the School Leader.

# V. Communications

We take Family communication very seriously. When families and teachers work together as partners in a child's education, the learning experience is richer and more meaningful.

## Electronic & Mobile Communications

Our School uses a web-based application ("Application") that helps us meet a Family's increasing expectations for electronic & mobile communications, and that helps make teacher's daily communication and record-keeping tasks easier.

During the week, Families typically receive communication about their Child engaged in learning. Families receive a report which includes information about the Child's daily routine as well as a photo and brief description of a learning highlight from that specific Child's day. The report may also include additional notes that might be helpful to Families. Families also may email morning notes to the teacher through this application. More information about the Application is available through the School.

## School Events & Activities

We strive to keep Families informed of upcoming events, activities and key dates. The overall school holiday calendar is on the school website, as well as the monthly calendar with all special events. We also issue a monthly school newsletter with calendar reminders, and send emails and alerts via the Application.

## Bulletin Boards

There is a bulletin board generally located directly outside the door of each classroom, but may in some cases be inside the classroom. These boards include the following items, as applicable:

- Current lesson plan
- Learning outcomes (Toddlers – PreK2)
- Infant skill sheets
- Current Week-at-a-Glance (Beginner – Pre-K)
- Toddler skill sheets
- Current Spanish poster (Beginner – Pre-K)
- Items as required by local licensing agencies (e.g., daily schedule, menu)

Teachers also display a variety of Children's work in the classroom to illustrate how classroom activities build skills. These displays show learning that is child-centered, open-ended and exploratory in nature, emphasizing process over product. Please see Addendum for any school differences.

## Monthly Folder

The monthly folder offers Families a lens into their child's activities and learning progression, gives evidence of skill attempts and mastery, and suggests ways that Families can be an integral part of their child's ongoing successes. The combination of preprinted communications and the child's own work samples show how our structured curriculum offers a unique and rich experience for each child. Teachers are required to send home the folder on the last school day of each calendar month, which may include letters to the Family, lists of skills, and samples of the Child's work.

Please see Addendum for any school differences.

## Family Reports

Teachers issue Family reports three times per year, in October, February and June along with an opportunity for a Family-teacher conference. The Family reports show how a child is doing relative to the skills and objectives of the program and provide a snapshot of the child's learning profile. The information reflects assessments that have already been completed by the teacher in the classroom on a weekly basis. Teachers do not "test" the children in order to complete the Family report. Skills are rated on the following scale:

- Introduced: Skill has been introduced, demonstrates skill less than 20% of the time.
- Beginning: Demonstrates skill between 20% and 50% of the time.
- Developing: Demonstrates skill between 50% and 80% of the time.
- Mastered: Demonstrates skill at least 80% of the time.

Teacher comments are based on objective observations, not opinions. Comments describe how the Child is progressing, observations of skill mastery, what is being done to help the Child develop skills, and a description of activities that support the rating.

Infant and Toddler reports are simple narratives that document past growth and future goals but may still include photographs and other samples to illustrate the skills the Child is developing, while the reports for the older preschoolers are more detailed. Family reports include a cover sheet for confidentiality, as well as to allow Families an opportunity to respond to the report with questions or concerns. Please see Addendum for any school differences.

# VI. Guidance and Discipline

## Behavior Guidance\*

Our behavioral guidance is constructive, age- and stage-appropriate and redirects Children to appropriate behavior and conflict resolution. We approach discipline with a positive attitude, based on the premise that children respect and care for themselves and others. Our goal is to solve behavioral concerns by using modeling, redirection of behavior, and positive reinforcement through attention and praise. Positive classroom rules, structure and reinforcement help children understand expectations of behavior. Circle time and other group meetings incorporate time for children to give and receive praise for positive actions, to plan activities together, and to discuss class concerns and goals for desired behavior.

When necessary, staff work with family members and other support professionals to create a plan for resolution. The plan includes positive behavior support, and Families are kept informed of progress. In rare circumstances, and only after all other possible interventions have been exhausted, suspension or expulsion is necessary. We reserve the right to suspend or dismiss a child for harmful or inappropriate behavior in our sole discretion: 1) If we do not have adequate expertise or resources for the Child's educational, medical or other needs; 2) for violations of our policies; or 3) for any reason we determine to be in the best interest of the safety of students and the school. In these rare instances, we may offer Families assistance in locating assistance and alternative placements.

## Forbidden Methods of Discipline

Behavioral guidance for children in our preschools shall be constructive in nature, age and stage appropriate, and shall be intended to redirect children to appropriate behavior and resolve conflicts. Children learn best when they are comfortable and feel safe. While all children need periodic redirection and behavioral guidance, actions which disrupt or undermine this positive environment are prohibited.

Some examples of prohibited actions are:

- Corporal punishment of any kind, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, pulling ears or hair, and any other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear
- Threatened or actual withdrawal of food or treats, rest or use of the bathroom
- Subjecting children to abusive or profane language from any person or from media sources
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment
- Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, frightening or isolating a child

*\*Our Guidance and Discipline Policy complies with federal and state civil rights laws.*

- Withholding from children emotional responses, stimulation, food or the opportunities for rest or sleep
- Any type of abuse, endangerment or neglect of children
- Cruel, harsh, unusual, or extreme discipline techniques
- Belittling or shaming a child
- Calling a child names and making negative comparisons to others
- Telling a child they are “no good,” “worthless,” “bad,” “a mistake,” or similar comment
- Yelling, threatening, or bullying a child
- Ignoring or rejecting a child as punishment, giving them the silent treatment
- Delegating children to manage or discipline other children
- Using any type of restraint on a child as outlined below\*
- Restraining a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain control
- Prone restraint of a child. Prone restraint is defined as all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal functioning of any portion, or all, of a child’s body while the child is in a facedown position. Prone restraint includes physical or mechanical restraint.
- Placing children in a locked room or confining children in any enclosed area (unless school is in “lockdown”)
- Confining children to equipment such as cribs or high chairs other than for meals or specific supervised projects
- Making derogatory or sarcastic remarks about children or their families
- Punishing children for failure to eat or sleep or for toileting accidents
- Punishing an entire group of children due to the unacceptable behavior of one or a few
- Isolating and restricting children from all activities for an extended period of time or any type of seclusion\*\*
- Allowing children to intimidate, torment or pressure others forcefully

*NOTE: The use of a physical escort as defined below and properly used when necessary to protect the child or others from harm is NOT coercion.*

*\*Restraint defined as follows:*

- *Physical escort: "the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location." (H.R. 7124, 2018)*
- *Mechanical restraint: "the use of devices as a means of restricting a student's freedom of movement." (H.R. 7124, 2018)*
- *Physical restraint: "a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move the individual's arms, legs, torso or head freely, except that such term does not include a physical escort, mechanical restraint or chemical restraint." (H.R. 7124, 2018)*

*\*\*Seclusion: "the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving, except that such a term does not include a time out." (H.R. 7124, 2018)*

## Family Conflict Resolution Procedure

We encourage open communications between Families and staff, so they may work together for the benefit of the children. Families can interact with their Child's teacher and other staff members daily during our school's normal hours of operation, subject to any applicable security of classroom management procedures. Families may also interact with the School Leaders informally and/or by appointment. In many cases, Families and school staff can resolve any concern or conflict that arises.

In the rare instance that Families are not satisfied with the outcome of discussions with the teachers and School Leader, they are welcome to communicate by phone, email or in person with the Regional Director to whom the school reports.

We understand that sometimes emotions regarding a child or a situation at a school can run high. However, we expect that Families will treat all teachers and staff respectfully and professionally. If a Family's behaviors disrupt the learning environment or school operations, or if it becomes too difficult to have a positive or constructive relationship with the School, the School may take immediate action. If at any point, a Family's behaviors pose a safety threat to our students, staff or property, we reserve the right to limit that Family's entrance to our schools. This limitation could include expulsion of the Child if the behaviors escalate despite our best efforts.

# VII. Health

## Our Commitment to Health and Safety

Providing a healthy and safe learning environment for our students is our highest priority. In addition to following our school's comprehensive health and safety practices, we regularly adjust our operations to meet or exceed the most current guidance from local and state health departments during this time of heightened vigilance related to COVID-19.

Our enhanced health and wellness protocols include:

- Repeated disinfecting/cleaning of “high-touch” surfaces throughout the school day and in the evenings (including desks, doors, public spaces, and bathroom fixtures)
- Frequent and thorough handwashing by students and staff, actively encouraged throughout the school day
- Ensuring all staff and students who are feeling ill stay home until they recover
- Finally, guidance regarding wearing facial masks/coverings is evolving, and we will update Families accordingly.

## Medical and Immunization Records

Prior to enrollment, all students must have an updated medical form on file, including a current list of vaccinations and the date of their last vision and hearing screening. All state required immunizations must be completed unless Families produce the required documentation for applicable exemption. If a currently enrolled Child or staff member has a medically compromised immune system, our school will evaluate whether a child who is not fully immunized may be newly enrolled. If a Child is not fully immunized for a disease which occurs in the school, that child will be excluded from all activities until any danger of infection is past.

Only those directly involved with the care of your Child or affiliated with state licensing, protective services or other government agencies will have access to your Child's records. Others may access these records only with your written consent.

## Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitizing

We recognize the importance of clean and sanitary conditions for children's health and safety. Toys that have been in a Child's mouth or otherwise contaminated are removed immediately, cleaned with soap and water and disinfected. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. We do not use toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized.

To control odors, our school uses ventilation and sanitation rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers. Any spills are immediately and thoroughly cleaned up, and surfaces are disinfected using fragrance-free and least toxic cleaning products to assure that cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing of the school is carried out as recommended by NAEYC guidelines.

All cleaners and other toxic substances are kept out of the reach of Children in a secure locked cabinet.

## Diapering

Teachers check diapers every 2 hours, when a Child wakes from a nap, and upon being soiled. The changing table is sanitized after each changing, even if paper covers are used.

## Food and Nutrition

Where offered, we provide Children a nutritious lunch, and morning and afternoon snacks. We follow government child nutrition guidelines for the amount and type of food we provide Children at snack times and meals. Menus are posted on our school website as well as in school for Families to review.

Staff discard any food not taken home by the Family the end of the day, as well as food with expired dates. Fresh fruits and vegetables are thoroughly washed before serving. No plastic or Styrofoam containers, bags, plates or wraps are used to reheat Children's foods or drinks.

Children with special feeding needs are referred to our ADA Compliance Officer for creation of a modification plan. Please see the Allergies section for more information on food allergies.

## Bottle Feeding

Bottles must be labeled correctly to be accepted by the school. If your bottle is missing information, you may be provided with the tape and a marker. **All bottles must go home at the end of the day.** To ensure Children receive the correct bottles, we require the following labelling procedure:

- Label the bottle and cap with the Child's first and last name, using the assigned colored tape for your Child.
- Mark the current date on the bottle.
- All breast milk bottles must have red tape in addition to the assigned colored tape, and must be marked with the date and time the milk was expressed.
- After warming, breast milk or formula bottles may be out for no more than one hour before being discarded.
- Breast milk or formula bottles cannot be reheated or returned to the refrigerator after initial warming.



## Breastfeeding

We provide a comfortable area for nursing mothers to breastfeed their Children. Please see your School Leader for specific information.

## Illness

Families assist us in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all our Children by keeping sick Children at home. The purpose of our sick child policy is to:

- Reduce the spread of illness from a sick Child to other Children.
- Promote complete recuperation of the sick Child.
- Prevent the constant spread of cold, flu and diarrhea and other communicable diseases such as COVID-19 that are common among small children.

We reserve the right to refuse admittance to any student who shows a sign of illness. Children who become ill at school will be made comfortable and Families will be notified to pick them up within one hour. Families must keep sick Children at home until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours\* if they display any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or more.  
Children must be free of fever for at least 24 hours, unassisted by fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Heavy nasal discharge requiring frequent wiping every 3-5 minutes
- Persistent, non-productive or “barking” cough
- Sore throat
- Fussy, cranky behavior unlike the Child’s normal demeanor
- Skin rash, including diaper rash
- Head lice
- Symptoms of a communicable disease such as pink eye, measles, chicken pox, mumps, or strep throat

**\*The length of time Children should stay out of our School depends on whether they have COVID-19 or another illness. Please see your School Leader for updated guidance.**

## Medication Administration

Whenever possible, prescription or over the counter medication should be administered at home or by a Family member who comes to the school for that purpose. We encourage Families to ask their Child’s physician to prescribe or recommend medications in such a way that they do not need to be administered during the school day. If the physician determines that the medication should be administered during the school day, we will consider such requests in accordance with state and local regulations.

When we agree to administer prescription or nonprescription medications, the Family must provide a note from a physician requesting us to administer the medication, with detailed dosage information, circumstances or schedule of medication administration, and any adverse reactions that could occur.

The medication must be in a new sealed container. Prescriptions must be in the original pharmacy container or box, with the official pharmacy prescription label securely attached. The prescription indicated on the label must be current. **Families cannot pre-mix medication into food or a bottle before bringing it to school.**

School administrative staff must keep the medication and a copy of the physician's note stored in the locked medicine location. School administrative staff complete the dispensing log after each dosage, recording the name of the Child, the medication and dosage given, the time and date, and signature of the person dispensing. Epi-pens and other emergency medications may be stored in either the normal locked medication cabinet or a secure location in the classroom. Note that Children with life-threatening allergies requiring the presence of an Epi-pen must be referred to our ADA Compliance Officer to evaluate and approve, and to create a modification plan. See Allergies section for additional information.

If the medication request is for any medication that requires specific skills or prior medical training to administer, Families must first make a written request for a modification and provide it to the school with the physician's note referenced above. We will submit the physician's note and request to the ADA Compliance Officer to evaluate and approve. Once the request has been approved and a modification plan prepared, we will notify the Family and follow the modification plan.

## Clothing & Personal Belongings

Children must wear comfortable, washable, seasonally appropriate clothing and closed-toe shoes.

Families must provide a labeled bag with a change of clothing (including socks) for their Child to be kept at school for emergencies. Families with infants and toddlers should provide two sets of clothing. All items must be labeled with the Child's name.

We encourage Children to bring a favorite blanket or stuffed animal for use at naptime. These items will be stored in your Child's cubby. Candy, gum, toy weapons, jewelry and money are not permitted at school. Toys should only be sent on designated days.

## Sunscreen

Families must provide written permission for school staff to apply sunscreen on their Child. All bottles must be in the original container, labeled with the Child's name.

## Allergies

Families are expected to inform the school about their Child's allergies. Each child should have a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan ("FARE Plan") listing their allergies, recommended treatment in case of an allergic reaction, prepared by Families and the Child's physician. Children's allergies are posted in the classroom as well as the kitchen. Some Children may need immediate intervention for an allergic reaction which may include administration of medication or an injection device, such as an Epi-pen. Families and School leaders will work together to ensure understanding about the allergies and FARE Plan. Children with life-threatening allergies are referred to our ADA Compliance Officer for creation of a modification plan.

## Abuse and Neglect Reporting

All staff members are mandated by law to comply with the child abuse and neglect reporting requirement. The law requires any person working in a school or child care setting who has knowledge of or observes a child whom she knows, or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect whether within the school or outside of school, to immediately report it to the applicable state child protective agency.

Teachers and staff are responsible for monitoring their own behavior and the behavior of other staff members and must immediately report to the principal any observations of an employee violating either licensing regulations or company policies. In addition, upon starting employment every staff member is required to participate in training on sexual abuse and molestation prevention.

Those who in good faith report neglect or abuse by a family member or co-worker are immune from discharge, retaliation or other disciplinary actions for having made the report.

We take allegations of neglect or abuse very seriously. Once the allegation is reported, we will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or regulatory agencies. To the fullest extent possible, but consistent with our legal obligation to report suspected abuse to appropriate authorities, we will endeavor to keep confidential the identities of the alleged victims and investigation subject.

# VIII. Security & Safety

## Building Access

Access to our building is limited to enrolled families, staff and registered visitors. Access may be through a buzzer or keypad. Where there is a keypad lock on the front door, **Families of enrolled Children and school staff are the only ones given the code.** Do not share your code with anyone else, and do not allow people to enter behind you without permission of the management team. The keypad code is changed on a regular basis.

Visitors other than enrolled Families cannot enter our school unless escorted by a staff member. All visitors, including vendors, applicants and family members are required to wait in the lobby/reception area until escorted by a staff member.

## Infant Sleep Safety

Safe sleeping practices are in place for all infants. These practices promote safe sleep when infants are napping and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or suffocation death. All staff are trained on the consistent use of safe sleep practices, which include:

- If an infant falls asleep outside the crib, they are moved to the crib.
- If infants arrive to the program asleep, or fall asleep, in equipment not specifically designed for infant sleep, the infant is removed and placed in appropriate infant sleep equipment, such as a crib
- Staff must place infants younger than 12 months on their backs to sleep without the use of infant sleep positioners, unless ordered by a physician. Once they can turn themselves over, infants may assume any comfortable sleep position.
- Crib labels with the Child's picture and name must indicate whether the Child is able to roll over on their own AND always indicate that the Child must first be laid down in the crib on their back.
- Sleeping infants are directly observed by sight and sound routinely and frequently.
- A teacher must be present in the crib area if any infants are sleeping.
- Infants' heads will NOT be covered with blankets or bedding at any time.
- Cribs will not be covered with blankets or bedding. No loose bedding, pillows, bumper pads, etc. will be used in cribs. Sleep sacks may be used instead of a blanket.
- Toys and stuffed animals are not allowed in the cribs. Pacifiers will be allowed in infants' cribs while they sleep, but a pacifier clip is NOT allowed.
- Only one infant is in a crib at a time, unless we are evacuating infants in an emergency.
- All infants are given the opportunity to nap/sleep. No infant is forced to sleep, to stay awake, or to stay in the napping area.
- Infants are removed from the crib upon waking up. The crib is NOT treated as a playpen.

## Accidents & Injuries

The health and safety of both Children and staff in our school are of paramount importance. All employees are responsible to assist in the prevention and control of injuries, illnesses and hazards and to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Staff members inspect their classrooms and outdoor play areas daily for potential hazards.

No matter how minor the incident, if a Child experiences an accident, injury or possible injury, staff will report it to school administration and a written incident report will be provided to Families. Families will also be immediately contacted if the injury needs medical attention. For any serious accident or incident, we will attempt to notify Families by a telephone call as soon as possible.

Staff members are trained in first aid and CPR. If a Child requires medical attention, a report is filed and sent home to Families. In the event of a serious emergency, the school will secure immediate medical attention as described in the “authorization for medical treatment” section of the tuition agreement filed in the school office. Every effort will be made to contact parents, guardians, or authorized family members or friends during such emergencies.

## Fire and Other Safety Drills

As required by law, our school holds regular fire and safety drills. It is expected that all Children on the campus at the time of such drills participate fully. If a drill must take place in inclement weather, all attempts will be made to ensure that Children are properly attired. Should you find yourself at the school while a drill is taking place, please participate with your Child, and take the time to review and discuss the importance of such drills with your Child.

## Weather Emergencies

In case of severe or hazardous weather, we may have to close or delay school opening hours. We will make every attempt to list closings and delays on the school website and to notify Families by email and text alert whenever possible.

In the event of severe weather or other emergencies during the school day, it may be necessary to close school early. We will notify Families by phone, email and/or text to pick up their child before the designated emergency closing time. Where applicable, bus/van services will make independent decisions regarding inclement weather procedures. Families will be informed of these decisions.

In an emergency, immediate decisions may be made. We will make every attempt to contact you, authorized family members, or specified friends. If you are going to be out of town, please notify your emergency contacts and let us know whom to contact in an emergency.

## Lockdown

If an emergency requires lockdown, we will notify Families as soon as possible. All entrances to the school will be secured. No one, including Families, will be allowed to enter or exit the building. The lockdown will be lifted when we receive notification from law enforcement officials.

## Vehicles on School Grounds

Because the safety of our Children is of paramount concern to us, we require all Families to adhere to the following rules of the road while on school property:

- All vehicles must obey the 5 miles per hour speed limit.
- Pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Parked vehicles **MUST** have ignitions turned off and the keys removed.
- Children may **NOT** be left unattended in a vehicle at any time or for any reason.

Violations of these rules may result in a warning. If a violation is serious, or violations continue, school personnel are authorized to take a tag number to report to local police.

# Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Child's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

This Family Handbook was created to promote an understanding of the school's policies and procedures.

The information in this handbook applies to all activities occurring on school grounds, school buses, and during any school-related activity. It is important that Families and Children are familiar with these expectations.

This signed page will be added to your Child's permanent file. Your signature means that you have received this Family Handbook and understand the policies and procedures of our school.

I have read and understand the policies and procedures in the Family Handbook. I agree to abide by them as will my Child(ren).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date