

Sprouting Scholars Preschool Parent Handbook



“Blossoming Great Minds into Great Scholars”

Welcome! This Parent Handbook will acquaint you with the mission, philosophy, curriculum and policies of Sprouting Scholars Preschool. We hope it will give you a clear picture of the Preschool and what you and your children can expect while in our care.

Sprouting Scholars Preschool (SSP) is a childcare center licensed by the North Carolina Division of Child Development. SSP was created with all families in mind. SSP is currently designed to serve children from 6 weeks old to 12 years of age. SSP provides high quality preschool and school age services to families of all racial, cultural, social, religious, and economic backgrounds. We are dedicated to ensuring that all children are given the opportunities they need to be successful, while keeping in mind that children need to be stimulated, engaged, and most importantly; have fun!

SSP offers low child ratios and all staff are highly trained. This program will make children feel safe and loved while learning. We feel that it's important to help children explore safely, but independently. We look forward to working with you as your child grows and discovers the world around them.

All children will have the opportunity to participate in learning through a state approved curriculum and activities. In addition to experiences throughout the classroom, the children will also participate in field experiences (field trips).

We expect parents to read this handbook, follow policies and procedures; provide us with all necessary information and have open and honest communication during your time here at SSP. ☺ This is your center; we are an extension of your home. We must work together to help your child develop; nothing is more important. We have an open door policy so if you have any questions feel free to contact the Director.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Philosophy and Mission Statement

A key word in our program is respect. We foster respect for self, respect for others, and respect for materials in developmentally appropriate ways. In a secure and nurturing environment, our curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. We believe that children learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials.

Our teachers encourage curiosity and experimentation, and have chosen materials that help expand children's thinking. Basic learning materials include sand, water, and tools to use with them, large and small blocks, puzzles, dramatic play props (dress-up clothes, puppets), items for scientific investigation (magnets, balances, and weights), computers, books, cd's, musical instruments, art and drawing supplies, and climbing structures with slides. Positive social interaction is encouraged by helping children to develop their verbal skills and to express their feelings in appropriate ways.

Sprouting Scholars Preschool mission is to offer age-appropriate activities that include social, physical, creative, emotional, and intellectual opportunities for growth to every child enrolled in our facility. The environment will be safe, fun, caring, and supportive – which will ease their transition from their parents care to our dedicated teachers. Our goal is to establish effective communication, and develop a positive relationship between the caregiver and the child, this way parents can feel at ease leaving their children in our care when off to work.

Our promise is to provide a stimulating environment for the child's full development.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In providing services to children and their families, Sprouting Scholars Preschool do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, disability, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin or sexual orientation.

Staff Qualifications

The staff at Sprouting Scholars Preschool are the Owner and Operator, Lead Teachers, Assistant Teachers and Floaters. All staff meet, and in most cases exceed, the Department of Early Education requirements for formal education for their respective positions, have had experience working with young children and their families, and have approved certification in First Aid and CPR. The staff enjoys and understands how young children learn and grow. They respond with sensitivity to each child's individual needs, desires, and interests.

In order to ensure that employees or other persons regularly providing child care or support services with potential for unsupervised contact with children at SSP are appropriate for serving in their positions, a thorough background check by the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (NCDCEE) and the sheriffs department shall be performed on all candidates for positions before an offer of employment is confirmed. Further, a qualifying letter from the NCDCEE is issued before any potential candidate may work in a center. This background check shall be performed every 3 years on all persons in such positions and/or any time the program receives information that may indicate that a new Background Record Check review is appropriate.

Hours and Days of Operation

Sprouting Scholars Preschool is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Preschool and Holiday Closures

Sprouting Scholars Preschool will always place the holiday closures on the parent board, calendar, and on your monthly newsletters. In addition, we will always give out reminder slips for all closures.

We are closed on the following holidays:

New Years Eve
New Year's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Day after Independence Day
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day (Thanksgiving Day & Friday (day after Thanksgiving))
Christmas Break (Dates to be discussed yearly)

Sprouting Scholars will be closing early on the following days:

*Day Before Thanksgiving 7:30am-12pm

*July 2 nd 2020 7:30am-12pm

Parents are still expected to make regularly scheduled payments during preschool/holiday closures. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, Sprouting Scholars Preschool will be closed the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, Sprouting Scholars Preschool will be closed the following Monday.

Your Vacation Time

Each **full-time** child who has been enrolled for 6 months or more will receive 5 vacation days per year. Your child/children may not be present during your vacation time. Your vacation days must be consecutive and can't be split days. Tuition is not expected during your vacation week and can be taken any time outside of preschool/holiday closures. Your 5 vacation days can't be rolled over into the next year. If you don't use your 5 vacation days within the year, they are considered lost. If your family uses up their 5 vacation days and wishes to take an additional vacation time, tuition is still due at full rate. A 4-week written notice stating your vacation departure date and when your child/children will be returning is required or tuition will still be due at full rate.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, Sprouting Scholars Preschool will attempt to open depending on the severity of the weather conditions we will follow Durham County school schedule. In rare situations when the weather conditions or emergencies cause concern for the safety of children, families, and staff, the Center may be closed or may experience a delayed opening.

If the Preschool closes or has a delayed opening, this decision will be made as soon as possible to allow families time to prepare. Closures or delayed openings will be communicated various ways: via email to all enrolled families, via the voicemail greeting on the main Preschool telephone line (252-632-0540), via text, a post on our FB Like page and WRAL closings.

If the weather becomes severe after the Preschool has opened for the day, the Preschool may determine that an early closure is in order to ensure the safety of children and staff as they travel home. If the Preschool must close early, parents will be called with as much notice as possible.

***Please Note* Payment is still required for Holiday closures, and Inclement weather.**

Please see Attachment B for a listing of the 2020-2021 closures and early closures

2. ENROLLMENT

Process

Parents interested in enrolling their child(ren) should call the Director and arrange a visit to the center. During your visit, we encourage all families to bring their child(ren) they plan on enrolling, so that they will be familiar with their environment as well as meet their new teacher and classmates. This visit is also for parents to familiarize themselves with our policies and procedures, meet our staff, and ask any questions that they may have.

If you decide to enroll, A child's application will need to be filled out. (All other forms will be emailed to you and need to be filled out and brought in on your child(ren) first day.) There is a \$85.00 (per child) non-refundable application fee (also due every year; due every August) to cover record keeping costs and purchase supplies. Also, first week tuition is also due at the time of enrollment. Checks for all payments should be made payable to: Sprouting Scholars Preschool. We also accept Cash, Money Order, Venmo.

A priority system is established as follows:

(1) Siblings of currently enrolled children will have first priority.

(2) Regular full time schedules will have second priority.

(3) All others will be third priority.

Capacity

Sprouting Scholars Preschool is licensed for ages 6 weeks-12 years old. We may enroll up to a maximum of 34 children per day.

The preschool has an infant room (the Seeds) One-Year-old Toddler Room (The Roots), a Two-Year-Old Room (The Stems), and Preschool Room (The Leaves/Petals) 3-4-5 years.

Orientation

A parent will complete an enrollment form and have a certified physician complete a developmental history form prior to your child's first day.

During the first few weeks your child will be adjusting to a new place and many new faces. We are interested in making this adjustment as easy as possible for both the children and families. Options for easing your child into the program should be discussed with the Director and Teachers.

Trial Period:

For the comfort of the parents, children, and Sprouting Scholars Preschool, there will be a 4-week trial period to see if this is a right fit for both your family and SSP. The 4-week trial period will begin on your start date and will run out for 4 weeks. Within that 4-week trial period, if you are not satisfied or happy you may dis enroll your child at any time within the 4 weeks without penalty. If we feel this is not a right fit for your family or the Preschool, we will dis enroll without notice.

After Trial Period:

After your trial period ends, if you decide to stay enrolled, you **MUST** give Sprouting Scholars Preschool a 4 week written notice if you will no longer be returning to our childcare. In the event that you do not giving a 4-week written notice you will have to pay all late fees (\$30 per week) and your tuition. If your fees are not paid in a timely matter legal action will be taken. However, Sprouting Scholars Preschool has the right to terminate any contract at any given time if ongoing circumstances occur, without issuing a refund.

Transitions

Sprouting Scholars Preschool is organized and staffed to minimize the number of transitions children experience. Being mindful of the importance of the bonds that are established with Teachers and peers, every effort is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children. Every effort is made to keep students together with their Teachers for nine months or longer. Developmental needs or concerns are always considered when planning transitions for children and clear communication takes place between center and home and among teaching staff.

Prior to a transition, you will receive a letter from the Director including the schedule for the transition and an information packet about your child’s new classroom. Transitions usually occur over a 3 week period with the child visiting the new classroom for a one hour period the first week, a 4.5 hour period the second week (this usually includes lunch and nap) and for a full day the third week. It is our goal to assist the child in his/her transition. Teachers from both classrooms will meet and share information about the child that will aid in his/her transition.

Group Sizes and Ratios

Our program adheres to the group size and ratios as set forth by the NC Department of Early Education as well as by the highest standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Age of Children	Enhanced Ratios	Max Group Size
0 to 12 months	1:5	2: 10
12 to 24 months	1:6	2:12
2-3 years old	1:9	2:18
3-4 years old	1:10	2:20
4 to 5 years old	1:13	2:25
5-6 years old	1:15	2:25

Tuition Fee Structures

There are two fee structures at the Center. There is a fee structure for full-time and part-time families. For tuition rates please see Attachment B of this handbook or call the Director.

Please see Attachment A for the 2020-2021 Tuition Fee Structures.

Tuition Fee Charges

Please see Attachment A for the 2020-2021 Tuition Structures.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes may be possible provided that space is available. If you are reducing the number of days your child attends, a month’s notice is required so that we may fill the available opening. We discourage parents from making more than 2 schedule changes per year to provide consistency for

the groups and for individual children. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances. When the maximum capacity for each group is reached, an internal waiting list will be established. The order in which children are enrolled is directly dictated by the requested schedule and the spaces available.

Loss of Employment Policy

Sprouting Scholars Preschool offers a grace period to parents who have lost employment. Your child/children may remain enrolled for up to thirty (30) days with half price tuition from the date your employment ends; if you choose to exit before the 30 day “enrollment grace period” concludes, the usual one month withdrawal notice applies.

If your grace period ends you want to remain enrolled up to 30 days, your tuition immediately goes back to full price.

3. FINANCIAL POLICIES

Application Fee

\$85.00 (per child) is required when submitting an application for enrollment or the waiting list; this fee is non-refundable.

Enrollment-Reservation Fee

An enrollment reservation fee is collected to hold a specific slot for a specified classroom only. The first week’s tuition is due upon the confirmation of your child’s enrollment into the program along with the application fee. These fees are non-refundable.

Tuition and Payment Policies

Tuition is always due in **full** every month prior to closing. We only accept electronic Zelle payments. Please note: we currently don’t use credit cards, paypal or square at this time.

Receipts are given out to the parents at the end of the month. If the last day falls on a weekend, payment is due the last Friday of the month.

Once payment is made, payments are non-refundable. If a situation occurs where the daycare will be closed, not for a holiday closure or weather related, payments will be credited for the following month.

The amount of tuition is based on your child’s pre-determined schedule and has no bearing on your child’s actual attendance, **(i.e. sick days, vacation days, and holidays, etc. Payments is still due for these days.)**

Tuition not received on the scheduled pay period will be considered delinquent. There will be a charge of \$30.00 per week the tuition remains unpaid. If the tuition and delinquent fee is not paid by the second day of scheduled payment, Daycare services will be halted and your child/children will not be allowed to come until tuition is paid. In the event you do submit your tuition late, please include your late fee with your tuition payment. Extraordinary circumstances should be discussed with the Director promptly. Several late payments may lead to the termination of your child’s enrollment.

Late Pick-Up/Overtime Charge

A \$2.00 per minute, per child late pickup fee will be assessed for all children picked up after closing. This must be paid in cash at the time of pickup, or before the child’s next regularly scheduled day. This will be **strictly** enforced, and habitual tardiness may result in termination of services. Tuition is still required even if contract is terminated.

Returned Checks

We don't accept checks. However, if a situation occurs and tuition or any other activity needs to be paid with a check, a fee of \$35 will be charged for any returned checks as well as any fees incurred due to the returned check. If there are more than two returned checks in a one year period, all future payments after the second returned check must be made in cash, money order or credit card. ***No Exceptions***

Sibling Discount

At this time, sibling discounts are not offered.

Drop Off Policy

In order to uphold the integrity of the children's daily schedule, we request that children be dropped off at preschool no later than 10:00 am with the exception of doctor's appointments, occasional needs and emergencies. Sprouting Scholars Preschool should be notified as soon as possible, in advance regarding needs for late arrivals.

We ask that drop off not occur during nap (Check classroom times) as this may be disruptive to the group as well as possibly difficult for your child.

4. GENERAL INFORMATION

Absences

If the prolonged absence of a child is due to a serious illness and/or extended hospitalization, the Director will make every effort to work with families regarding holding an enrollment slot and making tuition payments.

If a child does not attend the preschool for an extended period due to a non-medical reason, a parent is expected to pay the regular tuition in order to hold the child's scheduled hours and days. A parent can give one month's notice of the child's termination date and go on the waiting list if re-enrollment is desired. There will be no guarantee that a slot will be available at the time of their return.

Program Evaluation

The Preschool conducts an annual program surveys in order to get feedback from enrolled families. The survey is anonymous and is a way for families to provide the Preschool with their comments, compliments, ideas, and suggestions.

Arrivals and Departures

Please accompany your child into the classroom, complete the sign-in sheet and let a teacher know that you have arrived. This is the time to discuss with the teacher any relevant information that would help your child during the day (e.g. sleeping irregularities, moods, changes in daily routine).

When picking up your child, please sign out and notify a teacher that you are leaving. It is imperative that a parent completes the sign in/out sheet for their child every day. This is our attendance sheet and is necessary in the event of an emergency. Unless the teacher is engaged with a group of children,

please inquire about the day your child has had. The Communication Board in each classroom should provide you with the general activities of your child's day and the HI Mama app.

Only those people authorized in writing by the parent or guardian may pick up a child from the center. The center must be notified in advance if someone other than a parent will be picking up the child, and this person will be asked to present identification. Under no circumstances will a child be released to anyone without prior written permission. Please leave your cell phones in your car so that your child and teacher will have your undivided attention at pick up or drop off time.

Babysitting

Occasionally parents may ask teachers to baby sit. Sprouting Scholars Preschool does not encourage this practice and assumes no responsibility for employees after their scheduled work hours.

Additionally staff members are not allowed to transport children.

Birthdays and Other Special Days

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday or another special event at school. Parents may bring in a special snack for the day, and we invite you to join us for the party. Please let your teacher know in advance if you will be bringing in a snack so they can let you know of any special diets/allergies within the classrooms. A low-key approach is best in-group care, so please leave party favors, balloons, etc. at home.

Discipline Management Policy

Our policy concerning discipline is based on the individual need of the child, the ability of each child to understand what he/she is doing and the consequences of their actions. Learning self-control is just a normal part of growing up, and our policy is never to embarrass or ridicule a child when he or she misbehaves. Corporal or physical punishment is never allowed.

It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge to ascertain what has taken place as clearly as possible. If an altercation between children has occurred, each child is spoken to with reason and with respect. Each child is then given the responsibility of approaching the other child in a friendly manner, with adult supervision, in order for the children to participate in the resolution to the misunderstanding. This is done in direct relation to the verbal ability of the child but can be accomplished even when the child is not yet talking.

When inappropriate behavior occurs with the adult being the recipient, the child will be approached either with a reasonable verbal response or with the technique of redirection. Removal from an activity for a short period of time is used only if it has been ascertained that other responses have failed or if a child is at risk. There is less likelihood of discipline problems when positive responses and remarks are the norm throughout the day. If a positive base is established in an atmosphere of respect and understanding, inappropriate or negative behavior then becomes the exception.

When any staff member feels that he/she is unable to manage a situation with a child in an effective manner, he or she will direct the child to another staff member and take a break. Staff members assist one another in creating a positive, relaxed atmosphere.

THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED AT SROUTING SCHOLARS PRESCHOOL:

- Corporal punishment, including spanking;
- Verbal or physical abuse, humiliation, neglect, or abusive treatment;

- Speaking to a child in a manner or tone that is disrespectful, sarcastic, demeaning or threatening;
- Withholding food, drink, or sleep;
- Force-feeding children;
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing the child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

Biting Behavior in Young Children

Sprouting Scholars Preschool recognize that biting is a normal stage of development that some young children go through. It is something they will outgrow in time. Young children, who bite, bite for reasons, all of them normal and developmentally understood.

Common Reasons Why Children Bite

Teething, exploring, stress, frustration, imitating behavior, personal space is violated or crowded, lack of vocabulary, sign of affection, to obtain attention.

Classroom Strategies Used To Minimize Incidents of Biting

We “shadow” the child who has exhibited biting behavior. We carefully observe the child who has bitten to determine if there is a pattern of when the biting behavior occurs. We comfort the child who has been bitten and firmly let the child who bit know that "biting hurts." and we offer an object to bite such as a teething ring or cold cloth.

Action Taken When A Biting Incident Occurs

- The child who was bitten is comforted;
- The child who bit is firmly told “biting hurts” while we continue to comfort and focus on the child who was bitten;
- The bitten area is washed thoroughly with soap and water and inspected for broken skin;
- If the skin is broken, an administrator is immediately notified. Both sets of parents are contacted and advised to call their pediatricians; open wounds on the face or hands are the most vulnerable to infection;
- An injury/incident report is written for each of the children involved;
- Ongoing dialog is kept with parents and staff on classroom and home strategies being used to address and curb the biting behavior;
- Relevant articles are made available to parents and staff.

Cleaning Procedures

SSP has cleaning procedures in place that are conducted everyday. All staff follow a guided document that lets them conduct an afternoon cleaning routine during nap that involves cleaning the restrooms, cleaning their classrooms and deep cleaning 2 centers every Tuesday/Thursday. The staff

also conducts an evening cleaning routine at the end of the day that consist of spraying all the toys down and entire classroom with a bleach solution, sweeping/vacuuming and mopping their floors, taking the trash out, and the Seeds, Roots, and Stems classroom take all the toys the children put in their mouth, dip it in a bleach solution and let them air dry on the class table overnight. We do these cleaning procedures everyday to help keep germs down and to prevent any illnesses or spread diseases.

Clothing

Please label all items with your child's FIRST and LAST name, Thank you!

The activities at Preschool can be messy. ☺ Please dress your children in play clothes. Although we do use smocks and roll up sleeves, we cannot guarantee that children's clothing will not get stained or soiled. We assume that you will send your child in clothes that allow your child to participate fully in our Preschool and that you understand that clothes may get stained or soiled. Extra clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. The name should be placed in the tag inside children's clothing, or placed in a zip lock bag with the child's name on it.

Part of each day is spent outdoors, weather permitting. Please dress your child accordingly.

Appropriate and safe footwear is required for outdoor play. If your child wants to wear other shoes to school, Flip flops are not safe for outdoor play and are therefore not permitted; children must wear sneakers for outdoor play; in summer, fully-closed water shoes with a solid rubber, non-skid sole are permissible; if there are questions about suitability of footwear, please verify with your classroom teachers.

During the cold weather please make sure your child has boots, (that slip on and off easily), a warm coat, snow pants, a hat, mittens and slippers for after snow play.

Each child should have a complete set of extra clothing to be kept at Preschool including underwear and socks for older children. All clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name (socks too, please). We cannot be responsible for lost articles.

Accessories and Jewelry Children's

Accessories and jewelry are extremely attractive to young children's eyes, fingers, and mouths. We ask parents cooperation to be safety conscious when choosing accessories that their children wear to the centers. Small objects like barrettes and earrings can be choking hazards and necklaces can pose strangulation hazards. Therefore, we do not permit the following type of jewelry:

- Dangly earrings (small, snug-fitting pierced studs are permitted);
- Necklaces of any kind;
- Bracelets with beads or charms (rubber, cloth or thread bracelets are permitted as long as they do not contain attachments or charms).

SSP is not responsible for any lost or damaged property.

Comfort Items If it will help your child feel more at home during the day, we welcome comfort items such as his/her favorite doll, stuffed animal, books or items that contribute to our activities are

always welcome. These items need to be small enough to fit within each child's individual cubby space. If you have any questions about what to bring please speak to your child's teacher.

Confidentiality of Children's Records

In order to ensure the confidentiality of your child and family, staff members receive a confidentiality policy in their Employee Handbook that is reviewed upon hire.

It states: "Records of the children are confidential, may not leave the Preschool, and should not be discussed with other parents or in front of other children. Confidential information includes but is not limited to: children, their families, employment, payroll, fiscal, and management information. Access to confidential data, including children's records, is permitted only when authorized and only in order to perform assigned tasks. Information contained in a child's record is confidential. This includes all written and verbal communication, which pertains to the child and/or his/her family. It includes but is not limited to addresses, telephone numbers, progress reports, learning disabilities, testing, financial information, behavior issues, attendance, etc. Employees should recognize that sharing information that may be considered to violate the privacy of children and their families with others who do not have a need to know would be considered a violation of confidentiality that may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Parents or others authorized in writing by the parents can request their child's record at any time."

Staff members sign an agreement that they have read and agree to adhere to all the policies in their handbook including the preceding policy.

Sprouting Scholars Preschool is in compliance with the Department of Early Education and Care regulations regarding the confidentiality and distribution of children's records.

The information contained in a child's records is confidential and will not be released to anyone without the written consent of the parents. Parents may have access to the records of their child. A copy will be made at no charge. A permanent written log will be maintained in each child's record indicating any persons to whom information has been released. The child's parents may add information or comments to the child's record, and may also request the deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's record.

Food & Menu

Sprouting Scholars Preschool works with a federally funded food program and insures that your child will be served nutritionally balanced USDA approved meals. This includes breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. Meals times will be posted in your child/children's classroom. Please let us know of any food allergies your child may have. We will gladly work with you and your pediatrician to accommodate your child's needs.

Meals will be posted weekly in your child/children's classroom and on the website and there will be **No candy, sweets, coffee or soda** brought from home. Special health treats will be allowed for parties.

*****Please Note***** All breakfast is stopped at a certain time depending on your child/children's classroom. (Check with your child's teacher)

If your child will be arriving after a mealtime has begun, food will not be served. Please feed your child before bringing him/she to Preschool. Bringing a meal from a restaurant/home and having the child eat here causes hard feelings from the rest of the children and is therefore, not allowed. To

promote healthy eating habits, teachers encourage children to eat what has been served for mealtime. With this in mind, Per Early Education and Care best practice, staff will allow children to eat the foods in the order they choose; we cannot withhold food or not permit children to eat some foods until they have eaten others. Children's interest in and enthusiasm for food is actually quite similar to that of adults; when food is prepared and presented to highlight a variety of colors and textures, it's often that much more appealing to eat and enjoy.

Nap Needs

Toddlers and Preschoolers should bring a nap blanket for naptime. Please make sure each is labeled. They should be brought home to launder weekly or as needed. Cot sheets and cots are provided and laundered by the center. A quiet comfort toy--doll or stuffed animal is always welcomed for nap.

Nap Time

After a long morning of playing, exploring and learning, all of our daycare kiddies are required to lie down on their cot. Sprouting Scholars Preschool will not force any child to take a nap however; all children must lie quietly on their cot so that the other napping children may rest.

Licensing/Health Dept./Fire Marshal

Licensing: There will be times licensing will come in to the Preschool to make sure the daycare is up to code, all background checks are being conducted and up to date and make sure the children are in an environment that is up to code per the state rules. Some days their visit is planned and others are unannounced.

Health Dept.: Every year the health department will come out to the Preschool and visit to make sure the Preschool is up to date for sanitation purposes. They also observe to make sure there are no harmful chemicals around that will endanger the children in care.

Fire Marshal: Every year the fire marshal will come out to the Preschool to make sure that everything is in good and working order. They will check fire alarms, and the building to make sure it's in good standing condition for your child/children.

We provide this information to let you know during the times they come out, there may be possibility of interaction with your children and that they're just coming out to do their job for the safety of Sprouting Scholars Preschool and your child/children in care.

SMOKING/TOBACCO RESTRICTIONS:

As provided in the licensing rule, smoking is prohibited at our Preschool during daycare hours or any hours during the day as well as Tobacco use. Please do not smoke on our property or extinguish cigarettes in our yard or driveway.

Photographs

No outside agency will be allowed to photograph the children without parental consent. Sprouting Scholars Preschool will often take pictures or videotaping of the children during a special event, (i.e. birthdays, graduation, etc.). Please inform the Director if you do not want your child to be photographed in these instances.

Caring for Children with Special Needs

Sprouting Scholars Preschool accepts applications for children with special needs. We realize the

benefits of supporting children with special needs and attempt to accommodate these children if appropriate and helpful for them.

Communication is the key aspect to successfully support a child with special needs. The parents, teachers and specialists who work with the child with a disability are all equally involved in sharing information, communicating their needs and listening to each other.

Supervision of Children

All staff are responsible for the supervision and whereabouts of the children assigned to their care at all times; this includes conducting regular and accurate headcounts any time a group moves from one area to another.

Classroom teaching staff are aware of where children are at all times and remain in sufficient proximity at all times in order to intervene quickly if/when necessary. Classroom teaching staff does not engage in any other activities or tasks that could unnecessarily divert their attention from the supervision of children.

Toileting and Diapering

At Sprouting Scholars Preschool, children are not required to be toilet trained by a specific age. We believe that a child should begin toilet training when he/she is physically and psychologically ready. Parents and teachers should be alert to signs of readiness, and together discuss an individual plan. Children must be ready to participate willingly if the process of toilet learning is to be a positive one. SSP cannot and will not force a child to use the toilet. Also please note a child cannot move up to the next class unless she/he are fully potty trained. (i.e. 3-5 year old class)

Toys From Home

We ask that children's toys stay at home, unless they are brought in for a pre-arranged sharing at group time. Toys from home are difficult to share at other times, and we cannot be responsible if they become lost or broken. We realize that this is sometimes very hard --leaving a toy in the car during the day is a tactic that sometimes works if you can't leave the house without that special something. Comfort toys for nap are the only exception, and should be kept in the child's cubby, unless needed at "difficult" times.

Transportation

It is the policy of Sprouting Scholars Preschool that staff does not transport children. If a medical emergency arises, children will be transported by ambulance unless in the reasonable judgment of the Center, providing transportation is medically necessary. The only person(s) allowed to transport children will be those noted on the child/ren's authorized pick up list.

5. PARENT COMMUNICATION / PARTICIPATION / RIGHTS

Parent Participation

Parents are welcome to spend time in the classroom, visit for lunch, or share any talents they have with the children. Parents are always welcome with no notice required, but may want to notify the teachers when they plan to visit, so that the child and the group can be prepared for the visit. If your child is having difficulty with separation, please discuss with the teachers ways that would make parting easier. You may decide that extra visits during your child's first few weeks could make it more difficult for him/her to settle and adjust. Please discuss any concerns you may have with the Teachers.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held on a regular basis to discuss your child's progress, adjustment to

the center and other issues of concern to both parents and teachers. Toddler and Preschool teachers complete developmental progress reports for each child and conferences are scheduled twice a year. If you wish, parents are welcome to schedule additional meetings with their child's teachers at any time. The purpose of progress reports and conferences is to identify the children's interests and needs, to improve curriculum, to adapt teaching practices and the environment, as well as to plan for program improvement.

Family Mailboxes

Each family has a mailbox located near the children's cubbies. Please check this daily. All written communication from the Director and teachers is placed in the mailboxes as well as your children's artwork.

Newsletter

To keep you informed about center activities, upcoming events, reminders and general announcements, we publish a newsletter monthly. We urge you to read it carefully. You'll also find that the newsletter can serve as a good discussion starter when talking to your child about the latest happenings at school.

Parental Rights

The information below under the headings of PARENT INFORMATION and PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES is provided by the Department of Early Education to inform you of your rights as a parent of a child in a daycare setting.

Parent Visits. You have the right to visit the center and your child's room at any time while your child is present.

Progress Reports At least every six (6) months your child's teacher should meet with you to discuss your child's activities and participation in the program. The teacher will prepare a written progress report for your child, will provide a copy to you, and will maintain a copy of the report in your child's file. If your child has a disability, you should receive a written progress report at least every three (3) months. Program staff must bring special problems or significant developments.

Access to your child's record. You are entitled to have access to your child's record at reasonable times on request. You must have access to the record within two (2) business days of your request unless you consent to a longer time period. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is maintained in more than one location. The center must have procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of children's record, and must maintain a permanent, written log in each child's record which identifies anyone who has had access to the record or who has received any information from the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

➤ PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Providing Information to the Department of Early Education: The program must make available any information requested by NCDCEE to determine compliance with any NCDCEE regulations governing the program, by providing access to its facilities, records, staff and references.

Reporting abuse or neglect: All Preschool staff is mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to either the Department of Children or Families (DCF) or to the Preschool program administrator.

Incident Reports/Accidents:

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid, and if an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible by phone, email and/or text.

If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital listed on your application where you will be asked to meet us. If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment, or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached.

Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation, if required. The owners of Sprouting Scholars Preschool will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on these premises.

Notification of Injury

SSP must notify you immediately of any injury, which requires emergency care. The Preschool, must also notify you, in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Policy and Procedures on Child Abuse and Neglect**Definitions:**

"Child Abuse" is the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker, which causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child's physical and emotional well being, including sexual abuse.

"Child Neglect" is the failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care.

Procedure: If a SSP staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a staff member or a parent may have been abusive or neglectful toward a child, they shall immediately notify their Director.

The Director will assess the situation and report the suspected or alleged incident to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education (NCDCDEE) as required by law.

Should the Director advise against filing/reporting, the staff member who reported the concern to the Director retains the right to contact DCF directly and to notify the local police.

If a staff member is in question of having been abusive or neglectful, they shall immediately be removed from working directly with children and will be suspended without pay until investigations by DCF and NCDCDEE have been completed; in cases where the SSP internal investigation results in termination of the staff member, this decision may precede the completion of the DCF and EEC investigations.

If allegations of abuse and/or neglect are substantiated, corrective action up to and including termination of the staff member will result.

If a parent is in question of having been abusive or neglectful, SSP employees are bound, as mandated reporters, to follow applicable regulations and Center process as described above.

ALL CHILD CARE WORKERS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS. IF THE CENTER CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR REPORTING IMPEDES THE REPORTING OF THE SUSPECTED CASE OF ABUSE

OR NEGLECT, THEN ANY INDIVIDUAL STAFF MEMBER WITH A CONCERN IS OBLIGATED BY LAW TO REPORT THE INFORMATION HIMSELF/HERSELF.

Withdrawal and Termination

➤ **Withdrawal**

Parents must provide a minimum of 30 days written notice for the withdrawal of a child for any reason. Parents will be responsible for tuition payment for these 30 days.

➤ **Termination**

SSP may terminate the enrollment of a child if the child's needs cannot be met, the safety/care of other children is in jeopardy, and/or accommodations for the child cause undue burden to the Preschool. Parents will be notified of the reasons for termination and conditions for re-enrollment (if any), in writing, a minimum of one month prior to the termination date. However, if the reason for termination is serious, termination can be immediate.

Before the implementation of the termination of a child due to challenging behavior, the staff will take the following steps:

1. Meet with parents to discuss other options;
2. Provide referrals for evaluation and services;
3. Pursue consultation and training for the program;
4. Develop behavioral intervention plan at home and in program.

Sprouting Scholars Preschool reserves the right to terminate services to children and families for the following reasons:

- If tuition payment is not received in a timely matter.

Extraordinary circumstances, which make it impossible to keep payment current, should be discussed with the Director promptly.

- If the staff cannot meet a child's individual developmental needs or within the daily program then parents will be referred to appropriate services after each of the steps outlined in the referral policy have been taken. This would include conditions or behaviors which cannot be managed effectively by the staff or which pose a potential threat to the safety and well being of his/her self, the other children or staff.
- If a parent or family member displays inappropriate behavior, physically, verbally or sexually, toward any staff member, child or parent, then termination/referral procedures can be initiated.
- If a parent's child rearing philosophy or beliefs are in conflict with that of the Preschool NCDCDEE will review the conflict and determine if the Preschool can reasonably accommodate the parent's request. If the parent's request is contrary to the Preschool published philosophy and educational and care giving goals, then the parent will be notified and termination procedures may be initiated.

Parents will be notified in writing at a face-to-face meeting when possible, including the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's record.

The Director will inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other child care services through Child Care Service Association. Whether initiated by the Preschool or the parents, the child's teacher will prepare the child and family for their departure in a manner that is professional, respectful and developmentally appropriate with regards to the child's level of understanding.

5. HEALTH CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Physical Examinations

A yearly physical examination is required for each child at the Preschool. In addition, immunization records must be kept current and submitted to the Preschool upon receiving updates.

Medical Policy

The Directors work closely with a pediatric Health Care Consultant to determine medical policies and resolve medical issues affecting the children and staff at the centers. Mildly ill children will be permitted to attend Preschool on their regularly scheduled days. For the protection of ALL children and staff, parents will be notified when their child is too ill to remain at Preschool and will be requested to pick up the ill child immediately.

Should a parent be unable to pick up their child within one hour, they are responsible for making arrangements for their child to be picked up by someone from their list of emergency contacts.

Criteria regarding signs or symptoms of illness, which will determine whether a child will be included or excluded from the center prior to morning drop off:

- If a child has a temperature of 100.0* or higher, he/she will be required to stay out of the Preschool until fever- free for 24 hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).
- A child on antibiotics must be excluded from the Preschool from the time of diagnosis until 24 hours after the first dosage.

Procedures for handling a child who has already been admitted to the Preschool and exhibits symptoms requiring exclusion until he/she can be taken home:

The child will be kept in quiet isolated area in the classroom on a resting mat. All mats and sheets will be cleaned after the child leaves the center.

Policies for when excluded children may return:

Illness

We have no separate facilities for long term care of a sick child, parents are asked to be especially aware of and plan for impending illness. If a child becomes sick while at Preschool, a staff member will contact the parent to ask that the child be taken home. We will ask parents to take their child home if we feel that he/she needs to see a doctor, is contagious, or has a greater need for individual care than staff can provide while providing care for the needs of other children. At Preschool, the child will be made comfortable on a mat in a quiet area away from the other children. Staff will provide the child with food and beverage as requested.

Some of the common conditions for which a child will be sent home are as follows; please also note that there will be a trail period of eliminating the use of the Illness Report.

1. **Temperature** - A child will be sent home if he/she has a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher. The child must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) before returning to the center. His or her activity level and appetite should be back to normal as well. In cases of highly contagious illness associated with fever (such as the flu), the return to center timeframe may be extended to ensure the health and wellness of the Preschool center community.

2. **Diarrhea** - A child who has more than one instance of diarrhea (watery stools) will be sent home. Diarrhea is usually caused by viral infections however bacteria and parasites (Giardia) may be the cause. If your child has an allergy or condition that regularly causes diarrhea, please alert the staff to this during orientation. The child must be diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours before returning to Preschool. In cases of highly contagious stomach and intestinal illness (such as Norovirus), the return to Preschool timeframe may be extended to ensure the health and wellness of the Preschool center community.

3. **Vomiting** - A child who is vomiting will be sent home and should remain home until vomiting has stopped. Most vomiting is caused by infection. Stomach viruses are highly contagious and can spread through the center very rapidly. The child must not have vomited for at least 24 hours before returning to the center. In cases of highly contagious stomach and intestinal illness (such as Norovirus), the return to center timeframe may be extended to ensure the health and wellness of the child care center community.

4. **Impetigo** - This skin infection is characterized by crusted sores, which may appear anywhere but usually first in the facial area. Children with this condition must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours and all lesions should be dry before returning to Preschool.

5. **Conjunctivitis** - This is a contagious infection of the eye characterized by redness and tearing, a yellow discharge from eyes, or eyelashes stuck together. Children with this condition must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to Preschool and all discharge must be gone.

6. **Strep Throat** - Is characterized by swollen neck glands and a temperature combined with a sore throat. This condition requires antibiotics. Your child should not return to Preschool until he/she has been on medication for 24 hours.

7. **Scarlet Fever** - Is a strep throat with a rash, which is red and has a sandpaper feeling. Your physician should be consulted as to when your child should return to the center.

8. **Chicken Pox** - Children can attend Preschool after exposure or during the incubation period (11-20 days after contact.) Your physician is the best person to consult if there is any doubt concerning your child's contagiousness during this illness. Please notify the Preschool if you suspect that your child has been exposed to chickenpox so that we may notify the other parents. The program will maintain a list of the children who have documented exemptions from immunizations and these children will be excluded from attending if/when a vaccine-preventable disease is introduced into the

9. **Ear Infections** (Otitis Media) - Ear infections are extremely common. If your child has an ear infection, your child may come to Preschool. However, your child must be comfortable and must be able to participate in activities. If your child seems ill and is not comfortable, we will ask that you pick up your child immediately and keep them home until they are feeling better.

10. **Respiratory Infections** - Are very common and usually are caused by viruses. It is advised that your child remain at home and if fever is associated with the infection, must be fever-free for 24

hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) before returning to Preschool.

11. Head Lice - Is characterized by very itchy scalp and nits (white eggs) that resemble dandruff but can't be easily removed from the hair. Children may return to Preschool after they have had one head lice treatment.

12. Scabies - Is a very itchy rash between the fingers, on wrists, under arms, at the belt line and in infants on the head, neck, palms and soles. A mite causes the rash. The child may return to Preschool after one treatment.

13. Hand-foot-mouth diseases - Is caused by a viral infection. It is characterized by small ulcers in the mouth, blisters on hands and feet and sometimes near the genitalia and on the buttocks. The child is contagious until the fever is gone (typically 3-4 days) and must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) before returning to Preschool.

Vaccinations/Shots- If your child goes to have shots, the child must be comfortable and not in pain to be able to return back to preschool. If your child is not feeling well after returning from getting shots, we will ask that you pick up your child immediately and keep them home until they are feeling better.

A doctor must clear all symptoms and you must present a doctors note before returning back to Preschool. If you return without a doctor's note, your child won't be allowed to return to Preschool.

Emergency Medical Forms

SSP requires parents to provide the Preschool with a current immunization record, annual physical exam report within 30 days of enrollment. ALL MEDICAL RECORDS MUST BE UPDATED YEARLY.

In addition, consent forms for authorization of medical treatment, emergency transportation and child release, must be signed by parents and kept in each child's file. FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, PLEASE REMEMBER TO NOTIFY THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGES OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS OR ADDRESSES LISTED ON THE CONSENT FORMS.

Emergency First Aid Procedures

All staff is required to have current training in either Red Cross or EEC certified First Aid and CPR. In cases of minor injury, the staff will administer simple first aid and will notify parent(s) in writing about injury and treatment

Emergency Medical Procedures

Depending upon the severity of the emergency, SSP will contact parents or authorized persons, the preferred emergency room and the child's doctor. Transportation to the hospital will be by either ambulance or police when time is of the essence, or if parents are not available. Should immediate transportation be necessary, the Director will accompany the child.

Administration of Medication

At this time, Due to liability reasons, Sprouting Scholars Preschool will not administer medication. This includes any sort of medicine administer by mouth. Please make sure if medication needs to be given, that it is given before attending daycare and next dosage is given after daycare hours. We also have an open door policy. Spouting Scholars Preschool will only administer bug spray & diaper cream. A permission slip must be signed to administer these two topicals.

Attachment A

Sprouting Scholars Preschool Monthly Tuition: Monday-Friday 7:30 am – 5:30pm

Before Care: 7:00 am-7:30 am Before care is \$4 a day or \$20 per week. Due every Monday at drop off.

5 Days A Week	6 Weeks-12 Months	1 Year-Old	2 Year-Old	3-5-Year-Old
Monday-Friday	\$1234.05 (\$285 per week)	\$1104.15 (\$255 per week)	\$1104.15 (\$255 per week)	\$1104.15 (\$255 per week)

3 Days A Week MWF	6 Weeks-12 Months	1 Year-Old	2 Year-Old	3-5-Year-Old
Monday-Friday	\$844.35 (\$195 per week)	\$844.35 (\$195 per week)	\$844.35 (\$195 per week)	\$844.35 (\$195 per week)

2 Days A Week T/TH	6 Weeks-12 Months	1 Year-Old	2 Year-Old	3-5-Year-Old
Monday-Friday	\$714.45 (\$165 per week)	\$714.45 (\$165 per week)	\$714.45 (\$165 per week)	\$714.45 (\$165 per week)

1 Day A Week Based on Availability	6 Weeks-12 Months	1 Year-Old	2 Year-Old	3-5-Year-Old
Monday-Friday	\$368.05 (\$85 per week)	\$368.05 (\$85 per week)	\$368.05 (\$85 per week)	\$368.05 (\$85 per week)

To calculate monthly rates, Take the monthly rate and divide it by 4.33 to get you're your weekly rate. (4.33 is the number of months in the year divided by the number of weeks). For example, if your monthly rate is 1082.50, then to get your weekly rate: $1082.50 / 4.33 = \$250.00$ per week.

Please Note- A 1 day per week option is offered on a space available basis, as part time schedules must match in order to balance Center enrollment.

Attachment B

Sprouting Scholars Preschool

2020 – 2021 Calendar of Holidays, Staff Days and Early Closure Days *

HOLIDAY/Staff Development CLOSURES OBSERVED *

Good Friday.....Friday, April 10th, 2020

Memorial Day..... Monday, May 25th, 2020

Day Before Independence Day..... Friday, July 3rd 2020

Labor Day.....Monday, September 7th, 2020

Veterans Day..... Wednesday, November 11th 2020

Thanksgiving Day & Day after Thanksgiving Thursday, November 26th, 2020
& Friday, November 27th 2020

Christmas Break Wednesday, December 23rd 2020 – Friday,
January 1st 2021

EARLY CLOSURES OBSERVED *

SSP closes early (12 p.m.) on the following days:

Day before Thanksgiving Day..... Wednesday, November 25th 2020

Pre-Independence Day..... Thursday, July 2nd, 2020

*** Tuition is charged for all Center closures, early closures and any vacation time taken by families***

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Sprouting Scholars Preschool – Parent Handbook – 2020/2021