

Parent Handbook



Sonshine Preschool

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Pleasanton, CA 94566

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director@sonshinepreschool

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Sonshine Preschool Administrative information

- Director: Kaitelyn Nicholson
- School Phone: 925.417.8411
- Trinity Church Fax: 925.846.8480
- Email: director@sonshinepreschool.com
- Web Page: www.sonshinepreschool.com
- Sonshine's Tax ID # : 94-1705517 (for your taxes)
- Emergency #: 925.846.6363 (Trinity Church)
- In an Emergency, tune to 101.7 KKIQ Livermore
- Preschool Hours:
- 2s 9am – 12pm
- 3s 8:45 – 12:15 or 1:00 – 3:15
- 4s 8:45 – 12:15 or 1:00 – 3:15
- Preschool Term: August thru end of May or Beginning of June

A Message from the Director

Welcome to Sonshine Preschool where we are champions of childhood!

We offer a developmentally-appropriate program in a part-time parent cooperative in a Christian environment where we help children prepare for kindergarten and life!

We encourage children to be creative, imaginative, expressive, independent and responsible by providing hands-on learning experiences through art, science, math, music, literacy, literature, and large and small motor activities.

Intellectual development happens as children grow physically, emotionally and socially. It is important that we all recognize the importance of children's play and respect each child's individual developmental stage and learning style.

The greatest gift we can give our children is the gift of childhood - time to play, time to grow, time to try, time to fail, time to succeed, time to laugh, time to cry - ***time to learn to love to learn.***

We look forward to spending time with your children during this exciting stage of their development and we value and encourage your participation in this process.

Thank you for choosing Sonshine as your child's preschool.

Best,
Kaitelyn Nicholson
Director

ps: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Sonshine are included in the following pages. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully so that you and your child will be able to make the most of this exciting experience.

ADMISSION POLICY

We are licensed to serve children 2 years up to first grade entry. Children do NOT need to be potty trained to attend. However, they must be 2 years old to attend. No child will be admitted prior to their 2nd birthday. At Sonshine, we base our placement cutoff date on Pleasanton Unified School District's transitional kindergarten and kindergarten cutoff date to place children in class with their peers.

Tuition & fees must be paid to hold the spot until child turns 2. Children's paperwork must be complete to be able to attend school. This includes the physician's report for the child and parent TB test, proof of measles and pertussis immunity, and influenza vaccine for parents who wish to co-op in the classroom.

Sonshine accepts children without regard to race, color, religion or national origin or ancestry.

Goodness of fit:

School is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Children have different personalities, temperaments, and learning styles. As we get to know the children at Sonshine, we may become aware that our program is not a good match for a particular child. At that point we would meet with the parents to discuss the issues and decide if the child should continue at school.

After careful consideration and observation by the director and staff, if either the child or parent is unable to cope with separation or adjust to the program, a parent may be requested to discontinue the child's attendance.

Sonshine teachers are trained to observe children's development. Staff will bring concerns regarding a child's development to the attention of the director and parents. We may refer parents to seek outside professional assessment or evaluation. The director and teachers will determine if the child's needs can be met at Sonshine.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

You MUST accompany your child into the classroom at all times. **Never** allow your child to run in the parking lot or into the classroom without you. Until you sign in, you are fully responsible for your child's safety and actions. Once you sign out, you are again fully responsible for your child's safety and actions.

Please note that **classrooms are not open and teachers are not available** to supervise children **until the designated time** to begin class.

Sign-in and Sign-out everyday. California Child Care Licensing requires full signatures and the actual time in ink. Also include the number at which you can be reached for that particular day, especially if it differs from your usual contact number.

Please DO NOT park in front of Early Years Children's Center's driveway. They need to come and go at all times of the day from that driveway.

DO NOT leave children unattended in a parked vehicle at any time! Not only is it not safe, it is also illegal and you can be cited by the Police Department for child abandonment.

DO NOT park along the red, curved curb in front of room 1. Leave a clear line of site for drivers to see children (who are shorter than the average car hood).

Make arrangements to pick up or have your child picked up on time. Children remaining to be picked up five minutes after class is over will be accompanied by their teacher to the director's office and the parents (or a designated alternate) will be called.

Children should be picked up on time. A late fee will be applied for excessive late pick ups.

Children will be released only to those authorized persons (at least 16 years old) designated on the child's release form. We cannot release your child to anyone whose name is not on the written authorization form, even if you call us. If no authorized person comes to pick up a child, we are required to contact the local Police Department.

We cannot release children to anyone we suspect is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

REGISTRATION

There is a **non-refundable, non-transferable**, annual registration fee for each child to be enrolled in the preschool year program at Sonshine. Returning students must re-enroll for each new preschool year.

The registration fee is due and payable in advance of the child attending class. If the fee is not paid by the designated date, his/her spot may be assigned to another child. Your child's paperwork must be complete prior to starting at Sonshine.

Registration priority

Registration for currently enrolled Sonshine students - followed by siblings of currently enrolled students generally takes place in January/February.

Registration for Sonshine Alumni Families and Trinity Lutheran Church members generally takes place in January/ February.

Registration for the general public generally takes place in January/February. Check the website or contact the Sonshine office to check date. No further preference will be given to returning students, siblings, Sonshine Alumni Families or children of TLC members. Enrollment will be on an "as space becomes available", first-come, first-paid, basis.

It is agreed by all parties (parents, staff, director) that the discretion of the Director will be final when making decisions including (*but not limited to*) enrollment and placement of children.

Waiting List:

A waiting list (name, address, phone, email, date of birth, etc.) will be maintained for the current school year. Classes will be filled at the discretion of the director. Information taken into consideration when determining placement in a class includes but is not limited to: space availability, boy to girl ratio, age range, class dynamics and personalities, teacher to child ratio, and goodness of fit with the program.

Teacher Assignments:

Sonshine reserves the right to change teacher/classroom assignments in order to maintain adequate, quality coverage at all times and to operate within the constraints of licensing, enrollment, revenues and approved budget.

HOLIDAY / PRESCHOOL CLOSURE SCHEDULE

Although we try to schedule our closures to somewhat coincide with PUSD's calendar of holidays, we do not follow them exactly. *Staff development and/or in-service training days for teachers will be scheduled as opportunities become available.* We celebrate Christian holidays and other special events.

Please refer to our current Preschool Calendar for this preschool year. In general, we will be closed for the following holidays: Labor Day, Fall Staff Development, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving week, Christmas break (generally 2 weeks), Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, Lincoln's Holiday, President's Day, Easter Monday, Spring Break, and Memorial Day.

TUITION & FEES

The Registration Fee is non-refundable, non-transferable. Currently enrolled children need to be re-enrolled for each new preschool term, which runs from August through the end of May. Please refer to the current Tuition & Fees Schedule for registration fees.

The Commitment Fee holds your child's spot for the preschool year and is applied to the last month's tuition. Limited refunds are available (May-Aug) for Commitment fees paid to hold a spot in the coming preschool term. (See current Commitment form)

The Yearly Tuition is divided into ten equal monthly installments for those who attend August through the end of the preschool year. For current rates, refer to the current Tuition & Fees Schedule.

Monthly tuition installments are due and payable on or before the 15th of each month even when it falls on a holiday or when it falls on a day when preschool is closed. Make check or money order payable to Trinity or you may pay tuition in the office with a credit or debit card. Late Start or Early Withdrawal Tuition is prorated on a per-day basis for that class.

Tuition guarantees your child's place at Sonshine. No tuition credits or make-up days will be given for any reason. Because we operate on a break-even budget and have on-going expenses, tuition refunds will not be made. Tuition remains the same, whether or not the child attends.

Payments are to be made through Smartcare.com. Sonshine's preferred payment is through Smartcare.com using the ACH bank to bank transfer option.

Discounts –

- A discount is offered for a second child.
- Trinity Lutheran Church members are entitled to a 20% discount on tuition per family.

Late Fee will be assessed for all tuition received after 3:30 pm on the 22nd of each month. Unless other arrangements have been made with the director or treasurer, children may not be accepted into the class after the 22nd until tuition is paid in full. Non-payment of tuition may result in loss of spot in the class (ie: The spot may be filled with another child.).

Late Pick-up Fee may be assessed if your child is not picked up within five minutes of the end of class.

An Annual Materials Fee is paid each July 15th prior to the school year starting. This fee is non-refundable and goes to help cover the cost of preschool supplies such as construction paper, pencils, crayons, glue paint, playdough ingredients, etc...

Missed Parent Helper - Full and partial co-op parents who fail to carry out their full responsibility to provide snack and work in the classroom as scheduled (or fail to find a substitute to work in their absence), will be charged a Missed Parent Helper Fee. This fee is will be charged to your Smartcare account and is due with the next tuition payment (even if snack is provided). Please refer to Parent

Participation - Full Co-op Parents and Partial Co-op Parents section in the current Parent Handbook.

Returned Checks will be subject to a Returned Check Fee (refer to the current Tuition & Fees Schedule for current rates). If your check is returned (for any reason), you will be expected to issue a new check including the Returned Check Fee. Re-payment of the original amount plus the returned check fee must be made within 10 days or your child may not be accepted into the class. If more than two checks are returned, you may be asked to pay by money order or cash.

Withdrawal - two-week, written notice is required to withdraw your child. You will be responsible for tuition for two full weeks from the day we receive your written withdrawal notice.

Re-enrollment - Should you choose to re-enroll your child within the same preschool year (after having withdrawn), a Re-enrollment Fee will be charged.

Change Fee - will be applied to process changes to your child's schedule (ie: early withdrawal, change of co-op status, change of number of days, etc).

Missed Saturday Workday Fee - You will be charged a missed Saturday workday.

Missed Committee Fee – Sonshine will retain your Commitment Fee in place of Committee work.

MISSION STATEMENT

As an outreach of Trinity Lutheran Church, our mission is to offer children opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually.

We also offer parents the opportunity to learn more about child development by participating in the classroom with experienced teachers and staff.

By providing a variety of materials and opportunities for hands-on exploration and learning in a safe, happy, caring, Christian environment, we encourage children to develop, grow and learn in the way they do best.

GENERAL PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- to prepare children for the rigors of kindergarten, transitional kindergarten, and set the foundation for future academic learning
- to contribute to the wholesome growth and development of the children, future citizens of our community, our world.
- to help children know the love of God
- to create a positive, nurturing, stimulating, Christian environment
- to provide an adult/child ratio of 1:7, 1:8, or 1:10
- to provide full co-op, partial co-op and non co-op options
- to provide parent information/education opportunities
- to model positive interaction with children
- to encourage parent involvement & parental networking

PROGRAM

The classroom environment and routine of the day are intentionally set up to encourage learning and

support our curriculum goals.

Children learn best through unhurried, hands-on experiences in a safe and comfortable environment. We provide and encourage children to explore a variety of materials and developmentally appropriate activities including art, stories/literacy, music, math, outside play, science, blocks and dramatic play.

Play is children's work - a chance for them to try on life and work through many important processes. We appreciate children's creative efforts and value the importance of play.

Our basic guideline is **RESPECT** - respect for self, respect for others and respect for our facility.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Full Co-op responsibilities:

1. **Parent Helper** - Approximately once every three weeks, Full Co-op parents provide the scheduled snack as the parent helper in the classroom. You will be expected to arrive at the beginning of class to help with set up and remain around 15 minutes after class is finished to help with clean up. Under the supervision of our ECE qualified teachers, during class time, you will function as a teacher's aide, observing, guiding, and helping the children as needed.

*Conducting personal or office business during class time is not appropriate or cooperative. All **cell phones** must be turned off or on silent while you work in the classroom. This is an important job. We, and the children need, expect, and deserve your full time and attention.*

If for any reason you are unable to carry out your parent helper duties on the day you are assigned, it is your responsibility to find a sub. It is also your responsibility to co-operate with other parents by agreeing to trade, sub or generally assist each other in carrying out your parent helper responsibilities. Fathers, grandfathers and other significant men in our extended Sonshine family are highly encouraged to participate in the classroom as often as possible. (A TB test and proof of TB, Tdap and MMR are required to work in the classroom.)

A Missed Parent Helper Fee will be charged to your SmartCare account if you are unable to work your assigned day.

2. **Saturday Workday** – Full Co-op parents are required to complete one Saturday Workday per school year. This consists of four hours on a Saturday morning doing things like maintenance, repairs, sifting sand, redistributing playground cushioning material, weeding, washing toys, cleaning out refrigerators, cleaning carpets, washing windows, painting, sealing decks, etc.
3. **Committee** – Full Co-op parents participate on one Committee per school year. There are several different types of Committees for parents to choose from, such as, Parent Scheduler, Gardening, Pasta Feed, etc.... Volunteer hours for Committee work vary but are generally around 5 hours a school year.

PARTIAL CO-OP PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

Parent Helper - Approximately once every three weeks, partial co-op parents provide the scheduled snack and juice/milk and work as the parent helper in the classroom. You will be expected to arrive at the beginning of class to help with set up and remain around 15 minutes after class is finished to help with clean up. Under the supervision of our ECE qualified teachers, during class time, you will function as a teacher's aide, observing, guiding, helping and comforting the children as needed.

Partial co-op parents pay an additional fee in lieu of working on a Committee or a Saturday Workday (*please refer to the current Tuition & Fees Schedule*).

Partial Co-op parents are not required to sign up for a Committee or a Saturday Workday.

*Conducting personal or office business during class time is not appropriate or cooperative. All **cell phones** must be turned off or on silent while you work in the classroom. This is an important job. We, and the children need, expect, and deserve your full time and attention.*

If for any reason you are unable to carry out your parent helper duties on the day you are assigned, it is your responsibility to find a sub. It is also your responsibility to co-operate with other parents by agreeing to trade, sub or generally assist each other in carrying out your parent helper responsibilities. Fathers, grandfathers and other significant men in our extended Sonshine family are highly encouraged to participate in the classroom as often as possible. (A TB test is required to work in the classroom.)

A Missed Parent Helper Fee will be charged to your SmartCare account if you are unable to work your assigned day.

NON CO-OP PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

Non co-op parents pay an additional fee in lieu of working in the classroom, on a Committee or a Saturday Parent Workday (*please refer to the current Tuition & Fees Schedule*).

Non Co-op parents are not required to sign up for a Committee or a Saturday Workday.

CELL PHONES

Whether dropping off, picking up or working as a parent helper in the classroom, Sonshine requests that parents turn off and put away their cell phones so they can be fully present for their child and so that parent helpers can be fully available for their parent helper responsibility.

Co-op parents volunteering in the classroom are an important part of our routine and classroom environment. We appreciate parent's support and help with activities and supervision of the children at Sonshine.

When working in the classroom, please let the teachers know if you need to step out of the classroom to use your cell phone. ***Do not take photos of the children or text during class time***, unless specifically asked by a teacher to do so. We do not have authorization to photograph all students.

PARENT HELPER duties for Full and Partial Co-op families

Each class will have its own list of parent helper duties. These will be explained in more detail in a "Parent Helper Guidelines" booklet will always be available in the classroom.

Following is a sample of some of the

General Classroom Parent Helper Duties

- Arrive on time with snack and juice (*bring enough for children & staff to have seconds*)
- Help set up the classroom and prepare for the day as directed by the teachers.
- Check outside that gates are closed & chained, the sandbox is uncovered, sidewalks are swept, etc.
- Help supervise **all children** in the classroom. (Only teachers discipline children.)

- Spend time with the children reading, playing, sharing, consoling, etc.
- Help teachers as they request. You are the teachers' aide.
- Clean tables before snack using soap solution and paper towels.
- Spray soap solution on paper towels at sink not on the table around children.
- Set up snack and leave on counter until prayer has been said.
- **NO PEANUTS!** Please check ingredients on packaging for peanut or peanut products.
- Sit with the children and teachers at the snack table - do NOT wait tables
- Model good table manners
- Help supervise **all children** outside on the playground. (Only teachers discipline children.)
- Stay after class about 15 minutes to clean up and take out the trash.
- After class clean-up: wash dishes, sweep floor, vacuum carpet.

SIBLINGS IN THE CLASSROOM

Our license does not permit younger/older siblings to be present when the parent is working in the classroom. When it is your day to work in the classroom, it is your responsibility to make child care arrangements for your other children so that you can devote **100%** of your time and attention to being in the classroom. When you work in the classroom, you are the teacher's aide - a responsibility which needs your full attention.

One benefit of participating in a parent co-op preschool is getting to know other families with whom you can trade child care in order to carry out your parent responsibilities. If you are unable or unwilling to carry out these responsibilities, perhaps a partial or non co-op spot would better meet your needs.

Once the classroom has been picked up, the toys remain put away for the next class. Please supervise siblings when you arrive at pick-up time.

SNACKS & SNACK TIME

The parent helper will provide the scheduled snack for that day. Refer to the current Sonshine Snack Schedule. Bring enough for everyone (children, teachers and parent helper) to have seconds.

Adults and children must always wash their hands before handling food. A table grace/prayer will be said at snack time.

Teachers and parent helpers are asked to join the children at snack time by sitting with them. Sitting together as a group for snack not only provides a nutritional break, it also provides opportunities for children to learn and practice good table manners and to build socialization skills.

At Sonshine, teachers and parent helpers do not insist that children say "please" or "thank you" in order to receive their snack. Rather they model appropriate behavior and polite manners. For instance, if a child says "I want more", the adult could say, "More water please?" while pouring the water. That will meet the child's request and at the same time model a more positive way for them to ask. Children

usually want to imitate and please and soon will “catch on”. We see it happen all the time.

Milk - must be low fat 1% or nonfat effective January 1, 2012 due to the State of California Community Care Licensing.

Snack - Parents must adhere to the snack for their day listed on the current Sonshine Snack Schedule.

Due to several serious allergies, Sonshine has a NO PEANUTS! - NO PEANUT PRODUCTS policy. Check all food labels carefully to be sure that peanuts are NOT included in the ingredients list and that the package does not say it has or may have been run on a line that also runs peanut products. Although our staff is trained in using the EPI pen, we would all prefer to never have to use one!

Canned fruits should be unsweetened, “in its own juice”, or lite when possible. Applesauce should be unsweetened and without corn syrup or cinnamon.

No candy, cupcakes, or cakes! You will be asked to take them back to your car if you bring them into the classroom *unless requested to do so by a teacher or the director*. Please don't ask us to make an exception!

PARENT FILES AND CHILDREN'S CUBBIES:

Each child has a Parent file – please check this daily for your child's art work and information from the teachers, Sonshine office, church office, and parent committees.

Do not use children's files or cubbies to deliver birthday invitations or invitations of any kind, thank-you's, missed “party gifts”, in-house “sales” parties, etc. Personal get-togethers, parties and especially a child's birthday party should be handled discretely outside of the classroom. A class roster will be available for your convenience in communicating with other Sonshine families.

Have your child check his/her cubby each day before going home.

BIRTHDAYS

Our goal is to acknowledge this very special occasion for each child in a developmentally-appropriate manner. Sonshine children will receive a birthday badge or birthday crown and, if they agree to it, their classmates will sing Happy Birthday to them as well. Although no gift to the school or the child's classmates is necessary, some parents want to do something “special” in honor of their child's birthday.

Due to life-threatening allergies, we ask that you do not bring food items to celebrate your child's birthdays. Should you wish to do something, here are a couple of simple ideas to get you started thinking: - with your child, choose a book (new or slightly used) to donate to the classroom. A picture of your child inside the front cover with a special note to the class makes this a nice gift. Let your child wrap it in plain brown paper (*grocery bag*) and decorate it (*with paint, crayons, etc.*) Or - choose a small token or baggie to hand out as the children leave with items such as a sticker, bubbles, or a pencil. There are lots of creative ideas out there just waiting to be thought up. See what you can come up with.

CLASS ROSTER

During the first few weeks of school, a class roster will be provided to help you communicate with other Sonshine families and to carry out your co-op responsibilities. **Use this list wisely and courteously.**

At no time is this list to be shared with or sold to anyone outside of the Sonshine family or used as a mailing list for any reason other than Sonshine preschool activities. **DO NOT** use the preschool or classroom roster to solicit business.

SHARING – Show and Tell

The 4s and 5s will participate in scheduled Show and Tell. Although, children do like to bring things to show to friends and/or teachers, **let's not waste our children's time bringing toy commercials.**

Rather, let's help our children to experience sharing as an opportunity to communicate personal experiences and knowledge - an opportunity to practice various skills including being the center of attention in a peer group, following directions and using memory recollection.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Teachers are expected to spend class time with the children. Parents working in the classroom are also expected to be working with and observing the class rather than socializing with other adults in the room.

If you wish to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, **please make arrangements with the office.**

FIELD TRIPS

Most of our field trips will be in-house field trips such as visits from a dentist, musician, or nature center.

Occasionally a class may schedule an off-site field trip, such as the Pumpkin Patch. In general, parents will be asked to "meet" at the field trip site and to accompany and supervise their own child during the field trip. However, if a field trip requires car-pooling, drivers must have a current proof of insurance form on file at Sonshine and all vehicles must be in safe operating condition and meet all legal requirements including appropriate seat belts and/or child car seats.

At no time will teachers be allowed to drive any children in their own personal vehicles. Should a situation arise where a child is left with a teacher at the site, the teacher will remain with the child and the parent or a designated alternate will be called to pick up the child at the field trip site.

For safety purposes, every child is encouraged to wear the yellow Sonshine T-shirt for off-site field trips.

JEWELRY HAZARDS

DO NOT allow your child to come into the classroom wearing a necklace, bracelet, ring, pins or other jewelry-type items. Although they seem innocent, in an active preschool setting they become health hazards. Jewelry catches on things. If pulled or caught, jewelry can choke or otherwise harm your child.

If needed, you may obtain a Jewelry Waiver form for your child from the office.

CLOTHING

In order to get the most out of these learning experiences, children must be dressed in appropriate ***"work" clothes***. We encourage children to participate fully in hands-on, developmentally-appropriate learning activities such as sand and water play, running, climbing, painting, gluing - just to name a few.

We find that smocks are not effective in keeping the paint off of children's clothing and so teachers are not expected to stop children from painting in order to have them put on a smock. This often stops the creative process and children can interpret the interruption as an indication that what they are doing is wrong or not as important as staying "nice and clean".

Extra clothing will be available for your child should it become necessary to change into dry clothes. If you have an extra pair of sweats, shorts, t-shirt, socks, undies, etc. to add to our "extra clothes collection" please feel free to drop them by the office.

Avoid hoods and drawstrings on children's clothing as they often get caught on things and can cause serious injury to children as they play.

Shoes with rubber soles and Velcro closures are best for active preschoolers. **Fancy dress shoes, slick soled shoes, cowboy boots, jellies & double shoelaces, are not appropriate.** Children are successful with Velcro closures and they'll have plenty of other opportunities to learn to tie.

Costumes are discouraged. Most capes are not safe to have in a preschool setting. They often cause tripping and choking hazards, not to mention the "jealousy" factor.

Photo/Media Release

When registering at Sonshine, parents sign a Photo/Media release form. This release applies to all social networking media including but not limited to Facebook, Yelp, Twitter, and the Sonshine website.

Photos, videos, and other recordings of day-to-day activities and special events are intended for the enjoyment of Sonshine families enrolled in the program and may be used on Sonshine's Facebook page, Yelp page, and website.

From time to time, parents, grandparents, and other family members may wish to take photos, videos, or other photo documentation and/or recordings of the children participating in various activities, working on projects, etc. Check with your child's teachers before taking photos, videos, or other photo documentation and/or recordings.

Sonshine staff, student teachers, and/or ROP students may take photos, videos, or other photo documentation and/or recordings of the children for such purposes as passports, cubby tags, name cards, classroom poster displays of daily activities, special Sonshine events or trainings, special events, orientation, educational pieces, etc.

Some photos, videos, or other photo documentation and/or recordings may be used to represent Sonshine at Trinity Lutheran Church functions, the local Community Preschool Fair, or other community groups. **If you DO NOT want your child's picture to be taken at Sonshine, you must notify the office in writing, dated and signed.**

Health & Safety Policy

The following policy has been established for the protection and well-being of the children, the staff and the overall program at Sonshine. Although we can't eliminate all health problems, especially those caused by the spread of germs, we can help minimize the spread of germs by modeling and teaching children healthy habits like covering

coughs and sneezes in our elbows, washing and drying hands thoroughly and frequently and keeping things out of our mouths. Thank you for doing your part in keeping Sonshine a happy, healthy place to be.

A runny nose with thin clear or white mucous is often a sign of nasal/environmental allergies or a slight cold that is nearly resolved. **If your child has an allergy**, bring in a doctor's note to keep on file. Keep staff informed if or when allergies are diagnosed or change. The Health Department and most doctors now agree that by the time we see thick yellow or green colored discharge, most children are on the upswing and are no longer contagious.

Please keep your child home if he/she has or is:

1. Listless with a slight fever and not generally up to participating fully in day-to-day preschool activities.
2. Fever of 99.6°F or higher within the last 24 hours. (A sub-normal temperature like 97.6°F is indicative of a viral infection and your child can be just as sick as with an above-normal temperature.)
3. Diarrhea within the last 48 hours. If your child had diarrhea the evening before but seems better now, please wait one full school day before returning to school.
4. Vomiting within the last 48 hours. If your child was vomiting the evening before but seems better now, please wait one full school day before returning to school.
5. Persistent/productive cough with wet secretions especially when accompanied with a slight fever.

Help children help themselves by teaching them how to blow their own noses and how to wash their own hands and faces often. Teach your child to use the inside/elbow area of his/her own arm to cover the mouth when coughing or sneezing rather than using hands. Hands spread germs and bacteria more than the inside of our elbows. Encourage children to keep things (especially toys) out of their mouths as much as possible.

6. Sore throat, headache or abdominal pain.
7. Undiagnosed skin rash or infection. Your child may return to school if he/she has been examined by and has a note from a doctor stating that it is okay.
8. Pink Eye (conjunctivitis). Your child must have been receiving treatment for at least 24 hours before returning with a note from the doctor stating it is okay to return.
9. Any contagious disease including, but not limited to the following: **chicken pox, lice, fifth's disease (slap cheek), hepatitis, impetigo, strep throat, ringworm, hand foot & mouth, croup, etc.** Please notify the school if your child comes down with a contagious disease as we are required by law to post a notice of any communicable disease we have been exposed to. Your child will need to be cleared by a doctor and have a note from the doctor stating that it is okay to return to school. Please take the note to the director before returning to the classroom.

If your child does not feel well during class time, (is listless, has a fever, diarrhea, vomits, can't stop coughing, complains of pain, develops a rash, etc.), we will call you to pick up your child. You are expected to pick up or make arrangements for your child to be picked up within 30 minutes or less of receiving our call. If after 10 minutes, we are unable to reach you, we will begin with the first designated person authorized to pick up your child and continue calling until someone is reached.

At times, all schools and preschools are asked to report unusual numbers of cases of contagious diseases to the California State Department of Health. Be sure to contact the office if your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease. Also, please let the office know if and when your child's immunizations are updated.

Remember: *"Healthy kids learn better." "Healthy staff are better teachers."*

BROKEN BONES, STITCHES, STAPLES, CASTS, SLINGS, EYE PATCH, etc

If at any time, your child has a cast, stitches, staples, a sling, glue closures, or other health aid, we must have a note from the physician stating that the child is approved to return to normal preschool activities

including but not limited to running, jumping and climbing, being around other/active children, sand and water play, etc. It is important that the physician realize that the child will not be returning to sedentary elementary school activities such as sitting at a desk.

WELLNESS

Getting enough sleep is critical for your child's proper development. It is also a key factor in helping them fight off illness. Children who do not get the proper amount of sleep often have a hard time participating appropriately in class.

The recommended amount of sleep changes as your child grows.

2-4 years: 11- 13 hours of sleep a day; 4-7 years: 10- 12 hours a day

NUTRITION

Children should always eat breakfast before coming to preschool. It is important for them to have nutritious food to energize and enable them to actively participate. We do provide a snack, however it is not substantial enough to replace an entire meal.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT

Any time a band aid is used to protect a new injury, when an injury leaves a mark such as a bruise or welt, or any time private areas are inspected after report of injury even if no injury is found, an Accident Report will be filled out in duplicate (1 for the parent / 1 for administration).

Accident/Incident Reports may also be used to let parents know about specific behavior that we observe at school and are working on with their child.

Incident Reports will not be written for minor bumps and abrasions which don't require a teacher's help.

Parents will be informed by telephone whenever there is excessive bleeding, swelling, or an injury to the head so the parent can observe the child for the next 24 hours. Equipment and facilities will be checked and repaired or replaced as necessary. State rules and regulations will be followed.

Parents are encouraged to be part of the "Safety Team" by reporting any items which need to be repaired and by helping their children to become safety conscious at home and at preschool.

MEDICATION

Dispensing medication to children by preschool personnel is discouraged, but may be done if a Permission to Administer Medication form has been prepared by the parent or guardian and the Physician's Release form has been received. This is a state law.

Prescription medicine must be **kept in its original container** with the prescription and placed in a locked container at school. Bring any medicines to the office to be logged in by the director.

Incidental Medical Services (such as an EpiPen, Inhaler, or Benadryl) will be administered for students who have proper documentation in place including parental permission, physician's orders, valid prescription, and proper training for Sonshine staff. See Sonshine's Plan of Operation for providing IMS.

EMERGENCY CARE & DISASTER PLANS

Emergency Care

The Director as well as most of the other preschool staff are certified in both First Aid and CPR. In the event of a more serious illness or injury, the 911 emergency phone number will be used to summon professional help.

Disaster Plans

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, the Sonshine staff will continue to care for your children, seeking emergency medical treatment if necessary until you are able to come for them.

As difficult as it may be, **DO NOT** phone the preschool during a crisis when the phone lines may be needed by public safety personnel. As soon as possible, a Sonshine representative will attempt to contact you in a crisis situation. Be sure you include an out-of-state emergency contact in your child's file.

Tune your radio to 101.7 KKIQ Livermore for information and updates during emergency/disasters.

Temporary Relocation Sites

If it is necessary to vacate the Sonshine premises, our first temporary relocation site (at least 150 feet away from our building) will be either the grassy area of Harvest Park or Trinity Lutheran Church's parking lot at the corner of Early Years Children's Center & Golden Road.

Should it be necessary to find temporary relocation sites still further away we will use:

Valley Community Church; 455 Del Valle Pkwy; Pleasanton - 846-6622 *and/or*
Harvest Valley Christian Church; 3200 Hopyard Rd; Pleasanton - 484-2482.

Fire Drills & Procedures

Fire drills will be conducted with the children. The director or teacher will signal for a fire drill. Teachers will clear the room as quickly and smoothly as possible. A quick head count (using that day's sign-in sheets) will be taken as the class moves out of the building.

A designated teacher will be responsible for collecting the emergency kit as well as that day's sign-in sheet. It is imperative that you sign your child in and out every day!

The director or designated alternate will declare the "all clear".

Children will also practice "stop, drop and roll".

SMOKING

Besides being a health risk, **Smoking is prohibited** on preschool premises per Pleasanton City Ordinance. Please inform visitors, grandparents, nannies, etc. of this policy.

PERFUMES, COLOGNES & other scents

Please refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes, or other scented products such as aftershave, hairspray, lotions, etc. Children are often seriously affected by scents and a number of our staff have allergies to scented products. Please inform visitors, grandparents, nannies, etc. of this policy.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Blankets, “Binkies”, pacifiers, “silgies” & “lacies” - are part of the transition from home to preschool. Please don’t take these things from your child just before he/she starts attending preschool for the first time. Any time your child experiences a change (be it large or small) he/she will actually need these items even more. However, it is very important that these items be labeled with your child’s name in permanent ink. In fact it is mandatory that “Binkies” be labeled. *(ps: even young children return these special items to their rightful owner when they find them laying around - SHARING is not an issue here.)*

Bottles - California Child Care Licensing requires all baby bottles be prominently labeled with the child’s name. Children drinking from a bottle or sippy cup must be seated and will not be allowed to walk or run while drinking.

Toys - Although it is important to acknowledge that our world includes weapons and “fighting heroes”, we want to focus on more positive things during our short time at Sonshine. For the health and safety of everyone at Sonshine, weapons (pretend or otherwise), fighting heroes, or other items which might promote aggressive behavior are NOT ALLOWED in the classroom or on the premises.

Upon arrival, if your child has a weapon or fighting hero, it will be sent home with whoever accompanied the child to school that day. We do not choose to “store” these items even during the class time.

Candy and gum have no place at preschool. Both attract ants and no one including the children likes to have ants sharing our space. Candy has no nutritious value. Gum is not only detrimental to clear communication, it can also be swallowed (causing grief as well as a sore throat), gathers germs as it gets fingered or shared by preschoolers, gets into everything and is nearly impossible to get out. The parent helper of the day will provide a nutritious snack for the children.

Money - Unless it’s part of the curriculum, money should not come to school with children. Besides getting lost, it’s actually a choking hazard.

Other items - Sonshine staff cannot be responsible for expensive or sentimental items which are brought to preschool. Toys, clothes, photos, books, DVDs, tapes, jewelry, money or any other personal belongings which have emotional, sentimental or financial value and which if broken or lost might bring grief to either you or your child should not be brought to preschool.

We have so many wonderful activities planned and equipment available that we ask you to leave toys at home. Occasionally, children may be invited to bring something to share with the class, but keep in mind that “Sharing” is not a clear concept for preschoolers.

Remember to label everything your child brings to school, including items to share.

LOST & FOUND

All cubbies are to be cleared at the end of each class. Please have your child clean his/her own cubby every day. Items remaining will be placed in that room’s Lost & Found box. On Fridays, each classroom will empty their Lost & Found items into the main Lost & Found box located in the office.

Items not claimed will be donated quarterly.

VISITORS

All visitors check in at the office and sign the Visitor's Log Book. Children accompanying parents during a visit must stay with their parents and be supervised by their parents at all times.

COMMUNICATION

We welcome your comments, suggestions and concerns. Open communication is vital to your child's successful experience at Sonshine. Please speak with your child's teacher directly if at all possible. (Set up a time through the office to speak with your child's teacher outside of class time so that the teachers can carry out their responsibilities to all of the children in the class.) If you still have concerns or comments, you may speak with the director.

We will try to get important information out to all parents as efficiently as possible. Please check the bulletin board posted in your child's classroom. Every day, at the end of every class, check your parent files as well as your child's cubby for important treasures and other forms of communication.

Please take advantage of the many channels of communication which are available to you including: bulletin boards, the brass mail slot, parent files, cubbies, and email.

PARENTS' & CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Personal Rights and Parents' Rights forms required by California Department of Health & Welfare and Community Care Licensing are in the Registration Packet you received when you registered your child at Sonshine. Community Care Licensing's address is: 1515 Clay St; Ste 1102; Oakland, CA 94612. Their phone number is: 510 622-2602.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Abuse &/or Bruises - As a licensed preschool staff, we are mandated by law to report behavior or suspected behavior which is considered abusive or possibly abusive to Child Protective Services.

Also, be sure you have included on your child's health report any marks such as birth marks or Mongolian spots which could possibly be misconstrued for bruises. Unexplained or questionable marks or bruises on children must be reported immediately to CPS. CPS will follow up with a visit to the parents' home and/or office or may visit the child at school.

STAFF

It is our goal for all Sonshine staff to meet or exceed California Child Care Licensing requirements. All Sonshine staff have been fingerprinted and a background check has been completed through the FBI and Department of Justice.

Sonshine staff are professionally trained to observe their student's development over the course of the school year. Staff will bring concerns regarding children's development to the attention of the director and parents.

We also ask that our staff continue to stay abreast of new and innovative child development information and ideas by attending workshops, conferences, taking classes and attending in-service training.

Parents interested in early childhood education are encouraged to join us in this effort as well.

ADULT & CHILD BEHAVIOR

Adults are expected to model appropriate behavior and **respect** for themselves, the children, our Sonshine family of friends, staff, the facility and equipment. Behavior which conflicts with the following guidelines may be grounds for termination from employment or participation in Sonshine's program:

Alcoholic beverages will not be allowed at the preschool when children are present or at any preschool-sponsored activity where children are present.

Drugs (except prescribed by a doctor) will not be allowed at the preschool or at any preschool-sponsored activity where children are present.

Smoking is not allowed in or near the facility whether or not children are present; nor is it allowed at any preschool-sponsored activity where children are present.

Gossip has no place at Sonshine!

Confidentiality - Please don't ask the teachers about confidential matters which do not directly involve your child. Sonshine staff are bound by confidentiality laws and cannot discuss another child with you. We are happy to talk to you about your own child.

Discussions about the children will be conducted out of their hearing range.

Sonshine staff will not be verbally abused while carrying out their duties at the preschool and will be allowed to follow and enforce the policies of the preschool without fear of retaliation.

Children are expected to use appropriate behavior as well, showing respect for themselves, their parents or caregivers, our Sonshine family of friends and staff, and our facility and equipment.

Our goal is to **model appropriate behavior**. **Preschoolers imitate** everything they see and hear. Hitting, kicking, fighting, etc. are disrespectful, abusive and not acceptable behavior at Sonshine. Neither adults nor children will be allowed to "hit" anyone, at any time for any reason. We are mandated to report abuse to Child Protective Services if and when we observe or suspect such behavior.

DISCIPLINE

Traditionally discipline has been equated with physical punishment ... something done **to** children rather than traits developed in them. Actually, good discipline is what we do to **help** children learn self-control ... not what we do to them when they misbehave.

The original definition of the word discipline refers to instructions given to the disciples! The deepest wish of the Biblical disciples was to emulate Christ, not just because they believed his teachings but because of their love for Him and His love for them. Love and admiration are powerful motives for adopting another person's beliefs and behaviors. Adults who model the results they expect in children achieve the most reliable results. "Do as I do" is much more effective than "Do as I say!"

We actually have very few discipline problems at Sonshine. We believe it's because we have realistic expectations and provide developmentally-appropriate learning opportunities with enough time and flexibility to peak the children's interests and meet their needs.

Although we know that young children sometime use hitting, scratching, biting, punching and crying as ways of communicating, as parents and teachers, our goal is to help children develop appropriate communication tools to use when they become uncontrollably frustrated. Every effort will be made to

model appropriate behavior and redirect inappropriate behavior. There may be times when it becomes necessary to temporarily redirect a child to another activity or to remove an item from the child or the classroom (with the understanding that the child may try again another time).

Sonshine's Discipline Policy focuses on redirection within a framework of respect. By allowing children opportunities to try again or to make their own decisions, we help develop a positive self-image and a high level of self-discipline within the children. It may take time and lots of patience, but we can almost always be guaranteed of success. Teachers will handle discipline issues.

If a child bites, scratches, hits another with an object, punches, or pushes someone down or uses other excessively aggressive behaviors, we will attend to the aggressee first to be sure he/she is cared for. Then we will speak with the aggressor and/or redirect him/her. Usually, this will take care of the situation right away. The child may be removed to the office to discuss the situation.

However, should aggressive behavior happen again, we will discuss the situation with this child's parents and work on a joint plan of action for both home and school so that the child will have consistency.

Depending on the situation, parents may be asked to remove the child for the remainder of the class time so that the child will learn that certain behaviors will not be accepted at his/her school.

If all else fails, after serious consideration and discussion between parents, teachers and the director, it may be decided that in the best interests of the child, his/her classmates and/or the school, removal (temporary or permanent) may be the next step to take.

Other less injurious problems (using "potty language", swearing, failing to take turns, spitting, throwing food, etc.) will be dealt with in ways appropriate to both the child and the offense. These include talking to the child, redirecting the child, offering an opportunity to re-do the act correctly.

Forced "manners" are counter productive. This includes withholding privileges until a child says "please" or prompting a child to say "thank you" or "sorry". We believe that asking children to say they are sorry disregards their true feelings (may be asking them to "lie" about how they really feel). Also, we have found that children who are told to say they're sorry actually learn to use "sorry" as a license to continue inappropriate behavior. Modeling of appropriate, acceptable behavior in these situations by teachers and parents will teach these skills in time, without injuring anyone's self-esteem.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE EACH DAY

Parents of Sonshine students are urged to make drop-offs **short & sweet** as children frequently interpret a lingering drop-off as indecision. When picking up your child, please remain outside until the teacher opens the door. If you need to pick up before class is over, quietly enter the classroom, sign out and leave with your child.

Although there will be activities which may require more active movement, for safety reasons, children will be encouraged to use "walking feet" and "inside voices" indoors. It is important to be safe. It is also important to be able to hear the teacher and our friends.

Children and adults are required to wash hands before snack and sit at a table while eating. Teachers and adults in the classroom are asked to sit and model appropriate manners at the table.

All children are responsible for throwing away their own trash and pushing in their own chair. It is the adult's job to encourage this by modeling it themselves and by not doing it for the children although

occasionally, a little help never hurt anyone.

Should spills occur (and they often do), children will be allowed to help take care of their own messes. Adults should model appropriate cleaning skills and provide the necessary tools such as a sponge or towels and gentle encouragement to help the children be successful in cleaning up for themselves. This is part of learning independence and responsibility. It also helps build self-esteem and self-confidence - some very important attributes to have when going off to elementary school and on into life.

Children will be expected to help pick up toys and other items when it is time to clean up. A good habit to begin working on (even as a preschooler) is to put things back where you found them when you are finished using them.

Please do not discard your child's work in front of the child. A great deal of effort goes into children's work and they are usually anxious to share their work. Help your child build confidence and self-esteem by encouraging him/her to talk about the process and their experience while working on various projects or activities during their day.

*Thanks for choosing Sonshine Preschool ~
We look forward to an amazing school year!*