

Dear Parents

Welcome to our Sunflower Nursery. We're happy that you've chosen us to share with you these precious years of your child's life. We recognize the great responsibility we have to you and your child, and we always do our best to ensure that your child is safe, happy, and thriving.

This handbook is especially for parents and contains general information not only about our program, but also about our administrative policies. We realize that no booklet can ever answer all of your questions; we hope that this one will be the beginning of an ongoing dialogue. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Warmly,

Early Childhood Village Faculty

Sunflower Nursery/Pre-School Director

Sunflower Nursery Parent Handbook



**Sunflower Nursery
Live Oak Waldorf School
410 Crother Road, Meadow Vista, CA 95722
Phone: 530-878-8720, Fax: 530-878-6548**

Preschool Program

The Waldorf school movement was founded in Germany in the early 1900's by the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. His approach to education was based on a "hands, heart, and head" picture of child development, and even in the upper grades all academic subjects were strongly infused with the arts and practical activities.

In the nursery, the developmental needs of the child are met in a program that is loving, positive, and play-centered. Ideally, the setting is as homelike as possible because of the feeling of security that such a setting can provide.

At Sunflower Nursery, the environment is peaceful and uncluttered. Simple, natural playthings provide many happy hours of play. Daily activities include circle time, artistic activities, inside and outdoor play, snack time, story time, and lunch. Weekly activities consist of painting, baking, cooking, and gardening. We celebrate the course of the year together with songs, games, and seasonal activities.

A sense of security and a reverence for nature grow out of these daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms and celebrations, and these qualities of inner security and respect for all life become the foundation for the healthy development of body, mind, and spirit.

Signing In

Because we are a state-licensed facility, each child must be signed in on the daily attendance sheet each morning. At the end of the day, each child must be signed out. Please sign your name and note the time you are picking up your child. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, please let us know in the morning. You may authorize an adult other than a parent to pick up your child by having his/her name, address, and phone number on file in the office. If we do not have an authorization from you, we are not permitted by law to release your child to another adult.

Guidance Policy

An atmosphere of nurturing and cooperation will surround our daily activities. These in themselves, as well as the developmental appropriateness of our program, will be the greatest discipline tools we will use.

If a child is in danger of hurting him or herself, or someone else, we will redirect the child. Generally done with minimal verbal interaction, the child will be warmly but decisively removed from the "scene" by the teacher and brought into another activity.

"Time-out" will be used only when absolutely necessary. It will be brief, and the child will be near the teacher. If a child is having an extremely challenging day, parents will be called and asked to come to the school for their child.

At no time, under no circumstances, will corporal punishment be used at our preschool. Employees, who act in this or other unacceptable ways, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Please call and let us know if you are keeping your child home.

We have first aid supplies available for minor bumps and bruises. If your child receives a bump or scrape while at preschool, we will care for the injury and fill out an accident form to let you know what happened. If we have any question in our minds about your child's condition, we will call you immediately.

Parent Communication

The top shelves of the cubby area will be the location of the sign-in clipboard, flyers for upcoming community events, the monthly newsletter, the lost and found, and the parent library. Please let us know if you have any information or suggestions that might be of interest to other parents. We welcome your contributions.

We will have regular parent meetings. Your questions and suggestions of topics for discussion will be an important element in our meetings.

Scheduled parent/teacher conferences will be held once a year for each family. At any time during the course of the year, individual conferences may be scheduled at the request of either the parents or the teachers. And we are always available and happy to answer any questions or work with any concerns you may have.

Clothing

Good, sturdy play clothes are the best choice for school clothes. Simple, washable clothes will allow your child to interact happily with sand, mud, water, and paint. Since these interactions are an important part of a child's "work," please don't send your little one to school in clothes that can't get soiled.

Your child will need a complete change of clothes in the classroom by the first day of school. Please label your child's entire clothing, including socks, shoes, and boots.

Your child will also need a pair of comfortable, image-free slippers or soft-soled house shoes to wear indoors. Please be sure that they fit, that they are easy to put on, and that they stay on.

Each child will need a sun hat for warm weather and a warm hat for cool weather.

Please dress your child appropriately for rain and cold weather. Unless the weather is raging, we will venture out into the elements daily.

A final note about clothing: When choosing your child's school clothes, please keep them free from cartoon or media-image printing. All of our souls are affected by the multitude of sense-impressions which can clutter our daily lives, and young children are much more vulnerable than older children and adults.

Sleep

The nursery's world is full of activity. Young children expend lots of energy playing and socializing, not to mention all the energy they need to grow and develop. Please help your child get enough sleep. For children to enjoy the richness of their world, they need to be well rested.

Toys and the Media

It is best to keep all children's books and toys at home; this means even the tiny stuff-into-the-pocket ones and the soft, much loved ones. It is a very sad thing to lose or break a special toy at school, and this easily happens.

A child's healthy development depends on his/her fully active, fully focused participation in the world all around her/him. This does not happen when a child watches TV or a movie or plays video or computer games. This is one of the many reasons why we ask you to turn off the TV, the VCR, the computer, and all electronic games for the next few years.

We have a bibliography of titles on the topic of media and the young child. Please ask us to recommend one or two. These early childhood years are so precious, and they fly by us with such rapidity. Turning off the TV can be FUN!

Snacks, Lunches, and Food Allergies

We eat well in the Sunflower Nursery! Our kitchen is as organic as we can manage, and our snacks are nutritious and yummy! We prepare whole grains such as rice, oatmeal, and millet. We bake bread and we make soup. Some of these foods may seem unusual to some children at first. Our approach to introducing such things is playful and gentle.

Children will bring their own lunches to school. There is ample room in the refrigerator to store anything needing to be kept cold. In order to bring harmony and joy into lunchtime, we request the following for the children:

- Simple, unadorned lunch boxes, baskets, cloth or Insulated lunch bags;
- Nutritious foods which your child will eat;
- No refined sugars.

If your child has food allergies, there is plenty of room on our pantry shelves for you to provide a substitute food.

Illness and Rest

We take our children's health very seriously. Because of this, we have developed some firm guidelines to assist you in deciding whether to keep your child home

In addition to the usual childhood diseases, your child needs to stay home if she or he has any one of the following symptoms of health conditions:

- * Fever: Your must be free of fever for at least 24 hours before returning to school;
- * Nasal mucus: Keep your child home if discharge is cloudy, this is often a sign of infection;
- * Diarrhea: if more often than once within a few hours;
- * Coughing that is congested, deep, barking, or wheezing;
- * Conjunctivitis;
- * Impetigo;
- * Any undiagnosed rash;
- * Head lice: we have a "no nit" policy.

If your child comes down with a communicable childhood illness, please let us know so that we can alert other parents to be on the lookout for the symptoms.

If it is necessary for your child to receive medication during school hours, we must have this information in writing. The medication must be brought to school in the original container with your child's name clearly printed on it. We are not able to administer any over-the-counter medication that is not recommended for children the age of your child without a doctor's note.

Please let us know if your child is taking antibiotics for an illness. Be aware that if a child is taking antibiotics, he or she can be vulnerable and tired while being treated with such medications. It is difficult for a recuperating child to keep up with the other children after such bouts, so do be sensitive when tempted to send your child back to school quickly after an illness. If your little one is well enough to come to school, she or he should be well enough for a full day of activity, including outside play.