



Parent Handbook

***SUGAR AND SPICE
CENTER FOR CHILDREN, INC.
Parent Handbook
2238 Mariner Sqaure Drive Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 865-1055
www.sugarspice.com***

School Phone Numbers and Hours

Sugar and Spice is Open: Mon. – Fri. 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Main Number (510) 865-1055

School Cell Phone (510) 388-9687

EMERGENCY ONLY AFTER/BEFORE HOURS (510) 735-4318 cell

ABOUT US

Welcome to Sugar and Spice Center for Children (SSCC). Thank you for choosing our program to serve your child's/children's preschool needs. We are proud to offer quality preschool and childcare services to parents from within our local community and around the greater Bay Area. We have now been in business for over 10 years.

OUR MISSION

We strive to provide high quality childcare for children ages 2-5. Our mission centers on educating children in a relaxing and nurturing environment, promoting personal self-confidence and mental growth. We promote an open door policy with parents in order to encourage continuous communications, thereby building a mutual understanding of your child. We consider ourselves your partners in your child's overall growth and development. We also consider ourselves highly successful in assisting your family in applying to local private schools.

PHILOSOPHY

We strive to create a warm and loving environment in which children can discover the richness and joy of growing up. Our staff believes in providing a warm and safe environment so each child can fully express themselves, in an atmosphere with the necessary tools for exploration and rich experiences. Our philosophy is rooted in the High/Scope program, originally developed in 1974 and used by accredited programs such as Head Start and many other outstanding programs located throughout Northern California. At SSCC, our philosophy emphasizes a relaxing and nurturing environment, promoting personal self-confidence and mental growth. By promoting a positive self-image for each and every child, we hope to enhance and stimulate his or her development. We run a child-centered, play-based program, with each teacher taking a hands-on approach to learning. As a play-based program, we proudly offer a variety of play stations to support the idea that "children's work is their play." Each age group is encouraged to participate in music, conversation, play and learning activities.

We also encourage parents to stop in and visit us any time. You are welcome to come in and participate with your child, take part in the program, and even change a diaper or two. SSCC believes no day or night should go by without a hug or kiss from those who love you!

SSCC accepts children of any race, nationality, creed or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally available to students at the school. Each and every child within our care will enjoy the rights and privileges of the school's program, without exception. We look forward to serving your needs and becoming a part of your child's life.

OUR STAFF

Our teachers are qualified and dedicated educators, with a strong commitment to ongoing learning and professional development. Each teacher is carefully screened and must meet requirements set forth by the Community Care Licensing Division of Alameda County. Moreover, our educational staff has also gone through additional training with an accredited director as well as vigorous training within the COR High/Scope program parameters (discussed on pp. 12-13).

ENROLLMENT FEE

There is a \$200 registration fee due at time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable and covers administrative expenses associated with your child's entry into our program.

TUITION

Please also refer to tuition enrollment agreement. Monthly tuition is due in advance. Tuition is due on the last business day of each month. Checks are deposited on the last business day of each month. Payments not received by the last business day of the month will be assessed a \$25 late fee. If the 1st falls on a weekend, tuition is due the previous Friday. Please remit all payments into the mailbox located next to the sign in/sign out sheet. We will not issue receipts unless they are requested. Tuition increases are annual and advance notice will always be provided to you in writing.

2 WEEK TRIAL PERIOD

Our years of experience in providing childcare has taught us an important lesson: however high the quality of care, daycare environments are not for every child – some may have a more challenging time adjusting to new surroundings than others. Although this occurrence is extremely rare, for the benefit of the child AND parent, we will recommend that you seek alternative care for your child, in the event your child or parent has too much difficulty adjusting.

TERMINATION OF CARE/CANCELING ENROLLMENT

Parents are required to provide a 30 day notice of termination. Likewise, SSCC will provide parents with a 30 day notice prior to termination of your childcare contract. SSCC reserves the right to cancel enrollment of any child in our program. Reasons for termination usually include non-payment of tuition/charges, chronic late pick-ups, non-completion of required forms by due date or if the child's enrollment violates state or local licensing requirements.

STAFF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

SSCC does not allow staff to solicit parents for employment. Further, any persons or individuals involved in such outside activities should not look to SSCC management or insurance to address any resulting losses or damages. Please respect this policy and avoid approaching our staff for services outside of SSCC business hours or for staff to approach parents.

EMERGENCIES

Upon enrollment, parents will be asked to provide an earthquake kit for their child.

DROP-OFFS AND PICK-UPS



Children attending SSCC must be escorted in and out of the building at all times during morning drop-offs and afternoon/evening pick-ups. In addition, each parent is required to sign his/her child in and out, per California State Code requirements. Children must be released by a teacher and parents must sign out using both first and last names. Please be considerate of our limited parking and limit your time in the pre-school during high traffic times (8 a.m. – 9 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.). **PLEASE DRIVE SLOW**

Sign-in/Sign-out: When you pick up your child at the end of the day, view the sign in sheet to see if you child's name has been highlighted in yellow. If so, please check in with the teacher as your child may have had a minor scrape or bruise (or similar occurrence) during the school day.

Late Pick-Up: If you are planning to arrive late to school please notify us in advance. Please note that SSCC has a “no tolerance policy” for chronic late pick-ups. When a parent is late, it causes great distress to your child and teachers. Our final pick up is 6:00 p.m. a \$1 per minute overtime fee will be charged to the next billing statement. If SSCC has not received a call or reached an emergency contact, we are required to contact social services for further assistance. We realize this is extreme but is a policy set forth by Community Care licensing Please work with us to have alternative pick-up for your child.

With the exception of parent conferences or special events (e.g., holiday parties), no parents/children should remain within the SSCC facilities beyond 6:00 p.m. – otherwise, a late fee may apply.

Late Drop-Offs: We request you advise us if you arrive past 10:00 a.m. ahead of time with the teacher. Teachers are unable to speak with you at great length when the day has already begun and they are busy working with children, as they must be fully present with their group(s). Please feel free to set up a meeting or leave us a parent note in the “notebook” located next to the sign in sheet.

Early Pick-Up: When planning to pick up your child early, please notify us in advance so we may have your child prepared.

Alternate Pick-up: Please indicate all persons authorized to pick up your child on your Emergency Card. Children will not be released to persons not listed on this card. A SSCC staff will check ID of the individual authorized to pick up your child.

CHILDCARE PROGRAM DETAILS

Daily Schedule: The daily schedule (see p. 14 for more information) may vary from time to time but is our main template for most of the age groups.

Supplies: Parents are asked to provide their child with a list of the following supplies upon enrollment: Change of clothes, sippy cup, bedding, box of tissue, hand sanitizer, 1 chubby pencil.

Friday Folder: Every child has a Friday folder for their monthly newsletter, teacher updates and completed projects/homework. We ask parents to please help maintain their child’s cubby area when you are arriving or departing with your child.

Meals and Snacks: We are committed to providing healthy snacks for the children, also involving children in the preparation to help promote a healthy food awareness. A complete sample menu can be

found on our website or you may refer to our morning board near the entrance to learn what we are serving for lunch that day. With the exception of that rare, special occasion, junk foods will not be served. If your child is not in our lunch program, please pack them a well-balanced lunch (please label bag/pail) that avoids sodas, juices, candy or other high-sugar snacks. We encourage parents to include healthy lunch items such as yogurt, sandwiches, fruit, sliced vegetables, cheese and crackers. Beverages served continually will include milk and water, provided to all the children by SSCC staff.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Classes available for sign-up: Music, tumbling, Yoga, Mad Science workshop, soccer and finally music and dance are specialty classes offered throughout the school year depending on availability. Classes that require an advance fee will be offered in your child's Friday Folder and will be discussed with you in advance. Scholarships are available and children are not required but encouraged to sign up for classes.

Field Trips: We may schedule fieldtrips that require some parent volunteers in order for children to attend. Our field trips are pre-planned and may be based on themes we have worked on during the school year. A permission slip must be signed by each child's parent or guardian in order for a child to attend an off-site fieldtrip. Please keep in mind field trips are very limited due to liability.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY AND FAMILY DINNER

Events: All parents are asked to participate in our annual holiday potluck, usually held in December.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS AND CHILD MANAGEMENT

Welcome Meetings: An informational meeting will be scheduled after you have enrolled. When possible, we will schedule a one-on-one meeting. Additionally, an annual meeting will be held to welcome prospective parents to meet SSCC staff and current families enrolled in our program.

Monthly Newsletter: Please consult our monthly newsletter to learn about upcoming events and new topics being introduced to your child.

Teacher Conferences: Each child will have a parent-teacher conference every 6-12 months. Parent or teacher may feel free to request additional conferences at any time to address any questions or concerns.

Behavior Management: Children come in all shapes and sizes and no child is alike. Respecting their uniqueness helps us set limits to allow for children to develop and understand responsible behavior and to learn what is expected of them. When a child is having a challenging day we encourage them to use their words to express themselves, draw a picture or, for the younger children, to point to a picture of children with various facial expression (e.g., sad, happy, or angry) to help us learn how they are feeling in that moment. In the broadest sense, we ask children to follow three simple guidelines with the assistance of a teacher:

- You may not hurt others
- You may not hurt yourself
- You may not hurt items, such as toys

If a child has a hard time adjusting to these guidelines, we provide a “cooling down” period so they can be alone for a few minutes. The quiet area is a designated area with a sitting area and some soft pillows. If you happen to be visiting and see an unhappy child in the quiet area, please know that we are working with that child. If a child continues to have a difficult time and setting limits is not working, we

may ask to meet with you to discuss some new strategies. PLEASE NOTE: SUGAR AND SPICE DOES NOT ADMINISTER CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

ILLNESS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We are under strict guidelines with regards to disease control; hence, there may be times when we are either forced to send an ill child home, or not to accept a child into our care. For this reason, parents are asked to have a plan for alternate care. If a child becomes ill at the center, we will do everything possible to comfort the child until the parent or emergency contact arrives to take the child home. An ill child will be isolated from the other children. Furthermore, if your child is sick enough to need the use medications such as Tylenol or Motrin they should stay home. Parents will be notified and required to remove the child immediately from the center if a child exhibits any symptoms indicative of illness, including:

- Fever greater than 101° F
- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Difficult breathing and/or severe coughing
- Conjunctivitis
- Chicken pox, measles, or other usual spots/rashes

Any illness impacting the school will be posted on our parent board.

Special Note About Medication: No medications will be administered by SSCC staff – parents or legal guardians are permitted to come to the facility to administer such remedies. Exceptions are made for asthma and nut allergies.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the case of an unforeseen disaster, the SSCC staff is prepared to stop all activity and relocate the children to a safe location. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the children will exit with their teacher outside to the front of the building. Roll will immediately be

taken while a second teacher ensures no other children are inside the building. In the event of a prolonged evacuation, our temporary location will be the lobby of the office building located in front of our building. Each exit location in the building is clearly marked.

- Main Entrance Door 1
- Main Entrance Door 2
- Back Door to backyard area

Earthquake Procedures: Parents are asked to provide an earthquake kit for their child. Earthquake supplies are located in a childproof container located in the far corner of the playground for easy access. In the event of an earthquake, we will follow instructions from emergency personnel in the area. If an evacuation is necessary, we will go to a location instructed by emergency personnel. SSCC staff will post signs on all our exit doors with our evacuation location. Parents should come to that location to retrieve their child as soon as possible.

Child Abuse: SSCC Staff is required by law (Penal code section 11166) to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

INTRODUCTION TO HIGH/SCOPE APPROACH

The High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for ages 2.5 to 6 is an evaluation instrument designed for use with children in early development settings, including preschool, daycare, and Head Start programs.

The COR assessment instrument can be used by a trained observer while children are involved in normal program activities.

Assessment is based upon observations of the child's behavior and activities in six developmental categories. The six categories included in the COR philosophy is:

- Initiatives
- Social relations
- Creative representation
- Music and movement
- Language and literacy
- Logic and mathematics

Because COR is an *observational assessment* tool, it is most appropriately used for child evaluation in daycare/classroom setting, where children can be observed initiating and participating in a wide variety of activities and behaviors.

ADVANTAGES TO THE HIGH/SCOPE APPROACH

Why use observation rather than testing to assess children? As adults who work in early childhood programs, we know that children come to us with widely differing experiences, abilities, temperaments, and talents. In learning environments that nurture each child's unique pattern of strengths and abilities, children learn of what they are capable and can be more successful in present and future endeavors. COR also helps effectively identify the skills and strengths of each child, allowing teachers to plan and adjust teaching materials, techniques and activities to match individual interests and developmental needs of the children.

There are some other advantages of observational assessment over testing: 1) Artificial and limited testing situations may inaccurately measure a child's developmental level, whereas observation of the

child over a prolonged period of time, while the child is engaged in the varied activities typical of an appropriate early childhood program, can give you a well rounded and accurate picture of that child's performance; 2) Many children do not perform well in situations that require them to answer specific questions or complete specific tasks. SSCC Staff feels COR is an invaluable tool that can be used to help support your child in his/her journey to learning and discovery.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM DAILY SCHEDULE

Time (approximate)	Activity
7:30-8:00	Arrival, Free play, Pre-school age children may volunteer with breakfast preparation and table setting
8:30-8:15	restroom and washing hands
8:15-8:30	Breakfast/snack
8:45-9:00	Clean up and diaper change
9:00-9:30	Morning Circle Time: Circle time which includes dancing, singing, board review, story time, estimation jar
9:30-10:00	Group work time: Children break into groups Ladybugs, Caterpillar, Butterfly
10:15-11:30	Clean up and transition outside eat morning a.m. snack
11:30-12:00	Transition inside, toilet time, diaper change
12:00– 1:45	Rest and nap time
1:45-2:15	Wake up, Brush teeth, toilet time and diaper change
2:15-3:00	Lunch time / Clean up
3:00-4:30	Station free play, special activities, group activities, manipulative play (play dough, writing, painting), additional Friday folder work
4:30-4:45	Toilet time and diaper change, clean up
4:45-6:00	Projects placed in cubby hole, outside play, final pick ups

** Two year activities may vary slightly and be more age appropriate*

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

January	Closed Martin Luther King Day
February	Closed President's Day
March	Open
April	Open
May	Closed Memorial Day
June	Open
July	Closed for Independence Day,
August	Teacher work day TBD
September	Closed for Labor Day
October	Columbus Day
November	Thanksgiving day and the Friday after
December	Closed for a week
New Years	Closed

SUGAR AND SPICE CENTER FOR CHILDREN

I/we _____ have read this
(Print your name)
handbook and will comply to all provisions contained herein,
and shall at this time enter into agreement with SSCC for the
care of my/our child, _____, with the
(Print your child's name)
understanding that we shall work together on behalf of your
child. This agreement is subject to review and renewal on an
ongoing basis.

Sign _____ Date _____
(Parent or Guardian)
Telephone _____ Start Date _____

Sign _____ Date _____
(Sugar & Spice)