

# PARENT HANDBOOK

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### ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

Our purpose is to offer a high quality, developmentally appropriate Early Childhood Education Program, to educate young children and support their families as well as the community. We are open to children 2yrs/9mos through 5yrs/9mos years of age; two to five days per week, mornings 9am-noon with our without extended day until 2:30pm. Green Hills operates on a school term basis from September through mid-June and offers a special 6-8 week Summer Camp.

### OUR HISTORY

Green Hills Pre-School, established in 1968 is privately owned and operated by Patti & Angelo Aguiar, who in 1979, took over operation from the founders, Lavert & Charles Elkins. As credentialed teachers and administrators, the Aguiar's have been educating children from the pre-school to high school level for over 50 yrs. In 1984 they were joined by their Lauren Kuehn their eldest child, who serves as the program's Director. Together they run the school as a family business that is committed to the evolution of the ever-advancing field of education.

### OUR PHILOSOPHY & MISSION

We know that young children learn through their experiences and that each child is born with his or her own innate sense of self, learning style and way of thinking. We believe that by providing a balance of play-based, child-centered opportunities as well as well-planned, structured, teacher-directed activities a child's personality can truly emerge.

By offering young children experiences that are playful, productive, varied, intentional and purposeful both alone and in groups, each child can find meaning as they begin to construct an understanding of the world they live in and their place in it. In our rich and dynamic environment, each child will observe, participate, explore, create, lead, follow, work together, pretend, imagine, ask & be asked questions, be challenged, take risks & learn to be safe, communicate ideas and feelings, as they form important relationships, and thrive. We greatly value the relationships children build with their schoolmates and teachers as they engage in these activities. We feel it is vital to build deep relationships as it helps children feel their efforts are important as well as socially connected to others. These relationships extend to each child's family for we believe that we must support families by helping them better understand early childhood development as well as ongoing process of parenting.

## STAFF & FACULTY

Our staff's collective education, training, experience, reflective and collaborative teaching practices are the foundation that allows our program to be a purposeful place to learn and grow for both our students and their families. Our teaching staff is a team of enthusiastic and supportive adults who are skilled at stimulating each child's current level of development by providing a rich array of materials and activities. Intentional and conscious efforts made by the staff to provide an environment that validates each child and family is the one of the hallmarks of our program.

We know that by hiring and retaining a great staff with a high level of experience and education, our students will grow socially and emotionally as well as intellectually. Our early childhood educated teachers are chosen not only for their qualifications and experience, but also for their warmth and outstanding abilities in interacting with young children and their families. Teachers work directly with the families assigned to their groups and help support them throughout their child's time in the program. Very important to us are our adult/child interactions. Using questions and comments related to the child's plans, intentions, experiences and observations teachers help extend each child's learning and engagement.

All staff members are fingerprinted by the state, and have clearances for good health and negative tuberculin tests on file. On site at all times, there are staff that are pediatric medic/first aid, CPR trained and disease prevention certified. Each teacher participates in a continuous program of in-service education where current research is made available for the professional advancement of teachers. This helps our staff remain alert to the ever-changing needs of today's children and families. Their photos are listed on the staff wall.

## OUR CAMPUS

Our charming, residential setting offers home-like surroundings in a safe, clean, spacious and well-ordered learning environment. Our large outdoor play yard lends itself well to active physical play and social interactions. Our school is fully equipped with high quality equipment and materials that are designed to be appropriate for young children. We pride ourselves on the beauty and warmth of our campus, we endeavor to design, construct and maintain a great place to play.

## CURRICULUM

As a team, the teachers, staff and director plan and develop methods of implementing the program goals. The developmentally appropriate learning experiences we provide promote growth in all developmental areas. The teachers offer planned activities and make on the spot changes in the curriculum for spontaneous learning. We use thematic curriculum units selected to inspire a child's interest and curiosity as this sets the stage for discussions and related activities. Each topic is explored deeply to increase a child's knowledge and understanding, while showing them how it relates to their lives and the world as a whole.

School Newsletters, class newsletters and teacher's white boards and lesson plans state the themes so that the parent can discuss with the child what is happening at school. We offer ethnically diverse, non-sexist and anti-biased materials and activities through the use of appropriate stories, images, toys, books, dramas, pictures, foods, music, tools and visitors. Further, families are encouraged to share any special knowledge, traditions, stories, items, or activities relevant to their family regarding a theme or topic.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT

Informal development tracking is done over the course of the school term and is used in combination with the California Desired Results 2010 Profile a developmental assessment tool designed by the State of California. The tool has 43 criteria that measure on-going development in 6 domains for children 3-8 years of age.

Much of the indicators are behaviors that can be observed during play and/or as each child participates in daily activities. Progress Reports are completed to represent these assessments and the child's teacher discusses her findings and observations with the parents at the parent/teacher conferences. Below is the list of Domains & Indicators that your child's teacher will be observing and documenting.

### **Developmental Domains and Observable Behaviors**

**Self & Social Development:** Identity of one's self, Recognition of one's own skills & accomplishments, Expressions of empathy towards others, Impulse control, Turn taking ability, Awareness of diversity in self and others, Positive relationships with adults, Cooperative play with peers, Engagement in socio-dramatic play, Development of friendship with peers, Conflict negotiation, Shared use of space and materials.

**Cognitive Development:** Growth in understanding of cause & effect, Problem solving ability, Development of memory and knowledge, Curiosity and initiative, Engagement and persistence.

### **Developmental Domains and Observable Behaviors** –*con't*

**Language & Literacy Development:** Comprehends meaning in spoken and heard language, Follows increasingly complex instructions, Expression of Self through language, Uses language in conversation, Interest in literacy, Comprehends age-appropriate text presented by adults, Concepts about print, Phonological awareness, Letter and word knowledge, Emerging writing.

For English Language Learners: Comprehension of English, Self Expression in English, Understanding & response to English literacy activities, Symbol, letter & print knowledge in English.

**Math Concepts:** Number Sense: Understanding quantity and Math Operations; Classification, Measurement, Shapes, Patterning.

**Motor & Perceptual Development:** Gross motor movement, Balance, Eye-hand, Eye-foot coordination, Fine motor skills

**Health:** Personal care routines, Understanding a healthy lifestyle, Personal safety

### **DAILY PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

#### DAILY ACTIVITIES 8am-noon

Arrival Time Play (8-9am)

Small Group (20-30 min)

Interest Center Time (50 min.)

Music & Movement (15-20 min)

Snack Time (20 min)

Outdoor Play (1 hr)

#### EXTENDED DAY noon-2:30

Storytime (20 min)

Lunchtime (30 min)

Outdoor Play (70 min)

Clean Up/Wind Down (20 min)

### **DAILY PROGRAM COMPONENTS IN DETAIL**

**Interest Center Time:** Teachers plan and arrange the indoor play area into "Interest Centers". The children are given the freedom to move through the centers at their own pace and interest level. During Interest Center Time activities include: art, cooking, science, pre-math, manipulatives, dramatic play, books, blocks, quiet places, drawing, cutting, play-dough, water-play, etc.

**Small Group Time:** Teachers plan and implement activities to help meet the individual needs of the children in their groups. Incorporated into each experience is a form quality literature that follows a basic theme both fiction and non-fiction is used to explore each topic.

**Snack Time:** Snack is provided by the school and served family-style to the child's small group. Snack time is a time for quiet conversation where manners and politeness are prevalent and important. Children enjoy sharing food and drink. Teachers talk about sound health and nutritional practices during school and at home.

**Music & Movement Time:** Children learn to be a part of a larger group; learning to wait for a turn and listening for directions are some of the skills that are targeted. Children sing songs, play circle games, participate in movement explorations and take part in dramatics.

**Outdoor Play:** Outdoor playtime stimulates physical, social and emotional growth as the children are offered many active experiences. Children have the opportunity to use their motor skills to master outdoor equipment, pretend with friends, paint, work with wood and tools and play with sand and water. Places are also designed into the environment for quiet and solitude.

### **DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT**

**Progress Reports:** Teachers will complete Progress Reports for each child in November & March, and an exit report in June. These reports are meant to keep the parent informed to their child's ongoing growth & development as well as pre-academic skill levels. Copies of the reports will be given to the parent and kept in the child's cumulative file to help the child's parents, present teacher and future teachers understand the child better and to ensure smooth transitions from one school term to the next.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences:** We feel that it is very important for each parent to know what their child's school performance looks like. Part of the bridge between home and school is the rapport that develops between the parent and the teacher. Each brings information to the other that helps to best understand the child's temperament, personality, growth and development.

Parents will be invited by their child's teacher to sign up for a Parent/Teacher conference. Conferences are scheduled for 20-30 minutes per family 2 times per year in the Fall & Spring.

**Developmental Evaluations and Referrals:** When a family enrolls in our program, we work hard to communicate effectively with them. When a child has special needs or any arise during a child's time in our program, we will endeavor to assist the family in anyway we can. As a team we will strive to ensure that the child and their family can get whatever is needed for the child to flourish in school. Parents are welcome to request information for outside professional referrals. Often a child's outside professional service provider will work with the teachers so that the school can help facilitate growth where the provider requests it. Further, an outside consultant can be brought into the school for an independent assessment should a parent become concerned about their child's growth and development or school experience. After such an assessment, recommendations are given to the family and the school so that the child's needs can addressed and then modifications can be made to promote the child's school success.

## GUIDANCE METHODS & TECHNIQUES

We use positive approaches to help the children develop appropriate pre-school-age behavior. These techniques are used to fit the needs of each child and each situation. In most situations we use re-direction, positive comments, and suggest and/or discuss alternatives. Teachers also help children resolve conflicts with peers by using problem solving techniques; by defining the problem, sharing feelings, having each person have their say, brainstorming solutions, offering alternatives and suggesting outcomes. These methods help children build self-control and negotiation skills.

If a conflict becomes physical or emotionally hurtful the teacher stops the play and works with the children to see that everyone is safe. If anyone was hurt during the encounter both victim and aggressor are attended to. The aggressor is asked to stay with the victim until they are feeling well enough to return to play.

Should a child become out-of-control that child will be removed from the situation until calm and then allowed to return with the teacher's help so that the child can constructively re-enter play. If a teacher feels that she cannot affect a change in a problem behavior, the parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and/or director so that as a team a plan can be formulated.

We want all the children in our care to feel safe at all times. There are rare occasions where, even when working together, we fail to make positive changes in a child's aggressive behaviors. Should any child, after attempted remediation, pose a threat to the well being of another child, children or teacher, the child posing the threat will be dismissed from the program.

## PARENT PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION

Education is a shared, dynamic process that requires parental support both for its effectiveness and advancement. We encourage all of our parents to become involved in our program in any way they can. We want parents to know and understand as well as discuss our program goals and how they relate to their child's growth, development and school experience. Please feel free to offer suggestions, comments and constructive criticisms as well as accolades.

Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher at any other time as well. We do ask that parents refrain from talking about a child in front of them, but to ask the teacher to set aside a time to chat. Phone calls or private chats are welcome. Parents can leave phone messages, notes or email their child's teacher.

**Parent Communication:** We believe that in order to understand the children in our program, we must also get to know their family. In order to do that we must build strong relationships through open communication that is ongoing through out the time the child is with us. During the hard times as well as the happy times we are available to help parents as they navigate the difficult yet joyful process of parenting. We have built in to our program regular times for formal meetings with each family and structured our daily program so that there are plenty of chances for informal, casual opportunities for parents to check in with their child's teacher.

**Parent Observations:** After being introduced to our program, we would like you to see how our school really works. October is Parent Observation Month. Watch for an email reminder in late-September to sign up to see your child in action. It is important that parents come into our busy, happy, active and creative school to see their child at play. We want parents to realize the validity of learning through play by seeing what is being learned in our environment. We encourage each parent to come in and visit often.

**Class Parent:** A class parent is someone who can assist the teacher for special events or projects in the child's small group it could entail making phone calls or sending emails, collecting unusual school supplies, coordinating help for special class projects.

**Parent Guest Speakers/Visitors:** In our continuing effort to offer a well-rounded experience for the children, we have a Guest Speaker/Visitor program. We encourage every possible opportunity to bring the community into the classroom. If you have a talent or vocation you would like to share with the children, please contact us.

**Parent Information Area:** This area set aside for up-dates regarding parenting classes, seminars, and other family activities. We also have many helpful and informative books in our Parent Library for you to borrow--books and articles on parenting, childcare, and child growth & development.

**Parent Mail Files:** These files are located in the sign-in area and are used for communication between the school and the parent, and parent-to-parent as well. Parent Mail Files are to be checked daily.

**Newsletters:** Newsletters from the school are emailed about every six weeks to inform parents of upcoming events, articles, announcements and information. The teachers send class newsletters out as well. Please check them for important dates.

**Parent Questionnaire:** At least once during the school term parents will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will ask the parent to evaluate how our program meets the needs of their family. Input from the parents is essential information to us as we use it to evaluate the quality of our program. Many of the questions asked in the questionnaire are related to the high standards that we continually work toward and improve upon.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

We host several special events each year. Some are traditional, annual events while others are planned with regard to the interests of the children and teachers. We try to have at least one a season. Listed below are our regularly scheduled events.

**Back-to-School Night (Sept):** Each family is expected to have at least one parent in attendance at Back-to-School Night. This "Parent Only" event is for the parents to meet with their child's teacher to hear about her plans for the children over the course of the school year. She will talk about her goals and objectives and how she can best communicate with you throughout the year.

**Harvest Social (Oct):** We have an evening get-together for children and their families in October.

**Ice Cream Social Pajama Party (Jan):** Children and their families are invited to come to school in the evening in January and wear their pajamas for an ice cream party.

**Classroom Parent/Child Events (Feb):** Children invite their parents for a special class visit.

**Open House & Art Show (Apr):** Our annual Open House & Art Show is held in April or early May. During this time the children bring their parents to the school on the weekend to celebrate Children's Art. Each child will have art pieces on display.

**Family Picnic BBQ & Graduation (June):** At the close of the school term, a celebration is held for all the children and their families. The children who are "graduating" from the program are honored and perform some of their favorite songs and dances.

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### PLACEMENT & TERMS OF ENROLLMENT

**Teacher/Child Ratios:** The adult to student ratio ranges from 1:7 to 1:11 depending on the child's age and the group placement.

**Placement:** Prior to the opening of the school term children are placed into groups according to their siblings' previous placements, chronological age, requested schedule & development.

**Enrollment Process:** Enrollments are available based on space available, the child's age and requested schedule. Preference is given to returning students, their siblings, and alumni families. New student enrollment begins after the currently enrolled student's re-enrollment process is completed mid-January.

To receive an application for enrollment, a parent must first visit the school and have their questions answered. After completing and submitting the application form and non-refundable, application processing fee, parents will receive confirmation of placement or wait list information through the mail. Included in this mailing will be a registration package to be completed prior to enrollment.

**Terms of Enrollment:** Each child is enrolled for the entire term or the balance of the term. For children entering during the school term or leaving before the end, tuition will be prorated daily according to the actual number of school days for the school term. An optional summer term is available mid-June through late August. Should your child enroll after a term begins we require that you come with your child prior to their first day and "shadow" during the peak hours of the program (9am-noon) at least once. Children who become familiar with their teacher and classmates seem to experience less anxiety when their parents leave.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

### Fees

A non-refundable \$100.00 **Application Fee** is due upon submission of an application.

A non-refundable \$50.00 fee for **Re-Enrollment** is due for each subsequent School Term on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

A **Tuition Deposit** is non-refundable and collected in advance (equal to 1 month of tuition) and is used to secure the child's space until the term begins. The tuition deposit is credited toward the June school term payment. The tuition deposit is due upon placement for students entering during the school term; March 1<sup>st</sup> for New Students; and July 1<sup>st</sup> for returning students. The subsequent nine payments for the school term tuition are due and payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month September through. As a courtesy, monthly Tuition Fee invoices will be placed in your parent mail file on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Payment of Fees and Discounts:** Tuition may be paid in full or monthly. Special arrangements can be made with the director for bi-monthly or weekly. There is a 5% discount is given to a sibling when children are enrolled concurrently. We offer a 2.5% discount for school term tuition when paid in full by Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Withdrawal/Termination/Enrollment Changes:** Two weeks notice is required for; withdrawal from the program, change of enrollment days or hours. Parents must request changes in writing, all changes are subject to director approval. Full tuition amount will be charged for that period if notice is not given. As school term tuition is divided into 10 equal monthly payments there may be an additional prorated fee for withdrawal prior to the end of the school term. The school reserves the right to drop a member for reasons of non cooperation, delinquency in payment of fees, continued late pick-up, or inability of the child or parent to adjust to the program. Notice of withdrawal of a student made after May 1<sup>st</sup> during the school term or July 1<sup>st</sup> for the summer session are not subject to a refund.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES – *con't*

**Miscellaneous Fees & Policies:** Failure to pick your child by departure time results in \$1/ minute fine beginning at 12:10pm or 2:30pm. A \$25.00 **Late Fee** is charged for tuition payments made after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month and/or \$35.00 **Returned Check Fee**. Tuition is prorated on a daily basis for schedule changes, enrolling or withdrawing during the school year and a refund is given for any credit balance, two-week notice is required.

## ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE POLICIES

**Drop Off & Pick Up:** Children are to arrive at school **by** 9:00am. If a child is going to be late or absent please call in by 10am.

\*Parents/guardians must walk the child in and out, and help the children get their belongings to and from their cubbie and making sure that staff on duty is aware of the child's arrival or departure. Each child must be signed in upon arrival and departure on the appropriate sign-in sheet by their parent/guardian. These sign-in sheets are our emergency attendance records and must be completed accurately.

Parents must be prompt and pick up their child at the scheduled time. Failure to pick your child at the departure time results in \$1/minute fine beginning at 12:10 or 2:30. If a child is picked up late more than three times, the parent will be asked to increase enrollment hours or to find another center that better meets the family's schedule.

**Authorized Persons:** Only authorized adults (**18 years or older**) will be allowed to pick up the child from the school. Staff will not allow a child to leave with anyone not on the I.D. & Emergency Card, unless the parent has given prior written & signed permission. Parents, guardians, and other authorized adults must also sign the child in/out and be prepared to show identification to leave with the child.

**Parking:** In the driveway--pull up as far as possible. Do not block others from leaving and **NEVER** BACK OUT OF the DRIVEWAY. Please honk your horn if you find yourself stuck in the driveway and we will get you out. If you are going to be longer than 2 minutes, please park on the street. Please be advised George St. parking on our side of the street is limited to 15mins. If you park across the street please use the crosswalks at the intersections, as jaywalking is illegal.

**Carpooling:** Because many of our parents live in the area, we encourage the use of carpools. At the beginning of each school year, we will provide a school directory so that parents can contact each other to form carpools. If you do not wish to be included in this list please inform us at the time of enrollment.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Your child's health and well-being is our most important responsibility. You've probably noticed that most of our policies are with regard to safety. Our first priority is to keep your child safe. Whether it is with regard to the playground, the food items we serve to how we handle germs—health and safety always comes first. Please help us keep your child safe by following our health and safety policies, procedures and rules.

Parents must keep children home and notify the school if the child has been infected with a contagious disease or rash. Written notification from the child's physician may be required after a communicable illness. When a child is sick at home it is essential for the school to know what the child's symptoms are, so please call in by 10am.

**Daily Health Inspections:** Staff will perform informal daily Health Inspections. If the child is observed to have any symptoms listed below or feel un-well parents will be contacted to take their child home. Should you be contacted about illness by the school we expect you or someone you have designated pick up your child as soon as possible.

**Never** send medication in book-bags, lunch boxes, etc. Vitamins, lozenges or any form of pain or cold relievers are not allowed on site unless prescribed in writing by physician and are handled as described below. The use of tranquilizers or sedatives prior to or during school is not permitted. You must notify your child's teacher if your child has been given any medication prior to school.

## FOR A CHILD TO RECEIVE MEDICATION AT SCHOOL:

- 1) Any medication to be given must be prescribed by a physician.
- 2) It must have pharmacist's label or written and signed notification from physician and must include Physician's name, dosage amount & time, and expiration date.
- 3) Parent must sign and complete our Consent to Administer Medication form.
- 4) Parents must alert a staff member when any medication is brought into the school, for safe storage as all medications must be stored according to state guidelines.

**HEALTH & SAFETY -con't**

**ILLNESS EXCLUSION POLICY:** In order to maintain a healthy environment for your child, follow these guidelines:

**Keep your child home from school** if he or she is not well, has a communicable, exclusionary, diagnosed disease or has any one or more of the following symptoms:

**Fever:** Children must be fever free & without fever reducing medication for 24 hours.

**Diarrhea or Vomiting:** Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school

**Runny Nose:** Nasal discharge that cannot be controlled with blowing and wiping. Contact your child's physician if discharge becomes, discolored, chronic or sinuses are painful.

**Rash--**keep your child home if they have an undiagnosed skin rash (including blisters, bumps, hives, lesions on body, limbs or face).

**Nits or Lice--**treat as physician recommends, child may return after treatment & when hair is "nit free".

**Minor Injuries & Illnesses**

If a child has been slightly injured, has a minor illness or symptom, (scrapes, bruises, bee stings, bloody noses etc.), an "Injury/Illness Report" will be put in the Parent Mail File and the School's Injury/Illness File.

**Identification & Emergency Information / Consent for Medical Attention:** Parents will complete forms for emergency information & permission for their child to receive 1st Aid. Parents must keep the school up-to-date of any changes in phones numbers, allergies, emergency information, and other pertinent information. Forms are available in the office to notify us of these changes.

**Health Records:** Prior to enrollment parents must present evidence of up-to-date immunizations and tuberculin clearance or signed affidavit to waiver requirements, plus a pre-admission physician's report signed by the child's doctor stating the child's immunization dates, health status and last exam date. Should a parent choose not to immunize a waiver must be signed and the child must be excluded should an outbreak occur.

**Unusual Incidents & Serious Physical Behaviors:** Should the child be involved in an unusual incident the parent will receive a written "Unusual Incident Report". This report will describe the nature of the situation and how the staff handled it. It will then be filed in the Parent's Mail File and the student's cumulative file. If follow up is required it will state that in the report.

*Should a child exhibit unusual physical behaviors deemed by the teacher and or director to be out-of-control and hurtful to others the parent will be called to pick up the child immediately. Should there become a pattern of hurtful behaviors that the school cannot resolve, the family will be required to remove their child from the program until the behavior has been modified or is no longer present. If the behaviors cannot be resolved successfully the family will be asked to leave the program.*

**Serious Injuries & Illnesses: IN CASE OF SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS WE WILL:**

- 1) Assess the child's condition and take immediate 1st Aid measures.
- 2) Make an immediate attempt to contact parents.
- 3) If we cannot contact the parents we will then attempt to contact them through the persons listed on the child's Identification Emergency Information Card. If we cannot contact the parent we will contact the child's physician.
- 4) If necessary we will call ambulance or paramedics.
- 5) Until the arrival of a parent/guardian, the physician, ambulance or paramedics; a staff member will remain with the child and make decisions on the child's behalf.
- 6) A staff member will remain with the child until the arrival of the parent should the child be transported.

**Hand Washing & Toileting:** Children are taught proper hand-washing procedures, by using running water, soap, scrubbing techniques and disposable towels. Children are required to wash before snacks and meals, and after toileting, and before engaging in cooking and water-play. Teachers use supportive strategies for toileting and remind children of best practices for wiping and washing after urination and bowel movements.

**Toileting:** Our program requires that all students be toilet-learned by the time they begin school. In our program a child is considered toilet learned when they can:

- 1) Wear cloth training pants or underwear during the day.
- 2) Will usually go unassisted or when reminded and have few accidents.
- 3) Can pull down/up own pants and underwear with little assistance.
- 4) Use the toilet unassisted.
- 5) Can wipe self, front to back (but may need supervision after bowel movement).
- 6) Flush and wash by themselves.

**Nutrition:** Our best efforts have been made to try and provide safe, clean, healthy snacks free of additives or coloring that may be harmful. Natural ingredients are used and organics are used whenever possible, great efforts are made to offer non-GMO products, without artificial flavor or colors. All dairy and juices are either organic or without hormones and antibiotics.

Snacks are planned to meet the child's nutritional requirements as recommended by the Child Care Food Program of the United States Department of Agriculture in proportion to the amount of time the child is in the program each day. The amount of food served is adjusted according to the age of the children. Snack menu plans are posted in the cottage snack prep area. Nutritional suggestions for lunches brought from home are available upon request, as lunches from home must also meet USDA guidelines.

**Lunches from Home:** Children who stay through the extended day (aka "Lunch-Bunch") bring their own NUT-FREE lunch from home. The USDA requires that lunches include at least 3 child-sized portions, one of which must be a protein; fruits and vegetables are considered 1 food group. We can heat up leftovers if they are sent in microwave safe containers. We offer the children a choice of milk or water with lunch so no drink is necessary. We try to encourage the children to start with their protein and healthy items first. If you choose to send a dessert we will ask the child to consume it last, but if your child has difficulty with this please do not send dessert. Please avoid sending gummy fruit, fruit-by-the-foot, etc. as they stick to teeth, floors and tabletops. Candy is not allowed. Parents are **never** to send medication, vitamins, lozenges or any form in lunch boxes, etc.

**Attire:** Children should be dressed comfortably in clothing that permits active play and is sturdy and free of complicated fasteners. Please keep a bag with an extra set of clothes in the child's cubby for accidents. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WEAR: corded hoods with drawstrings, long necklaces, long dresses or "T" shirts to the ground as they may cause accidents.

**Footwear:** We strongly encourage easy-to-put-on, sturdy shoes, athletic sneakers, trainers or sandals with simple fasteners, like Velcro. Cowboy boots, slick-soled "mary-janes" and "Crocs" are strongly discouraged. Backless sandals, flip-flops, high heels and "heelies", are not allowed. Weather permitting, children will be allowed to go barefoot outdoors.

## MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

**Emergency/Disaster Packs:** Each child enrolled is required to have an emergency/disaster pack on site for disaster preparedness. These bags will be returned to you at the end of the year to be updated or taken home. The school stores water and other emergency supplies as well. Please check freshness dates on all food and drink items to be sure they will be edible until at least the end of the term.

**No Toys From Home:** Children are not allowed to bring toys to school. Books, recordings and other materials that relate to our themes are welcome, but we do ask that they be left for a few days. Occasionally, the teacher may send a note home for the child to bring a specific item from home to share at group time, if so we ask the item arrive in a bag with the child's name clearly marked.

**Birthdays:** We observe the child's birthday during small group time with a special crown or medallion and sing "Happy Birthday". In honor of the child's birthday the parent may donate a book to the school to be shared with the child's small group. If the child's birthday falls on a weekend it can be celebrated on the next school day. Please contact your child's teacher to set up a time.

**Neighborhood Walks:** Occasionally, the teachers will schedule short neighborhood walks. We feel it beneficial for children to learn how to take a walk in a group and observe certain safety rules, and buddy-system concepts.

**Extra Clothes:** We ask that every child maintain an extra bag of clothes in the cubbie for accidents and messes. This bag should include; 2 pair of underwear, a pair of sweats or shorts, a shirt and a pair of socks.

## THE RIGHT OF THE LICENSING AGENCY:

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA GENERAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS, SEC. 101195, states: "The Dept. of Social Services or Community Care Licensing Agency shall have the authority to interview child(ren) and/or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent. The licensee shall make provisions for private interview with any child(ren) or any staff member; and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility. The department or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and to have a licensed medical professional examine the child(ren)."

**SCHOOL CLOSURES** (school year approx. 180 days and closely follows Los Gatos Union School District Calendar)

Sept: Labor Day (1 day)

Oct: In-Service (1 day)

Nov: Veteran's Day (1 day) Thanksgiving (3 days)

Dec: Winter Break (10+ days Dec/Jan)

Jan: M.L. King, Jr B-day (1 day)

Feb: President's Days/Local Ski week (5 days)

Mar: Teacher In-Service (1-2 days) State Conference

Apr: Spring Break (5 days)

May: Memorial Day (1 day)

Jun: Semester Break (5 Days)

Jul: Independence Holiday (1-2)

Aug: Summer Vacation (2 weeks)



**PREPARING FOR SCHOOL**

**Child's Shadow Day:** To help your child become accustomed to our program and facility it is necessary it set up a day or more where your child comes to school with a parent to visit for a couple of hours to participate in the program. Not only do these visits help your child prepare for school, it also helps ensure that each child is placed in a group that matches his or her personality, temperament and level of development.

**Get-to-Know You Meeting:** Parents of new students are expected to attend a meeting with the director. These meetings are informal and can take place during the outside playtime when the incoming student attends for their Shadow Day. To ensure that your child will realize the maximum benefits of our program, it is important to understand our goals, policies, procedures, and educational philosophy.

**Student Orientation Day:** Before the beginning of the school term the child will be introduced to his or her teacher and other new class members. There will be a short group time to orient the child with the facility, rules and general guidelines.

**Starting School:** Starting school is an exciting experience for a young child and his or her family, however it may also be a difficult one. It is important to introduce the child to school in a way that will make the first separation as easy as possible. We suggest that the parent and child visit often before the child is scheduled to begin school. We also recommend developing a short "good-bye routine" to help your child understand what will happen next as you prepare to leave. Most important; is not to linger if your child seems like they may be reluctant to let you go.

On your child's first regular school day it is important to leave your child even though he or she may cry. This usually only lasts until the parent is out of sight. We sometimes find that a child may separate easily in the beginning and then suffer separation anxiety a few days, weeks or even months later. It is normal for a child to go through a periods of adjustment as part of the child's healthy development.

Learning to be able to feel comfortable away from home and parents is an important skill. We appreciate the trust and faith you give as we forge strong connections with your child. If this time becomes unusually difficult the parent our staff can help come up specific strategies designed to help the child and family adjust more easily.

.....*detach receipt & submit to school—required for enrollment*.....

**PARENT HANDBOOK - ACKNOWLEDGE OF RECEIPT**

Parent of: (child's name) \_\_\_\_\_

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_

have received **and have read** the Green Hills Pre-School Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies stated. I have had my questions regarding the policies answered.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_