



2020-2021

Dear Mustard Seed Families,

Welcome to Mustard Seed Preschool! We are pleased that you will be a part of our preschool community. We are glad to get to know you and your family. Our highest priority is to partner with you during this extraordinary time of growth, discovery, and enrichment.

This handbook is designed to help you become familiar with our school's policies and procedures. It holds important information that will allow the school community to function smoothly.

Please keep this handbook with your child's school records. If you have any questions about any part of this manual, please contact me by email or come and see me in the office.

Here's to a new year!

Candace Martinez, Director

Accountability

Mustard Seed Preschool is operated by Berkeley Covenant Church (BCC). The Preschool Director handles the daily operations of the school and is under the supervision of BCC's Director of Administration, Karen Davidson. The Director of Administration reports to the board of BCC.

California State Licensing

Mustard Seed Preschool is licensed by the State of California, Department of Social Services, and Community Care Licensing Division. As per their Health and Safety Code Section 1596.852, they are authorized to enter and inspect without prior notice. **Community Care Licensing authorized officers are allowed to interview children at any time without prior consent. (Code Section 101200 (b) (1))**

Mission Statement

Mustard Seed Preschool is a deeply rooted community where:

1. Children are nurtured in love and high quality care;
2. Children are equipped to be socially competent and emotionally intelligent;
3. Children grow to be more independent and confident people.

Philosophy

We respect each child's needs, skills, and interests. We allow them to explore, create, and grow at their own pace. In order to establish the foundation for effective learning, we believe these three components need to be firmly in place before academics can be mastered.

1. Children are nurtured in love and high quality care.

It is of the utmost importance that children feel loved, nurtured, cared for, and comfortable in our

school environment. We want children to be able to trust in the consistency of our teachers, of our routines, and quality of care. Our teachers regularly collaborate in how to best meet the individual needs of each child.

2. Children are equipped to be socially competent and emotionally intelligent.

Supporting children's socio-emotional development is our highest priority. We encourage their developing skills of voicing their needs, identifying feelings, and asking for help. We help them to recognizing the feelings of others, and encourage them to help friends in need. We support them in developing conflict resolution techniques, methods of overcoming their fears, and becoming resilient individuals. We plant these early seeds of empathy, kindness, peacemaking, conflict managing, and self-regulation knowing they will serve the children tremendously through adulthood.

3) Children are supported to be independent and confident people.

We believe children thrive when they are supported in becoming independent and confident. We encourage children to try things on their own, to challenge their own personal zones of learning, and to master new physical, social, and academic skills.

With these three goals in place, children are primed to learn successfully and thrive accordingly.

Admissions

Enrollment

Mustard Seed accepts children from all races, family structures, national origins, and religious backgrounds. We enroll children between the ages of 18 months through first grade entry.

Students are enrolled on a trial basis for the first month of school to determine that Mustard Seed can provide the care necessary for your child. To the extent possible, Mustard Seed will try to accommodate children with various special needs, however we are not a specialized school and may

not have the ability or resources to individualize care.

Registration

Returning students and their siblings qualify for priority enrollment which begins in October. Although returning, all families need to register every year to hold their child's place. This also applies to our summer program. For each new session, a registration form and fee must be submitted.

Electronic Required enrollment forms (needed by child's first day):

- Registration
- Admission Agreement
- Identification and Emergency
- Pre-Admission Form: Parent's Health Report
- Physician's Report Form
- Immunization Record
- Medical Consent
- Parent's Rights
- Personal Rights
- Earthquake/Emergency Procedure & Release
- Field Trip Permission
- Media Waiver & Release
- Consent to Administer Creams
- Parent Honor Code*
- Waiver of Liability during Pandemic*

*Covid-19 specific forms

Change of Schedule

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, schedule changes are limited. Changes will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will only be approved by the Director. To request a schedule change, email the Director. Schedule change fees will be added to your tuition invoice

Program

Hours of Operation & Holidays

Mustard Seed's hours of operation are from 8:30am to 5:30pm*, Monday through Friday. Our core program is from 9:00am to 1:00pm with extended care in the morning and afternoons. The school year is from August 10th, 2020 through May 28, 2021 and is closed for the following days in the 2020-2021 school year:

- Labor Day: Sept 7, 2020
- Veterans Day: November 11, 2020
- Thanksgiving Break: November 25-27, 2020
- Christmas Break: December 21-January 1, 2021
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day: January 18, 2021
- President's Day: February 15, 2021
- Easter Break: April 1-2, 2021
- Spring Break: April 5-9, 2021

Staff

Our staff members come from diverse backgrounds of experience, education, life stages, and cultures. Each teacher, assistant teacher, and substitute meets or exceeds qualifications required by the State of California, Department of Social Services and the Department of Education. Each staff member is fingerprinted through the California Department of Justice. Staff been verified to be fully immunized from TB, measles, and pertussis.

Curriculum

Mustard Seed Preschool is **play-based**. We believe that children thrive and learn best through play. Teachers are intentional in creating child-centered environments to facilitate hands-on play which promotes exploration, inquiry, experimentation, and collaboration. Learning through play fosters a love of learning in an environment that supports children's curiosity and critical thinking skills.

We believe that play is vital for a child's growth and development. Studies show the link between play and many foundational skills and cognitive activities such as memory, self-regulation, language, and socio-emotional development. Play can lay the firm foundation for learning in school.

We believe that a rich school environment and curriculum provides opportunities to encourage the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, creative, and spiritual growth of a child. Our program balances activities that are structured with those that are free-choice and open-ended. Activities, learning themes, and projects are a mixture of teacher-led and child-initiated.

Words, numbers, letters, and abstract concepts are presented to children as part of the world around them and not as academics they have to master. By presenting these concepts and symbols repeatedly in intentional and developmentally appropriate ways, the children are introduced to all they need to prepare them for kindergarten.

We offer children developmentally appropriate experiences in art, music, language & literature, gross and fine motor activities, pre-reading & pre-writing, mathematics, science, dramatic art & creative expression.

Christian Curriculum

As a Christian preschool, values are built into our expectations as we encourage children to treat each other with respect, love, acceptance, and kindness. Songs and books about Jesus and stories from the Bible are integrated into the curriculum in age-appropriate ways.

Academic Goals

Our academic goal includes fostering intellectual curiosity, keeping children excited about learning, and helping them develop a sense of confidence and competence in a school environment.

The steps toward reaching these academic goals include:

- Providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to grow in independence, responsibility, and self-expression.
- Providing activities that require investigation, exploration, and inquiry.
- Nurturing intellectual curiosity and a disposition for learning.
- Providing ample opportunities for imaginary and dramatic play, which develops abstract thinking and are the first steps to scientific and mathematical thought.

Socio-emotional Goals

At Mustard Seed, we believe that in order for academic skills to develop and be mastered, children must first be guided in proficiency by developing self-regulation, social, and emotional skills.

The steps towards reaching these socio-emotional goals:

- Helping to foster friendships that promote and develop problem-solving, empathy, trial-and-error, and critical thinking skills.
- Encouraging behavior in ways that helps to develop inner impulse-control and self-regulation.
- Providing ample opportunities for imaginary and dramatic play, which develops the ability to empathize, problem-solve, self-regulate, and play out fears and feelings.

Classroom Placement

The Director makes the final decision of classroom placement. We take many factors into consideration when determining which class a child should be enrolled in. Our goal is to place your child in the class that is developmentally appropriate for him/her.

While our primary consideration is age, we also regard birth order and previous child care experience when deciding which classroom is the best fit for a child. We also look at social, emotional, cognitive, and gross motor skills. Other factors that contribute to the director's final decision are teacher

recommendations and parent preferences.

Classes

- For the time being and to the extent possible, children will be separated into small groups (Circles) of no more than twelve children.
- As per the Alameda County Health Order, all Circles will be stable. This means the same children and staff will be grouped together for at least three weeks at a time. Any necessary changes to staffing or adding children to a Circle will only happen 3-4 weeks after Circles begin
- Children shall not move between Circles.
- Each Circle shall meet in a separate, dedicated classroom space.
- Circles shall not mix with each other, including outdoor play and meals.
- Teachers will remain with their dedicated Circle for the entirety of the day.

Core Program Schedule

Each class has a daily schedule that includes:

- Free Choice Time- Teachers set out activities such as art, blocks, puzzles, games, and books in the classroom that children can choose to play on their own or in groups.
- Circle Time- This is one of the only times of the morning schedule where the whole class comes together in one space to sing, dance, play group games, listen to a story, have show-and-tell, go over the calendar, and even problem-solve through classroom problems as a class.
- Snack and Lunch Times
- Group Center Time (Kanga class only)- In preparation for kindergarten, this is a time of table activities that teachers have prepared such as art projects, dictation, math games, science experiments, and cooking projects.
- Outside Time- Each class has two scheduled times to play outside. The Pooh Bear and Piglet classes share one of their outside times.

Extended Care Program** Note: during Covid-19 extended care stays with their same Circle & with same teachers.

We offer two extended care times. Our morning extended care is from 8:30am-9am and our afternoon pickup times are 3:00pm and 5:30pm. During extended care times, classes will remain in their classes (Circles).

The afternoon extended care program is meant to have a home-like feel where children can extend their play for longer periods of time in a cozier environment. From 1pm-3:30pm, children are either napping/resting or outside on the play yard.

Holiday Care (Optional)

During the Spring Break, we offer Holiday Care for an additional hourly fee. We are open from 8:30am-3pm. While flexible schedules are accommodated during this week, there is a four-hour minimum per day.

Summer Program (Optional)

Registration for the summer program is separate from the regular school year. The 2021 summer program dates are still to be determined. Families can enroll on a weekly basis, scheduling around vacations. There is a five week minimum sign-up. A separate registration form and tuition deposit is required to enroll in this program.

Program Policies

Transitioning into our Program

The emotional transition from home to school can be a challenging for children and parents. On average, children new to preschool take between one to three weeks to fully adjust to our schedule and routines. We are here to help in your family's adjustment. The teaching staff are very experienced in this stage and have many tips and suggestions to navigate through this process. We hope to partner with you in designing a plan to help your child the best way possible.

There are many variations available to transition your child into the classroom. Please check in with your child's teachers for their recommendations for your child specifically.

Here are some tips and requests we ask of you to help in this time:

- In the days leading up to your child's first day, help your child prepare by talking about how school will be. Talk in detail about how you will be saying goodbye to them and reassure them you will be back to pick them up.
- Please do not sneak away when your child's not looking. Say goodbye even if your child is crying. Sneaking away makes children afraid parents could disappear at any point and prolong their adjustment time and their trust in the teachers.
- During this time of transition, your child is welcome to have a "lovie" or other comfort item from home. This item needs to stay at school.
- When you are ready to leave, please let a teacher know so they can hold or be near your child.
- Once a plan is established, consistency is key to success in adjustment.

Drop-off Time

- Please refer to Mustard Seed Preschool's COVID-19 Safety Protocol for specific drop-off procedures.
- Please do not drop off your child before your child's designated drop-off time. This interferes with the COVID-19 check in process and the teachers' preparation time.
- Establish a consistent "drop-off" routine that you do with your child every morning. Please include hand-washing as part of this routine.

Pickup Time

The one o'clock pick-up time is an extremely busy time at Mustard Seed. We have parents picking up children, staff coming on and going off their work shifts, and children transitioning into enrichment classes or nap rooms. There are ways you can help this time be less chaotic:

- Please refer to Mustard Seed Preschool's COVID-19 Safety Protocol for specific

pick-up procedures.

- Please be on time when picking up your child. This gives them a sense of security and consistency. It is also respectful of the teacher's time, especially when picking up at 5:30 pm.

Late Pick-up Policy

Please pick up your child on time to avoid late fees. If you know you are going to be late, please call the school *before* your child's scheduled pick-up time to let us know. We will charge a drop-in fee of \$30 to extend their time an extra hour. This is not applicable to the 5:30pm pick up time.

If your child's scheduled time is 5:30pm and you are late, we charge \$3/minute for the first offense, and \$5/minute for any offense thereafter.

Drop-in Care

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, drop-in opportunities are limited. Changes will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will only be approved by the Director. When occasional appointments come up and you need supplemental childcare within business hours, a "Drop-In" can be requested. Drop-ins are available depending on space. Please submit early for approval. You may also request drop-in care when you are unexpectedly late to pick up your child. This request needs to be made by phone and before the scheduled pick-up time. This is considered an "at the door" drop-in and charged at our highest rate.

Staff Babysitting

Teachers are prohibited from babysitting for families with children enrolled in our program. It is important that teachers are viewed and treated as professional educators and not personal hired help. If you choose to override this policy, Mustard Seed cannot be held responsible for any damages or issues that happen outside of the school grounds.

We often have recommendations of nannies in the school community, so feel free to ask staff for referrals. You can also use the school-wide email to get recommendations from other families.

Toilet Training

Please let your teachers know if you begin potty training at home. The teachers will reinforce your process by continuing it at school.

Financial Policy

Tuition and Billing

Upon receipt of the registration form and fee, your child is considered registered and committed to attend Mustard Seed for the entire school year. Tuition payment is due on the 10th day of the month. Curacubby (our billing system) automatically charges a late fee beginning on the 11th day of the month. If an account becomes delinquent for more than two (2) weeks, and an acceptable payment plan cannot be agreed upon, a parent may receive a dismissal notification from the school. In these instances, the school will keep any tuition deposit.

The regular school term consists of **180 school days spread over a nine-month period**, late August through early June. **Tuition is billed in ten (10) equal invoices. (180 days divided by 10 comes to 18 days per month)** There are months when there are more than 18 school days in a month; and there are months when there are less. Regardless of the number of school days in each month, the monthly tuition cost will be the same.

If your child is enrolled mid-year, you are still expected to pay tuition for every month from the time the child enrolls including May's final full tuition.

Submit your tuition payments online in the Curacubby portal. Alternative ways to pay are to have your bank bill pay directly to us or hand deliver a check to Candace or Linda at drop off or pick up time.

No refunds/credits will be issued for absences due to illness, vacation or personal business.

If, after completing our regular school session, you enroll your child in our summer program, you must pay the final May invoice for the regular school year, as well as the first installment for the summer program.

Deposit

A tuition deposit holds your child's space for the entire school year. This deposit is due at registration and will be held and credited towards the invoice for the final/last month (May) your child attends Mustard Seed Preschool.

School Fees

- Annual Registration Fee: \$275
- Summer Registration Fee: \$275
- Tuition Deposit: One month's tuition based on selected schedule
- Earthquake Kit Fee: \$20
- Change of Schedule Fee: \$40 per change
- Late Payment Fee: \$40
- Tuition Statement print Fee or Cumulative Statement Fee: \$10
- Drop-in Fees:
 - \$25/hour for requests made 24 hours in advance
 - \$27/hour for requests made less than 24 hours in advance
 - \$30/hour for any request made at the door OR late pickup.
- Late Pickup Fees:
 - Late pick-up for drop off times other than 5:30pm is charged \$30 for any fraction of an hour.
 - Late pick-up after 5:30pm is \$3/minute for the first offense and \$5/minute for any offense thereafter. This charge goes toward paying overtime to staff.

Tuition Assistance

We often give need-based scholarships. Applications must be submitted with copies of your income tax returns for the previous two years.

- Priority is given to current returning families.
- Scholarships are offered based on income and can be up to 40%.
- Sibling scholarship/discounts can only be applied for at the beginning of the school year.

Withdrawal Policy

A tuition deposit holds a spot for your child in our school. Once we have received your deposit, your child is considered enrolled from late August to May. If you withdraw during the school year, your deposit is 100% forfeited.

Summer Program Tuition Deposit

Mustard Seed's ten-week summer session begins early June. Tuition is calculated on a weekly basis. Weeks can be scheduled around family travels and vacations. There is a required minimum of five weeks to be considered priority in the enrollment. If your child is returning the following fall, no additional deposit is due at the time of summer registration. If your child is not returning, a summer tuition deposit equal to two week's tuition is due. This deposit holds your child's spot in the program and will be applied as payment for a portion of the summer tuition.

Summer Program Withdrawal

Registration in the summer program will begin in January 2021. Withdrawing from the summer program after April 30, 2021 will forfeit any deposit on file.

Health & Emergency Information

Emergency Locations:

In the event of an emergency which requires us to move the children off the school grounds, children will be evacuated to either:

- King Jr. High tennis courts on Hopkins St., Berkeley (next door to the school) **or**
- 1540 Ada Street, Berkeley, CA 94707 (cross street is California St.). This is the parsonage house that Berkeley Covenant Church owns.

Emergency Preparedness

In accordance with the Community Care Licensing Earthquake Preparedness checklist, we have earthquake kits for children, emergency water in storage, and tools for water and gas shut-off. We also have hand-held walkie-talkies, panic buttons, and cell phones. We conduct emergency drills during the school year, both with the children and as a staff.

Emergency Kit

We provide an emergency kit for each child. Each packet contains:

- Emergency survival blanket
- Emergency drinking water
- Emergency food rations
- Safety Glow Stick

Medical Emergency Procedures

Parents are required to always be accessible to the school in case of an emergency. In a medical emergency situation, the procedures will be as follows:

- First aid will be administered by MSP staff.
- When further treatment is necessary, we will consult the medical professional indicated on the child's Emergency Medical Consent Form.
- We will make every effort to contact a parent/guardian and/or other individual designated on your Emergency/Identification Form.

- If urgent medical treatment is necessary, 9-1-1 will be called. If the child is transported to a medical facility, parents/ guardians will be contacted and advised to meet their child and the designated MSP staff member at the medical facility.

Health and Safety

Prior to your child's start date at Mustard Seed Preschool, you must provide a physician's written medical assessment of your child's health. The Physician's Report form must be completed, signed and stamped by a physician. As a part of this assessment, your child must be screened for TB risk factor.

Immunizations

Immunizations must be up to date according to the California School Immunization Law, Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375 before a child can start at Mustard Seed.

- The required vaccines are: Polio DTaP MMR Hib Hepatitis B Varicella Tdap

Administration of Medication

- If your child has been medicated before coming to school, please inform the teachers when you drop your child off.
- If your child needs to take medication please fill out a Parent Consent for Administration of Medications and Medication Chart Form. Provide detailed directions for administration of the medication.
- For safety purposes, give your child's medication to his/her teacher. Do not leave it in his/her cubby.
- Information relevant to the health and wellbeing of your child should be shared with your child's teachers. We will make every effort to respect your requests for privacy.

First Aid Policy

A parent will be informed when:

- Their child has any type of head bump or injury, no matter the severity.
- Their child has been injured and cannot be calmed in a reasonable amount of time.
- Their child has a cut and bleeding cannot be stopped in a few minutes or by the pressure from

a band aide.

For all other minor accidents (such as scratches, small bumps), staff will fill out an Accident Report for the parent to read and sign.

Illness Policy

Please refer to Mustard Seed Preschool's COVID-19 Safety Protocol for this policy.

Communication Protocol

We strive for excellent communication with each family. We use email as our primary source of communication. Please let us know if there is a better method for your family.

If you have a question or concern for your child's teachers, please email the following emails:

Roo teachers : roo@mustardseedpreschool.org

Piglet teachers : piglet@mustardseedpreschool.org

Pooh Bear teachers: poohbear@mustardseedpreschool.org

Tigger Teachers : tigger@mustardseedpreschool.org

Kanga Teachers : kanga@mustardseedpreschool.org

For billing questions:

contact Laurie at laurie@berkeleycov.org

For general program/paperwork questions:

contact Linda at office@mustardseedpreschool.org

For specific questions to the Director, contact Candace at

candace@mustardseedpreschool.org

Parent-Teacher Conferences **Note: For 2020-21 school year, conferences will be held via Zoom.

- Mid-year parent-teacher conferences are held between November and January. Year-end conferences are held between March and May. These conferences are optional, but we encourage all parents to take the opportunity to have extended conversations about your child's developmental progress. It also gives you an uninterrupted chance to ask questions and share any concerns you may have about your child.
- In addition to the scheduled conference(s), you may request a conference with your child's teacher at any time during the year.
- If a behavior issue comes up at school, your child's teachers or the Director may require a conference with you. These conferences will be designed to partner with you to resolve any difficulties your child may be experiencing. If a meeting has been scheduled, attendance is mandatory.

Concerns

We strive to address problems quickly and in ways that are respectful to your family's communication and parenting styles.

Concerns from Parents

If you have quick questions or small concerns, please do one of the following:

- Email teachers any time. Each class has their own email account that will go directly to all the classroom teachers.
- Schedule a meeting with your child's teachers.
- Email the director with concerns.

If you are not satisfied with an interaction with the Director, a final and last resort step can be emailing the director's supervisor, Karen Davidson at karen@berkeleycov.org.

Concerns from Teachers

If a teacher has a concern about your child they may take any of the following action:

1. Meet together as a staff to discuss plan of action.
2. Email you outlining their concerns.
3. Schedule a conference with you.
4. Ask the director to talk with you.

We strive to resolve all issues with the families that attend Mustard Seed Preschool. If the problem cannot be resolved, we may ask you to withdraw your child from our program. Please see the dismissal policy in this handbook.

Code of Adult Behavior

Our goal is to provide all children with positive adult role models as we provide high-quality care and service. To do so, we need to set boundaries and expectations that will foster effective school-family relationships. The following behaviors are prohibited from all adult family members, authorized pick-up people, and their guests:

-Excessive special requests that are considered unreasonable and outside the boundaries of our realm of care cannot be accommodated. (Examples of past requests: my child only drinks ice cold water, keep child indoors when cold, keep my child's shoes/clothes clean, keep track of special toy, keep my child away from this child, walk my child to my car, watch unenrolled sibling, etc)

-Behavior that the staff consider to be rude, threatening, demeaning, or disruptive or which interferes with the staff's ability to provide care may result in immediate termination of enrollment.

-Actions from adults that constitute grounds for **immediate termination** include but are not limited to: yelling, swearing, the use of indecent or obscene language, personal attacks, aggressive actions, harassment, threats or infliction of physical and/or mental harm or abuse, sexual advances or abuse, and carrying of weapons of any kind onto the premises.

-Smoking is not allowed on the preschool's premises or at a preschool sponsored activity.

-No illegal or recreational drugs will be allowed at the school. As mandated reporters, we will call the police and Child Protected Services if an adult takes the child off the premises who appears to be under the influence of drugs. Staff have been instructed to stall adult and call alternative authorized persons to pick up child. If there is resistance, the police and CPS will be called.

-Alcoholic beverages will not be allowed at the center. As mandated reporters, we will call the police and Child Protected Services if an intoxicated adult takes the child off the premises. Staff have been instructed to stall adult and call alternative authorized persons to pick up child. If there is resistance, the police and CPS will be called.

-Children and staff shall remain safe from physical or verbal abuse while at the preschool. Any adult who hits, pushes, grabs, spansks, or uses profanity will not be allowed at the school or at any school-sponsored activity.

We reserve the right to terminate families from the program who do not follow the program guidelines.

Child Behavior Policy

At all times, children are expected to be safe and respect others. Each age group has different behavior expectations and what is considered age-appropriate at Mustard Seed (i.e. biting by a 4 year old vs biting by a 2 year old). Each age group has different supports in place to reinforce positive behavior. We strive to establish clear limits, both inside and on the play yard.

Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through sensitivity, consistency, firmness, fairness and follow-through.

Any form of discipline involves specific learning processes.

The following disruptive behaviors are not acceptable:

1. Endangering the health and safety of other children or staff
2. Continuous refusal to follow acceptable rules of behavior
3. Habitual use of profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity
4. Leaving the premises without permission

When a child has not been meeting the behavioral standards of the program, any of the following techniques may be taken:

1. Encouraging positive behavior by continuous reinforcement
2. Alternative behaviors are discussed with child
3. Discussion of the situation, feelings, and alternatives are accomplished through teacher supported/child involved problem solving
4. Removal from problem activity/area
5. Parent(s) will be notified of the problem if persisting
6. A Parent-Teacher and/or Director conference will be held to discuss the issue and an action plan to correct will be formulated.
7. A progress check or follow-up meeting will be held
8. If the problem is not resolved, the teachers will consult the Director to consider the situation and the possibility of removing the child from the program. At this point all documentation, conference notes, and subsequent documentation is to be reviewed by the Director in consultation with you.
9. If the child's behavior poses a significant threat, to the safety of themselves, other children, or staff, the parent will be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately.

10. Extreme or violent behavior may result in immediate termination and all efforts will be made to refer the family to additional community resources.
11. Termination from the program shall be considered in extreme situations after all reasonable resources have been exhausted
12. Termination from program shall be considered if staff and parents are not in agreement with how to manage behavior

Dismissal Policy

We strive to resolve all concerns and behavior issues that arise. However, there are situations where we may make the difficult decision to dismiss a child from the program at Mustard Seed. Reasons for dismissal are at the school's discretion and may include but are not limited to:

- Failure to correct the adult behavior and/or child behavior as stated in the Child Behavior Policy and Adult Code of Conduct Behavior
- A child's need for more specialized or individualized care.
- A child exhibits excessive aggressive or disruptive behavior towards the teacher or other children.
- A parent, any authorized pick up person, or adult guests of a family exhibits demeaning, disrespectful, negative, or disruptive behavior towards or in front of children, teachers, other families, or director.
- One or both parents are unwilling to partner with teachers while receiving constructive feedback regarding their child's behavior.
- One or both parents fail to comply with the school policies.
- One or both parents failure to pay tuition on time.
- One or both Parent repeated tardiness in picking up the child.

General Information

Security

At MSP we take the safety of the children and staff seriously. With this in mind, we always have staff members on site who are Pediatric & Adult First Aid/CPR trained. In addition, staff attend safety training seminars and participate in emergency response drills (earthquake, fire, medical, and stranger-danger lock downs). Here are some things that we have implemented to increase our security measures:

- **Doors/Gate**
 - The front entrance gate is equipped with a key pad lock. The code is changed annually. When necessary, we may need to change a code mid-year.
 - The church entrance is monitored during pick up and drop off times. The door is locked from 10:00am to 12:30pm requiring a buzzer-request for access.
- **Cameras**
 - There are three on-site security cameras located at the entrances to the school campus. These cameras provide monitoring and keep a video recording for up to thirty days.
- **Communication Devices**
 - All classrooms have panic buttons that send alarms to the front office and the preschool office. When activated, the school enters into emergency lockdown mode.
 - Each classroom has an intercom for office-classroom communication.
 - During Covid-19 times, we will implement walkie-talking use between classes.
- **Safety Equipment**
 - Each classroom and hallway is equipped with a fire extinguisher.
 - A fire alarm is located in the downstairs multi-purpose room.
 - Each nap room has a carbon monoxide alarm.

Entrance and Exiting Procedures

Please refer to Mustard Seed Preschool's COVID-19 Safety Protocol for specific drop-off procedures.

- State law and regulations require parents to sign their children in and out daily using their assigned PIN. Sign in/out kiosks are located outside the gate. The kiosks will have a touch-free option.
- If someone unknown to the staff is picking up your child, they will be asked to provide ID to ensure the person is on your child's authorized pick-up list.
- To add a person to the authorized list, email the Director with the person's name and add them to Curacubby account with their own phone number and PIN. If adding an authorized person, please inform the Director.
- All persons picking up children must be 18 years or older.

Parking

When dropping off or picking up your child, please make sure that you only park in legal parking spots. Please be courteous to our neighbors by not parking in or in front of their driveways. Street sweeping occurs on the second Thursday and Friday of each month and parking restrictions apply on those days.

Cubbies and Personal Belongings

Each child has the use of a cubby for personal belongings.

- Label all articles and store everything in a reusable grocery bag or backpack.
- Stock your child's cubby with a set of extra clothes (including socks and shoes) and diapers

Bringing Personal Items to School

Please refer to Mustard Seed Preschool's COVID-19 Safety Protocol for items to bring and leave at school.

Children may not bring personal items such as toys or games to school. These items can cause cross-contamination between home & school. These items may also get lost, broken, or create sharing/ownership problems. Exceptions are made for younger children who are attached to particular

“lovie”. Choose an item that stays at school.

Student Clothing

- Dress your child casually and sensibly. We’d like your child to feel comfortable and ready to “get into” play without worrying about his/her clothes getting dirty.
- Choose clothing that enables your child to exercise self-care during toileting time such as belt-free pants.
- Choose school shoes that are comfortable and easy to put on and take off.

Mustard Seed Lunch Program

At Mustard Seed, we believe children should be nurtured in high quality care. This includes high quality food. Our professionally trained holistic chef, designs a menu that includes several courses and hearty snacks.

In this one-of-a-kind program, the children are introduced to a variety of flavors and foods from around the world. The children eat with their teachers and learn beginning table manners such as setting and clearing up the table.

All foods are cooked without peanut or tree nuts. We strive to accommodate most of the common food allergies. Vegetarian options are offered daily. Please discuss any food allergies with the Director.

School-wide Community Events

During COVID-19, we will not have in-person events. However, we will make every effort to provide on-line opportunities for you to meet other parents and become more involved in our community.

Family Involvement

There are many opportunities for you to be involved at Mustard Seed. The primary ways we need your help are:

- Fundraising
- School Improvement
- Social Gatherings & Support

- Holiday/Seasonal Event Planning
- Technology
- Outreach

Please let us know if any of these areas interest you and you'd like to be involved in one or more.

Birthday Parties

- We know that a child's birthday celebration is often the highlight of the year for him/her. If you would like your child to celebrate her/his birthday at school, make arrangements in advance with your child's teachers.
- Be sure to bring enough goodies for the whole class. Please bring mini-muffins or mini-cupcakes that are store bought.

Field Trips

Unfortunately, we will not be able to participate in Field Trips this year.

Elective Enrichment Classes

We will be unable to offer enrichment classes this school year. We hope to resume in Summer 2021.