

PARENT HANDBOOK 2022/23 School Year

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4454 N Hermitage Ave Chicago IL, 60640

Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30am-5:30pm

Early drop off/Late pick up option available at an additional fee.

Table of Contents:

1. Mission statement
2. Philosophy on Education
3. Teacher – child ratio, qualifications and training
4. Hours of care and Payment terms
5. Late pick-up fee
6. Leaving the program early/ Termination of care
7. Parent-Educator partnership
8. Discipline policy
9. Illness policy
10. Snack and Lunch
11. Supplies to provide our school with
12. Items from home (including Birthday parties)
13. Child pick-up Authorization
14. Pre-enrollment visits
15. Visits and phone calls
16. Field Trips
17. Potty Training
18. Inclement Weather Closures
19. Holiday closures, Provider's sick days and Vacation
20. Record - Keeping
21. Privacy and Confidentiality
22. Medication on Premises
21. Summary

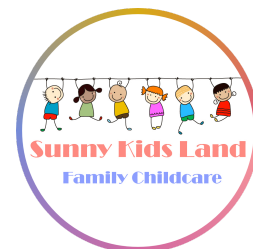
MISSION STATEMENT

Welcome to Sunny Kids Land!

We are committed to providing safe, affordable, high quality child care for children 6 weeks through 5 years of age living in Ravenswood/Lincoln Square and surrounding neighborhoods of Chicago in a home away from home set up. We focus on laughing, learning, reading, playing and discovering. Your child will enjoy enhancing their social, emotional, intellectual, cognitive, and motor skills while building confidence and self-esteem. We want children to learn to love books, rhymes, music, recognize shapes, letters and numbers.

PHILOSOPHY ON EDUCATION

We believe that as early childhood educators are responsible for providing infants, toddlers and young children with positive learning experience. Children have the right to have their needs met and receive the proper education while in the care of their caregivers. Our methodology is centered around these three principles: CREATE, CULTIVATE, CELEBRATE. Early development is a series of firsts. Their first words, first tower block, first mud pie are part of exploring and learning how to create in their environment. In our program creation is woven into the core beliefs and practices of Sunny Kids Land. Development builds upon itself and flourishes best in spaces that are encouraged. Our programs are centered around the idea that given time, encouragement, and gentle course correction children are eager to grow. We strongly believe that positive reinforcement has the best results for a child's confidence. At Sunny Kids Land, all kids are given one-on-one attention in order to recognize big and small achievements since early childhood is a time of constant joy and learning and there is always something to celebrate! The main agenda is to create a community oriented, home based childcare where children will have an opportunity to learn, grow and have fun while parents will enjoy a safe, family like environment, with play based yet structured learning programs for their children.

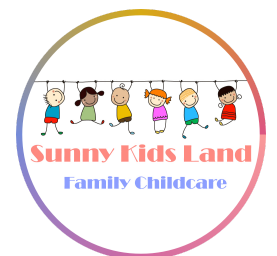


Our experience and love for little ones aims to nurture a relationship with every child and their families, where kids can play, learn and grow in a home away from home.

This small, family childcare can accommodate 12 children and it serves children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age. While maintaining our home daycare license, issued by DCFS, we provide a service with two full-time childcare professionals and additional part-time help as needed. Our school is safe, eco-friendly and hazard free where your children will love a structured, age appropriate, early child development art and play program. Activities will include free play, structured play, large and small motor skill activities, story time, arts and crafts, music, nutrition, cultural activities and outing, preschool math and science, cooking and other educational play based activities. We will encourage discipline, independence, good manners, and personal hygiene. Through a mixture of guided and undirected creative play, the children will learn about colors, shapes, textures, numbers, letters, animals, seasons, feelings, senses, nutrition, personal hygiene, manners, discipline, basic science and math concepts, as well as creative concepts such as “pretend” play, art, music, drama, and dance. We do not believe in pushing any child to learn at an accelerated rate, and will not make a child feel pressured to achieve any developmental milestones. Every child develops its own pace for learning and maturity, to which we will pay close attention in order to bring about the best in each child. By providing the right kind of fun, safe environment, we believe that children will learn at their own appropriate pace. We look forward to working with parents and helping children achieve their potential through encouragement and nurture.

TEACHER-CHILD RATIO, QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING

At Sunny Kids Land, we have a 1-4 child-teacher ratio for all children and strive to keep a small group of 12 children on a daily basis. All teachers are fully qualified, CPR and First Aid certified, experienced in the early childhood education field and are continuously being trained for the in service hours requirements. All staff members have gone through intensive background and health checks as part of the requirements for the preschool licensing.



We pride ourselves on our intimate group setting and small teacher – child ratio. Children need to feel they are getting quality attention from the adults in their lives, and they also benefit from lots of one-on-one care.

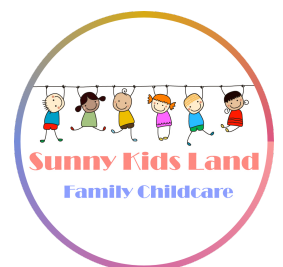
HOURS OF CARE AND PAYMENT TERMS

Our school is open from 7:30a to 5:30p. Early drop off/Late pick up options are available at an additional fee.

Tuition payments are due bi-weekly on the first visit of your child's weekly school schedule. We require a 2 week deposit (amount varies based on your chosen schedule) which is used towards the last two weeks of your child's tuition in case of an early termination of the contract with a **proper notice of one month excluding month December**. Payments can be made by cash, check or preferably electronic transfer.

Payments not received by the end of the week incur a late payment fee of \$20 for each day past due date and will be added to the tuition. Receipts are sent electronically by the following week or when the same clears in the bank. Each family will receive a yearly tax report in order to file their tax deductions. If your child is enrolled part week and is absent due to sickness or vacation, you may not make up days, as all spaces are filled and overcrowding will result.

Please note: Tuition is still due regardless if your child is sick or on vacation, same applies to unprecedented natural events, severe weather conditions or any similar natural causes as well as government or city orders that might mandate us to close our program. Payments have to be submitted BEFORE you leave on a vacation. Tuition will still be due on all federal holidays as well as for 2 weeks of vacation throughout the year that you will be getting a given notice ahead of time.



LATE PICK UP FEE

The preschool is open from 7:30am and closes at 5:30pm.

For Full-Time program drop off starts at 7:30am, with a possibility of early drop off at 7:00am with an additional fee, and pick up is anywhere from 4:00pm to 5:30pm. For Part-Time AM program drop off hours are from 8:00am to 9:00am and pick up is from 12:30pm to 12:45pm.

We encourage Parents/caregivers to plan their late pick ups in advance so we can make arrangements with our staff and plan accordingly. In case of unexpected events that will cause late pick up of your child, please call/text/email your teacher as soon as possible. If your child is not picked up by 12:45pm/5:30pm a \$30 late fee plus \$1 per minute will be charged to compensate the teacher who has to stay behind after hours if you are late.

LEAVING THE PROGRAM EARLY/ TERMINATION OF CARE

Our contract may be terminated with a proper notice by either party, at any time during the school year. According to the contract, proper notice will consist of written or verbal notice to the provider not less than one month (30 days) prior to the child's last day of care. At that time, your deposit will be used towards the last two weeks of tuition. In case you reserved your spot for a new school year in early summer, your deposit is non-refundable until after 30 days of your active childcare. Please note that we do not issue refunds. If at any time we feel that you or your child pose a safety risk to our staff or any of the children in care, or for any reason thereof, we will give you as much notice as possible that your childcare will be terminated. This action will be reserved for extreme cases only, and we will first attempt to resolve any issues with you before resorting to termination of care.



PARENT-EDUCATOR PARTNERSHIP

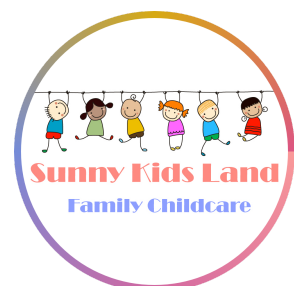
The Lead Educator, Ms. Sonja, in your child's classroom, is in charge of the curriculum, schedule and supervision of all other staff. We track individual children's growth, interests, skills and conceptual development. This data is used to tailor curriculum to each child's learning needs. Feel free to set up an appointment to discuss any concerns or questions with the lead Educator regarding your child's development.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is strongly against our policy to physically discipline children (no spanking, hitting or shaking). We do not believe in threatening, shaming or belittling children for misbehavior. We never withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline, nor do we bribe children with food or any other treat in order to get them to do what we want. Sunny Kids Lands' Educators embrace and uphold a few basic rules and routines and give warnings and reminders (for scheduled transitions as well as for rules of behavior). Gently and consistently, Educators insist on compliance. In general, we try not to say 'no' and 'don't'. Educators make an effort to frame directions in positive language (instead of 'don't run', we say 'walk indoors, please').

For us "discipline" is not based only in regards to wrong behavior. We will aim to discipline children every step of the way. Such as:

- Following clean up routines
- Picking up after themselves before going onto another learn and play activity
- Sharing their toys
- Respecting personal space and keeping hands to themselves
- Using good manners while interacting with their friends, teachers and other adults
- Using good table manners such as sitting properly at the table, using utensils, not talking with their mouth full, saying please and thank you, etc.

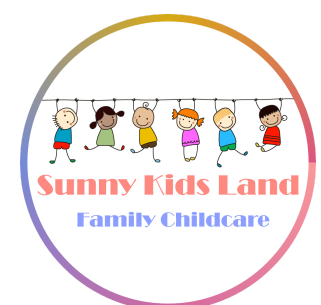


IF YOUR CHILD BECOMES ILL

In order to protect the health of all children in our care, we will call you at work and request that you pick up your child within one hour if he or she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 1 hour
- excessive diarrhea for 2 consecutive diapers or toileting
- vomiting in excess of typical child spit-ups
- conjunctivitis (“pink eye”)
- persistent complaints of ear or stomach pain
- bleeding other than minor cuts and scrapes
- head lice
- suspicious rash in the area of mouth, stomach, hands and feet (hand, foot and mouth)

In the event your child is sent home due to one of the above conditions, he or she will not be allowed to return until they have been symptom free for a full 24 hours without the use of medications, or until accompanied by a signed note from your child’s doctor. This policy is intended to help prevent the unnecessary infection of the other children in our care. Although it may seem inconvenient when your child is sent home, you will appreciate knowing your child’s exposure is minimized when other children become ill. We will not send a child home with a common cold, unless accompanied by a fever or other severe symptoms. However, many times when young children are ill, they may not exhibit “classic” signs of the illness (fever, vomiting, etc.) but will be excessively fussy and/or require constant cuddling and attention. While we believe in providing as much cuddling as desired, if a child is ill and requires our undivided attention this distracts from the ability to provide quality care to all the children in the group. Therefore, if your child reaches a point when he/she requires constant attention, will not play, cries continuously, whines and wants to be helped constantly, etc., then your child will need to stay home. You should expect that any time a new child is introduced to the group, colds and other minor illnesses are likely to occur until everyone’s immune systems have adjusted to the new exposures. Also, advise me whenever a member of your family has an illness so that I can be alert to the possibility of symptoms developing in the childcare group.



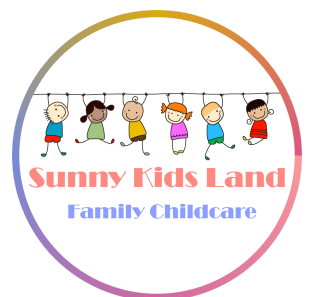
SNACKS AND LUNCH

Sunny Kids Land will provide healthy snacks in the AM and in the PM and Lunch. Snacks are usually ripe fruit in a combination with graham crackers, gold fish, Cheerios, and other typical grains found in the grocery stores. Lunch is delivered daily to our school by a catering company Delicious Unlimited. They follow DCFS's serving requirements, which means your child will be getting five components consisting of: Proteins, Whole grains, Vegetables, Fruits and Milk.

We use our lunchtime together at the Sunny Kids Land as a continuous educational aspect of our program where independence, use of utensils, table manners and self-paced eating with adequate supervision is encouraged. Please make sure to fill out the Food and Allergies form in your Enrollment Forms package and specify if your child has food allergies and/or special diet.

SUPPLIES TO PROVIDE OUR SCHOOL WITH

- **Clothing (appropriate for the season):** If your child had a busy and involved day at school, chances are he or she got at least a little dirty. Please be sure to always send at least 1 change of clothes for your child daily. Dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes. Flexible, closed toe, rubber soled shoes (like sneakers) are the safest.
- **Diapers and Wipes:** Diapers, wipes and any necessary diaper cream must be provided by the family.
- **No spill water bottle**
- **Lovie for a nap (optional).**



ITEMS FROM HOME (INCLUDING BIRTHDAY PARTIES)

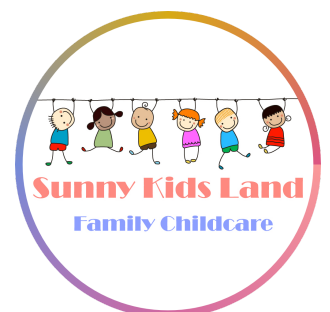
Comfort toys and family photographs can help a child feel more secure away from home. Other toys from home can create problems at school. If you are wondering about what your child can bring to school, and what should stay home, talk to Ms. Sonja.

Talk to us at least two days before if you wish to provide treats to celebrate your child's birthday. That will help you decide what and how much to bring, but here are some guidelines:

- Standards require commercially prepared goods only. This protects children with allergies, and ensures that foods consumed at school are prepared according to local health department specifications.
- No gift bags, please. Keep it simple; a cake, candles and singing are what make the party in the eyes of the child!

CHILD PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION

Children are only permitted to be picked up by those the enrolling parent(s) authorize. These persons are listed on the pick-up card. Keep the list up-to-date. We appreciate it when you supply photographs of these people so we can have them on file. If you need to ask someone to pick up your child who is NOT on the card, please notify us ahead of time, either in person or by telephone. Anyone picking up a child should be prepared to supply photo identification. When dropping off or picking up your child, NEVER leave your child unattended. DO NOT leave children of any age unattended by parked vehicles. All children must be directly supervised (within eyesight) of an adult family member or one of our staff members.

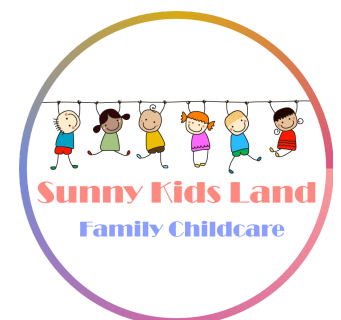


PRE-ENROLLMENT VISITS

We believe that children, teachers, and parents do best when everyone participates in “phase-in” sessions prior to the first day of care. This helps children get used to the teachers and allow parents plenty of time to ask questions. It also helps everyone feel more comfortable with the situation. This benefits the child by allowing us to approach the first day of care with ease, which helps reduce stress for everyone. Children benefit from a stable, long-term care environment. We hope that these visits will help reduce the number of misunderstandings that can inevitably arise, so we can develop a good working relationship and avoid the need for unnecessary termination of care. We will work with you to schedule as many pre-enrollment visits as possible. These visits should only last about an hour or so, depending upon the number of questions you have.

VISITS AND PHONE CALLS DURING REGULAR CARE HOURS

It is not a good idea to drop by during regular school hours. Children often do not really benefit from these visits. Many children will cry or act “clingy” during pick-up and drop-off times, but will quickly adjust and start playing happily once Mom or Dad are out of sight. Having such irregular additional visits often serves only to interrupt the child’s comfortable routine, and can lead to increased distress during regular transition times. Cellphone, text and email correspondence are welcomed throughout the day, but please keep in mind that our priority is attending children at all times, therefore it may be difficult for us to answer the phone or text during regular care hours.

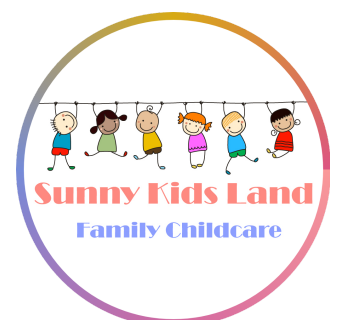


FIELD TRIPS

When completing your initial child registration form, you will have the option to permit your child to accompany the class on regular neighborhood outings, such as walks to the closest nearby park. These walks will replace any outdoor time when the center playground is otherwise not available. Parents will receive notification of any field trips in advance. In most cases, parents are welcome to come along on any formal field trip. We are not able to include children who aren't registered with our center. Note that our educators always bring along cell phones and can be reached at any point during a trip. Travel details for any field trips will be included on separate permission slips.

POTTY TRAINING

The decision of when to assist your child with potty-training is a personal one, and should be made based on your child's signs of emotional and physical readiness. Your child will need to remain in a "Pull-Ups" during preschool hours until he/she has shown the ability to remain accident-free in your home for a period of at least two weeks. This is for several reasons: children often appear to be trained in a (calmer, quieter) home situation, but are not yet able to "listen" to their body's signals when presented with the distractions of a group care environment. Your child must be able to communicate their need to go to the potty while at school before s/he will be able to remain in underpants. The teachers will decide and advise you on this matter once we feel a child has reached that point. We are here to support you during potty training and encourage your child to use the potty.

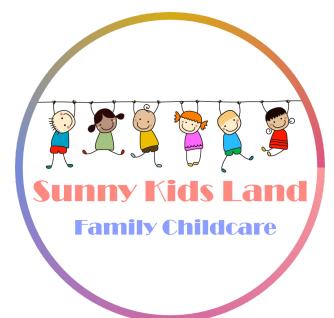


INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSURES

We aim to notify parents at least 24 hours in advance of any anticipated closures due to inclement weather, most notably in the case of a major snow or ice storm. It is possible that in some cases 24 hours notice is not available. All family members will be notified by phone of any school closures as soon as possible. If you do not receive a phone call regarding a weather related closure, assume the school is open as usual.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES, PROVIDER'S SICK-DAYS AND VACATION

Although we will do our very best to be available every business day, it is conceivable that some of us may be sick occasionally. However, I will always try my best to remain open and provide quality care for your children. Please do understand that this is my home and in case of sickness I have to remain here as well as my family. In this case, we will stay isolated. Please do understand that our daily routine might change in order to provide a safe environment. We take 2 weeks paid and 2 weeks unpaid vacation time. 2 weeks unpaid vacation time is rarely used but we want to have that option in case of an emergency or any other reason that might come up. Occasionally, my family will schedule extended personal vacation days not listed in the calendar, during which the school will remain open and fully operational under supervision of our teachers.

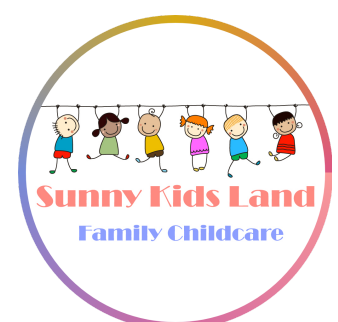


RECORD - KEEPING

It is extremely important to tell us about changes in home address, home phone number, workplace (or school), work (or school) address, work (school) telephone, and cell phone of parents in the home, emergency contacts and all those authorized to pick up the child. For your child's welfare we must be able to reach you (or your alternative emergency contacts), all day, every day. Keep us informed daily of phone number changes. All pertinent information related to your child's health should be updated regularly, including allergies, food restrictions, medical procedures, health conditions, your pediatric health provider's name, address and phone number. Also include your child's health insurance information.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Types of information which are kept confidential and shared only with those who need it to carry out their jobs include: medical history including any current or suspected medical problems; family status; financial information; and other personal issues like family matters or children's behaviors. Access to written records is restricted to administrative staff, state monitors, and the Educators directly responsible for the child. In order for records to be released to any other person, school or agency, written permission is needed from the child's parent. Areas of concern (like problem behavior or other special needs) are discussed with parents in private and in a problem-solving manner, respecting the roles we all can play in helping children feel competent and successfully become part of the group.



MEDICATION ON PREMISES

If your child is on medication, try to arrange the medication schedule so your child does not need the medicine at school. If this is not possible, and if the medication is prescription (or accompanied by a doctor's note), we can administer a dosage here after lunch. If it is medically necessary to administer the medication at another point in the day, we can do so. Please provide us with any medications that your child would need in an emergency (for example, asthma medications, or an EpiPen for allergic reactions). Complete and sign a medication checklist. Under no circumstances may children hold their own medicines, and medications may never be kept in children's cubbies. [Nothing may be in the classroom labeled 'Keep Out of Reach.']

SUMMARY

Children need a safe and enriching environment to grow and thrive. We at Sunny Kids Land will do our best to ensure the safety, comfort, health, and happiness of all children in our care at all times and present them with the opportunity to learn at their own pace through several different child centered activities. Most of all we strive to build a true community and provide exceptional care to your children in a home away from home.

