

ALPHABET SOUP PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK SAN JUAN ISLAND

Alphabet Soup Preschool will play an important role in your child's development. It is essential that parents be informed as to the goals, curriculum, and socialization process which will take place. We hope you will lend us your support by adhering to the following guidelines in this hand book.

Philosophy

Our goal is to create a safe, supportive, and stimulating environment that encourages the social, emotional, physical, and mental development of young children through creative play, while nurturing each child's sense of accomplishment and personal growth. Our daily activities are designed as a foundation for your child's early development. Children learn through interactive play, we provide an environment that is conducive to this goal. Activities include art, science, pre-reading, math skills, dramatic play, music, language and writing development. We stress the utilization of all senses for the most efficient learning experience. We ensure that all children have the opportunity for small and large muscle development as well as individual and group interactions.

Admission Requirements

- * Children will be accepted for care between ages 1-5 years
- * Parents must submit all necessary forms including

Registration

About Your Child

Health History

Current Immunization Record

Emergency Medical Consent

Emergency Contact

Pick-up/drop-off Authorization

- * A one time non-refundable \$50.00 registration fee is due when all forms are submitted.
- * Alphabet Soup Childcare will provide care for any child regardless of color, race, sex, national origin, or religious affiliation.

What to Bring?

- * A change of weather appropriate clothing to be kept in their cubby.
- * Blankets and cots will be provided for nap time. Your child is welcome to bring a special nap time companion from home such as a blanket or stuffed toy.
- * A weeks worth of diapers must be provided for all non-potty trained students.
- * A well balanced nutritious, ready to eat, lunch in a labeled container.
- * Morning and Afternoon snacks are provided. We offer healthful choices that are served family style.

Curriculum

Teaching Practices in the HighScope Toddler Program

Active Learning, trusting, relationships, continuity of care.

Our Toddler Curriculum is based on the principle that children learn best through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. During this active learning process, toddlers are encouraged to discover the world around them by exploring and playing. Learning and development are anchored by long-term, trusting relationships with caregivers, who are close at hand to support the children as they play.

Center arrangement, materials and equipment.

The space and materials in toddler settings are arranged to promote active learning within a safe, comfortable and secure environment. Each center is divided into areas organized around specific kinds of play and care, such as small toy area, book area, movement area, art area and spaces for diapering, meals, and naps. The areas are located around the perimeter of the room and the middle space is used for large-muscle movement.

Daily schedules and care giving routines.

Teachers give children a sense of control over the events of the day by planning a predictable yet flexible daily routine. The routine consists of arrivals and departures, choice times, group times, meals, and outside times. These common daily events are scheduled to accommodate the eating, sleeping, and bodily care cycles of each toddler.

Assessment.

The Toddler Child Observation Record enables teachers to assess each child's progress and plan educational experiences that will encourage further learning.

Teaching Practices in the HighScope Preschool Program

Adult-child interaction.

Teachers and children are active partners in the learning process. This balanced approach to adult-child interaction — also called "intentional teaching" — is critical to the effectiveness of the program. It includes techniques for encouraging learning in specific content areas as well as strategies for helping children resolve conflict.

Classroom arrangement, materials, and equipment.

The space and materials are carefully arranged to promote active learning. The center is divided into interest areas organized around specific kinds of play; for example, block area, house area, small toy area, book area, sand-and-water area, and art area.

Daily routine.

Teachers give preschoolers a sense of control over the events of the day by planning a consistent daily routine that enables the children to anticipate what happens next. Central elements of the preschool daily routine include the small- and large-group times, greeting time, and outside time.

Curriculum Content

Key developmental indicators.

The curriculum is built around teacher- and child-initiated learning activities in five main curriculum content areas: approaches to learning; language, literacy, & communication; social and emotional development; physical development, health, and well-being; and arts and sciences.

Active Learning

What is active participatory learning?

The HighScope educational approach is based on the belief that young children build or “construct” their knowledge of the world — they are “active learners.”

This means learning is not simply a process of adults giving information to children. Rather, children discover things through direct experience with people, objects, events, and ideas. They learn best from pursuing their own interests while being actively supported and challenged by adults.

Teachers are as active and involved as children in the classroom. They thoughtfully provide materials, plan activities, and talk with children in ways that both support and challenge what children are experiencing and thinking. HighScope calls this approach **active participatory learning** — a process in which teachers and children are partners. The goal of promoting active learning is reflected in every other aspect of the curriculum.

Ingredients of active learning

Active learning has five ingredients which must be present:

Materials: Abundant supplies of interesting materials are readily available to children. Materials are appealing to all the senses and are open ended — that is, they lend themselves to being used in a variety of ways to expand children’s experiences and stimulate their thought.

Manipulation: Children handle, examine, combine, and transform materials and ideas. They make discoveries through direct hands-on and “minds-on” contact with these resources.

Choice: Children choose materials and play partners, change and build on their play ideas, and plan activities according to their interests and needs.

Child language and thought: Children describe what they are doing and understanding. They communicate verbally and nonverbally as they think about their actions and modify their thinking to take new learning into account.

Adult scaffolding: “Scaffolding” means adults both support children’s current level of thinking and challenge them. Adults encourage children’s efforts and help them extend or build on their work by talking with them about what they are doing, by joining in their play, and by helping them learn to solve problems that arise.

Teaching Practices

Adult-child interaction is the process of working alongside children and communicating with them both verbally and nonverbally to encourage learning. One of the most important High Scope’s strategies for adult-child interaction is sharing control with children: creating a balanced climate where adults and children are partners in the learning process. Additional strategies include focusing on children’s strengths, forming authentic relationships with children, supporting children’s play, using encouragement instead of praise, and taking a problem-solving approach to conflict. During High Scope training, teachers and caregivers learn a host of specific techniques for carrying out each of these strategies.

The classroom in High Scope settings is divided into interest areas stocked with a stimulating range of materials designed for specific types of play, for example, house area, art area, block area, small toy area, computer area, reading and writing area. Materials are arranged in consistent places and the shelves are tagged with child-friendly labels so that children can get out and put away materials themselves. The classroom’s organization also helps children understand how the world is organized, and concepts like more, less, same, different, large, small, in, out, in front of, etc. The outdoor play area is considered part of the learning environment and is arranged and equipped to support all areas of child development, including cognitive, social, and physical abilities.

The daily routine in High Scope programs is a consistent framework for the day that provides a balanced variety of experiences and learning opportunities. Children engage in both individual and social play, participate in small- and large- group activities, assist with cleanup, socialize during meals, develop self-care skills, and exercise their small and large muscles. The most important segment of the daily routine is the plan-do-review sequence, in which children make choices about what they will do, carry out their ideas, and reflect upon their activities with adults and other children.

Our curriculum is based on the HighScope Model of development and teaching method. All of our program curriculum explanations come directly from HighScope literature and is copy written as such.

Policies

Discrimination/Anti-bias Policy

Alphabet Soup Childcare does not discriminate in admissions, enrollment, or hiring on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability. We provide an environment that is bias free and culturally democratic.

Behavior Philosophy & Policy

We want to insure that every child is safe while in our care. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between children. We believe in a positive, proactive approach to discipline and behavior management. Elements of this belief include minimizing the opportunity for inappropriate behavior by re-directing the child's attention and energy. When behavior problems or conflicts occur each child involved will be given a chance to talk about what happened and produce a solution. For severe incidents where a child's safety is at risk or harm has been done to another, that child may be excluded from the group with an adult until they are in a calm state and ready to rejoin the group. All of our teachers have been trained in "Love & Logic".

Biting Policy

Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and are still developing their language skills. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. When it happens, it's very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Our teachers plan activities and supervise carefully in order for biting not to happen. We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

Child Abuse & Neglect Policy

Washington State law, WAC 388-150-480, requires that any suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation be reported to Child Protective Services immediately.

Drop-off/Pick-up Policy

Your child cannot be picked up by anyone who is not on your pick up authorization form. If there is someone that you would like to add to your list it needs to be documented on your form. You must use your full signature when signing your child in and out. Please note the time your child was dropped off and picked up on the sign in and out sheet. **There will be a \$1.00 charge for every minute past 5:35, payable directly to the teacher that was required to stay past the official pick up time.**

Holidays

We plan to celebrate holidays by exposing the children to a wide variety of cultural beliefs celebrated throughout the world. No one belief will be taught.

Daily Schedule & Activities

Our daily activities are designed as a foundation for your child's early development. Children learn through interactive play, we provide an environment that is conducive to this goal. Activities include art, science, pre-reading, math skills, dramatic play, music, and language and writing development. We stress the utilization of all senses for the most efficient learning experience. We ensure that all children have the opportunity for small and large muscle development as well as individual and group interactions.

Opening>Welcome

8:30

Centers

Art/Math/Science/Writing

8:30-9:30

Morning Snack

Cooking projects

9:30-10:00

Circle Time

Music/Drama/Sharing

10:00-11:00

Outside time

Large muscle development

11:00-12:00

Lunch

12:00-12:30

Story time

12:30-1:00

Quiet Activities/Nap

1:30-3:00

Afternoon Snack

Cooking projects

3:00-3:30

Circle Time

Music/Drama/Sharing

3:30-4:00

Outside play

Large muscle development

4:00-5:00

Clean-up/pick-up

5:00-5:30

Tuition & Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:30 pm

Pre-School/Pre-Kindergarten Program

Year Round

Full Day 8:30-5:30

Pre-School (am) 8:30-11:30 Pre-School (pm) 11:30-5:30

Toddler Program

Year Round

Full Day 8:30-5:30

Half Day (am) 8:30 - 12:30 Half Day (pm) 12:30 - 5:30

Monthly Rates

Full Day	Half Day	Pre-school-AM	Pre-School-PM
5 days/\$885	5 days/\$520	5 days/\$405	5 days/\$675
4 days/\$725	4 days/\$440	4 days/\$335	4 days/\$550
3 days/\$530	3 days/\$315	3 days/\$240	3 days/\$400
2 days/\$365	2 days/\$225	2 days/\$165	2 days/\$275

A one time non-refundable \$50 registration fee is due when all forms are submitted. All payments are due the first day of each month prior to care. Non-payment will result in the termination of care.

Credit for planned absent days are available for children attending FULL TIME only. (M-F 8:30-5:30).

These days will be credited to the next month's bill. There is a 5 day maximum per calendar year. Unplanned absences due to illness or school closures due to snow days will not be credited.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes will take effect at the beginning of the month with at least a two week notice. All schedule changes are subject to availability. We will need a 30 day notice if your child needs to withdraw from the program completely.

Days Closed

We will be closed Thanksgiving day and the Friday after, the week of Christmas-New Years, Fourth of July and the day after, Labor day, & Memorial day.

Tuition fees are a flat rate, reserving your child's space regardless of illness, unplanned absences, days closed or snow days.

Health Care Plan

In case of accident or emergency:

- * Minor injuries will be treated and the child will be allowed to stay for the remainder of the day. All minor injuries will be recorded in the Accident Log book found in the office. Parents will receive an accident report form with the relevant information.
- * In the event of a life threatening emergency, staff will call 911. Parents will be notified immediately. They will be instructed as to the course of action taken. A staff member will remain with the child until a parent or an authorized emergency contact person can assume responsibility.
- * In the event of an illness or injury that is not life threatening, first aid will be given by attending staff. Parents will be notified and we will follow parent instructions as to the best course of action in order to provide medical care.

Health & Illness

It is our goal to keep all of our children as healthy as possible. It is of the utmost importance that parents adhere to our health and illness policies, not only to protect the ill child but also to protect those children that are well. Any child who is experiencing the following symptoms should make arrangements for alternate care until the symptoms have disappeared for at least 24 hours.

FEVER - VOMITING - DIARRHEA - EARACHE

Please let us know if your child will absent due to illness.

Medication

We will only disburse prescription medication if it is in the original container with the physician's instructions for administration on the label. Medication will be placed in the Medication Container in the school's refrigerator. Do not leave medication in lunch boxes, backpacks or anywhere that may be accessible to children. A medication form must be completed indicating time, dosage and duration of medication.

There are certain groups of non-prescription medications that can be administered. Parents must provide all over the counter medications. (we will require a physician's prescription indicating dosage for children under two years of age.)

- * Antihistamines
- * Non-aspirin pain relievers/fever reducers
- * Cough Medicine
- * Decongestants
- * Diaper Ointments

Parents must sign all medication authorization forms, both prescription and non-prescription for medication to be administered.

Acknowledgement & Receipt of Parent Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Alphabet Soup Preschool's Parent Handbook. I understand that it contains important information regarding policies and procedures. I also understand that this Parent Handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise, but is simply a general guide to Alphabet Soup Preschool's policies and procedures.

Child Name

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date
