



Childcare Parent Handbook

Licensed Child Care

Sunrise Montessori School (SMS) is licensed by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. SMS ensures that all programs provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment with quality care for the children we serve.

Our Centre is inspected at least once annually to confirm compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

Welcome to Sunrise Montessori School

Sunrise Montessori School (SMS) is pleased to welcome your family to our Child Care program. In choosing SMS for your child, you have chosen one of the finest and most trusted providers of high quality child care services in the York region.

This handbook will provide you with program information and policies regarding Sunrise Montessori services. If you require further information, please feel free to contact your Centre Supervisor.

Thank you for becoming part of our SMS family.

Program Statement

SMS Child Care programs strive to deliver stimulating learning experiences in a safe environment that enhances children's social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development. This enhancement happens throughout a child's daily routine which encompasses a balance of indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time.

Play is the cornerstone of our curriculum – understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children. Our SMS curriculum takes a child initiated, adult-supported approach that focuses on play-based learning, allowing the child to take the lead and then focusing on his or her interests through intentional observation, interaction and engaged communication. When this approach to learning takes place along with staff's understanding of child development, each child's learning and individual development is supported and as a result the child's competence, capacity and potential are maximized.

We know that children flourish in all areas of development when they are in supportive, caring and responsive relationships with adults whose focus is on the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children. This is the foundation of quality child care.

We strongly believe that Child Care is a shared responsibility between parents and SMS Educators. SMS Educators work together with the parents to exchange information about the child's language, culture, interests and development so that the sum of a child's experience is greater than that which parents or SMS Educators alone could provide.

SMS values parent engagement in the area of both their child's development as well as program development. We provide the following opportunities to ensure that communication and information sharing takes place between parents and SMS Educators: daily open communication, evaluation and family events.

SMS Educators are true professionals who connect with children, ensure safe environments, plan and extend play, scaffold learning, reflect on successes and document the children's play and learning, all of which is the foundation to guiding the Educator's planning. The documented play and learning's are shared regularly with parents.

Our Educators encourage each child's developing sense of self and their ability to see themselves as capable communicators, able to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Our SMS Child Care Educators are carefully chosen and specially trained to ensure quality care. SMS recognizes the importance of continuous professional learning for our SMS Educators. To support the value we place on the importance of continual learning, we provide each child care staff with internal SMS training, as well as the opportunity to attend the various Professional Development Training workshops organized by The Regional Municipality of York. This approach to learning is in alignment with the Ministry of Education's How Does Learning Happen?, a resource developed by the Ministry of Education to promote a shared understanding of what children need and what can be done to help them grow and flourish.

SMS Child Care Objectives

- To provide a warm, caring environment to develop your child's creative, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical skills.
- To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's individual needs, learning and development is supported.
- To provide a safe environment that is part of a natural progression between home and school.
- To ensure that your child is cared for and is supervised at all times.
- To employ staff who are experienced and well trained to provide the best care and enrichment for your child.
- To provide a communication system that ensures parent-staff contact throughout the program year.

SMS Approach to Curriculum Planning

Our quality SMS Child Care programs create rich learning environments for children to flourish and reach their potential. This approach to learning is in alignment with the Ministry of Education's How Does Learning Happen?, a resource developed by the Ministry of Education to promote a shared understanding of what children need and what can be done to help them grow and flourish.

SMS Learn Through Play – Infant, Toddlers, Pre-School

We believe that SMS Learn Through Play incorporates the best approach to ensure a child's continued enthusiasm and capacity for life-long learning. Our infant, toddler and preschool staff are trained in the research-based SMS Learn Through Play curriculum, which provides an understanding of how play provides the foundation for learning to read and write, for learning mathematics, science, technology, and a foundation for the arts. SMS Learn Through Play also sets the stage for your child to successfully transition to school and the early years

SMS Ages of Care

SMS Child Care Centre is licensed for children between 3 months and four years of age specifically infant, toddler and pre-school. Pre-school Children must be toilet trained, unless there is a medical or diagnosed condition.

SMS also has a private school entity that offers the Junior Kindergarten, Senior Kindergarten and the Elementary Program

SMS Admission Priority

Parents need to fill up the Registration Form, the Registration Package and attach the latest Immunization form and the emergency contact form to ensure the safety and security of your child.

Families with Infant/toddlers/pre-school are admitted to Sunrise Montessori School Infant/Toddler/Pre-school program on a first come first serve basis. Priority is given as follows:

- 1) Siblings of children already attending any of the school's programs
- 2) Infant/Toddler/Pre-school of staff of Sunrise Montessori School
- 3) The public community

Prior to acceptance, as required by the York Region Health Department, parents of each child must have an up to date record of the child's health immunizations.

Arrival, Departure, Custody and Release

To ensure the safety and security of your child while attending SMS Child Care, we require that:

- Drop off and pick up takes place in your child's classroom.
- Each classroom has a sign-in and sign-out sheet as you enter the classroom. Teachers will check, initial and indicate the time of drop off or pick up daily.
- Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from our preschool and infant & toddler programs.
- Parents are responsible to dress and undress their child upon arrival and departure.
- Parents must make alternate arrangements for pick up if they cannot pick their child up by 6:30 pm. Please notify the school if you are running late. Children who are picked-up more than 15 minutes late will join our aftercare program and be charged accordingly. If you are delayed and will not be able to pick up your child by the close of the school day, please call us at (905) 477-2833 to advise us of the situation. Children picked up after 6:30 PM - 6:45 PM will be charged a \$5.00 late pickup charge and an additional charge of \$1.00 per minute after 6.45 p.m.
- Your child's safety is our first concern. Children will only be released to those persons listed on your "Child's Enrollment Information Form" who have photo identification. Please understand, this policy is meant to ensure the safety and security of your child.
- If your child is to be picked up from the school by anyone other than those listed, a written note from the parent/guardian must accompany him/her. If an emergency situation arises requiring alternate pick-up after your child is already in school, please call the front desk and leave a message for the teacher detailing the alternate plans. Photo identification will be required.
- Please notify the director in writing if there is a guardian conflict. If we do not receive such notification, we will assume no conflict exists and the child will be released to either parent.
- Where there are child custody arrangements in place, SMS shall not deny a parent access to their child unless the centre has a copy of the original legal document outlining the specific custody arrangements including days and timeframes.
- If a staff perceives a parent or alternate pick up person to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when arriving to pick up their child, the staff will ensure the safety of the child by requesting the parent arrange an alternate form of transportation.

Hours of Operation, PA Days, Parent Teacher Interview Days

SMS Child Care Centre is open Monday to Friday, 7:15am to 6:30 pm except statutory holidays and designated school holidays. Please refer to the School Year calendar that list all the school holidays, PA days and Parent Teacher Interview Days. Alternate child care is provided for children who are under the Subsidy program.

Field Trips

During the year, our Preschool Programs may take trips to special places of interest. SMS will send a notice home in advance of the excursion informing you of the destination, time, and date. A minimal charge may be required to cover transportation and entrance fees. You are always welcome to join us.

Inclement Weather & Emergency Closures

SMS will not operate and school is closed due to inclement weather or another emergency. Parents in both Infant, Toddler and Preschool are responsible for determining if the child care centre/ school is closed because of inclement weather or unusual circumstances. For information on centre closures please refer to SMS website. Regular daily fees will apply. If possible, notification of school closings will be made by e-mail or telephone.

Withdrawal Policy

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from any of the programs must provide written notice /letter to the Principal sixty (60) days before their intended withdrawal date. Withdrawals with or without notice, the sudden departures are treated the same and are required to pay full fees for the two months following the date of notification/departure/ withdrawal.

Parents may be asked to withdraw their child/children from the school based upon the following:

- Non-payment of tuition fees
- The child/children behaviour is unacceptable.

Caring, Qualified Staff

Our staff are carefully chosen and have appropriate educational background and experience to ensure quality care and understanding of child development. They have personal qualities of friendliness, warmth, and the ability to relate openly to children and adults. Our staff are dedicated to the needs of the children, the concerns of the parents and the high expectations of SMS.

All SMS Child Care staff complete a Criminal Reference Check with a Vulnerable Sector Search and hold current certification in First Aid and CPR. Our staff who hold Early Childhood Education diplomas are Registered Members of the College of Early Childhood Educators.

Our Child Care staff participate in ongoing professional development opportunities and internal curriculum training, among others. We continue to strive for excellence in all our programs, and regular evaluation of staff and programming ensures ongoing high quality care for your children.

Student and Volunteer Supervision

SMS promotes opportunities for personal growth, community involvement and volunteerism. Students and volunteers are welcome in our licensed child care centre, and they participate in an orientation and review of relevant policies and procedures. All adult volunteers complete a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector Search through York Regional Police services. Students and volunteers do not have unsupervised access to the children in the centre that is they are not alone with a child. They are paired with and mentored by a SMS staff member.

Discipline

Our Early Learning Programs use a positive approach to discipline. We believe in protecting the rights and privileges of the children while fostering a nurturing and warm environment. We use techniques such as redirection and reinforcing of positive behaviors with encouragement. We do not permit any physical or verbal abuse of any kind, nor is food or playground time ever withheld from children.

Prohibited Practices

Under no circumstance will corporal punishment be used for behaviour management . As well, the following control techniques are not tolerated:

Inappropriate Verbal Practices:

• humiliation • threatening • swearing • harassment • yelling • sarcasm • discussion of a child within any child's hearing

Lack of Supervision Including:

• diverted attention for frequent or extended periods • leaving children unsupervised, child unaccounted for

Harsh Discipline of any kind: • deprivation of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding • confinement, either by locking exits of a room or use of a lockable structure

Serious Occurrences

When the Child Care Centre has filed a serious occurrence report, the Serious Occurrence Notification Form is posted within 24 hours of the occurrence. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form is posted for a minimum of 10 business days. If the form is updated with additional information such as additional actions taken by the operator, the form remains posted for 10 days from the date of the update. If the serious occurrence is an allegation of abuse against a staff, student or volunteer or regarding an unsubstantiated complaint, the notification form is posted once the investigation has been completed.

Accident/Incident Reports

Communication about their child's well-being is important to parents. Parents will be informed regarding any incidents affecting their child's health, safety or well-being. If a child is injured, parents will be provided a copy of the Accident/ Incident Report.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays may be celebrated in school with a special snack provided by the school. Please do not send candy as it will not be distributed to the class.

Change of Clothing

Accidents and spills will happen so please send a complete, labeled change of clothes in a labeled, zippered plastic bag to keep in the classroom. This includes shoes, socks, and underwear. Please remember to change this set of clothing as the seasons change and your child grows.

Changes in Student Information

Any changes in home or work addresses and telephone numbers, must be given to the business office or front desk as soon as possible. Please ask the business office for the appropriate forms to complete.

Comfort Toys

Children may bring "cuddlies" (blankets, stuffed animals, and dolls) to comfort them and for during naptime. We ask that toys remain at home so that they do not get broken or lost.

Dress

Children's play is their work! Remember they may get messy, so please dress them appropriately. For safety reasons, children should wear closed-toed shoes and socks. Sandals or water shoes must be worn during time spent in our fountain. Flip-flops are appropriate for indoor school activities.

Email

Much communication with parents now takes place via email. Newsletters from teachers, notification of school activities or closures, and invitations to special events are all distributed electronically. Please ensure that we are provided with a current email address.

Holiday Celebrations

The Family Center Preschool, toddler and Infant Program are non-sectarian learning environments that recognize the spirit of the holidays at various times during the year. Our curriculum offers multifaceted opportunities for children to experience the multi-cultural diversity of our community. Decorations, songs, and the holiday flavor will be demonstrated throughout the school year and will reflect a variety of traditions. The many holidays which occur throughout the school year present a wonderful learning opportunity for our children.

Health and Illness/Wellness Policy

The health and well-being of your child and all the children and staff at Sunrise Montessori School is important to us. In order to ensure that a healthy environment is created and maintained, we need your help. If your child has a rash, diarrhea, fever, and/or is vomiting, have undiagnosed rash/skin condition, communicable disease, obviously infected discharge, lethargy and irritability and are not able to participate in program, persistent pain, cough please do not send him/her to school. A persistent, green, runny nose may indicate infection and may require a doctor's note to return to class. On occasion we may need to send your child home (for example, if he or she has a temperature of 100°F or more). If your child is sent home, we require that you keep him or her home for 24 hours. If you present the Director with a doctor's note stating that the child is well enough to attend school and is not contagious, an exception may be made.

A receiving staff member who notices any of these symptoms when a child arrives will ask that the child be taken home or to a doctor for a note confirming that the child is healthy and not infectious.

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 stipulates that prior to admission, each child must be immunized according to the local medical officer of health. Therefore, we require that a copy of the child's immunization record, or a letter of exemption, and a medical information sheet be completed and signed by the parent. These must be submitted at the time of admission and should be updated annually.

All children play outside each day. If your child is not well enough to play outside, please keep him/her at home.

For our part, Sunrise Montessori School Program will also ensure the wellness of all children and staff by instituting proper handwashing procedures throughout the day, by sanitizing toys and equipment on a regular basis, and by providing children with opportunities to engage in healthy physical activities such as outdoor play. Curriculum activities designed to teach children about a healthy lifestyle will also be implemented during the school year.

Keeping children and staff healthy and well takes the determined effort of us all. If you have suggestions for improving our program, please do not hesitate to share.

Medication

Children who have a doctor's prescription for medication may have it administered by staff, providing parents submit a written "Authorization for Medication" form. Forms may be obtained from your child's teacher. This form must be updated with each change of medication.

Prescriptions must be brought to school by the parent in the pharmacy bottle with the child's name, date, doctor's name, dosages and times to be given and instructions for storage, and administration of the drug and must be a current prescription. Over the counter medications will not be given to children unless accompanied by a doctor's recommendation/note. Please remember that a form is required for the application of sunscreen and diaper cream to your child.

Nutrition and Allergies

Infant, Toddler and Preschool program provide breakfast, morning and afternoon snack and a hot, nutritious lunch. All meals follow Canada's Food Guide and are monitored by government standards. We encourage each child to try each type of food. Our goal is to help children develop a taste for a variety of foods.

Our Child Care Centre follows the SMS Anaphylaxis Protocol to ensure the safety of all children with allergies in our programs. Upon registration, parents of children with a risk of an anaphylactic response will complete an Anaphylaxis Action Plan. SMS is a peanut-free environment, and due to severe allergies and Public Health requirements, any outside food brought into your child's centre must comply with your centre's allergy restrictions, and special treats to be shared must include the manufacturer's list of ingredients.

Infant under 1 year old are permitted to bring their own food in compliance with the "peanut free" policy

Sun Safety

All children go outside every day, weather permitting, and our staff promotes sun safety. All children should have hats to wear outdoors, as well as sunscreen in warmer weather. Parents must fill out a Sunscreen Application form in order for it to be applied.

Rest Period

It is a requirement that all children attending a licensed Preschool Centre have a rest period each day. It is not necessary for your child to sleep, but he/she will be encouraged to rest quietly on his/her cot during this time. A child-sized blanket from home, labeled with your child's name, is required. Children may also bring a soft comfort item from home for rest time only.

Parking

At Sunrise Montessori School, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our children and families. When navigating the parking lot, parents are requested to be watchful.

Observe traffic laws:

The speed limit in our parking lots is 20 mph. Please drive slowly. Please do not drive against the traffic. Laws are in full effect for handicapped spaces. Violators are subject to a fine by the York Region Police Department. Come to a complete stop at stop signs and yield to traffic with right-of-way.

In an effort to further increase and maintain safety: Do not use your cell phone or other devices when driving in our parking lot. Respect the one-way traffic flow in operation during peak drop off and pick up times.

This system has been implemented to prevent long lines of traffic. Pay close attention to pedestrians and remember that young children can be very unpredictable and run into the path of traffic. Keep a close watch on your child as you

unload your car and always hold your child's hand when walking through the parking lot. Do not move your vehicle for the duration of a building evacuation.

During an evacuation everyone must leave the building and walk through the parking lot to designated assembly points. It is therefore very important that vehicles remain static during this time. Do not move your vehicle until all children and adults have safely returned to the building. Your car should remain in park. Never leave children or valuables unattended in your vehicle, even for short periods of time.

Playground

Please help us keep our play spaces safe and clean by abiding by these rules. Our playground is closed when the Sunrise Montessori School is not in session.

- Please be sure your child wears shoes at all times
- The equipment is wonderful, durable and safe; however, it is to be used by children ONLY.
- Children may not be on the playground unsupervised.
- Smoking is not permitted on our playground.

Safe Items from Home

Sunrise Montessori School Childcare Program strives to keep children safe and healthy at all times. We constantly monitor our classrooms to make sure that the toys, materials, and equipment available are appropriate for young children. To maintain this high standard of care, we appreciate your support in ensuring that all items brought from home are safe for use with young children. No small items which can cause a choking hazard should be sent to school. If you are uncertain about any particular item, you can check with an administrator to see if it conforms to safety standards.

Parental Involvement & Parents as Leaders (Sunrise Parent Association -SPA)

Our Parents are our most valuable resource in the early education of our children. SPA is our parent support organization. SPA offer parents an opportunity to extend their involvement with our school.

Parent Responsibilities

Licensing regulations require us to maintain our files by keeping them accurate and up to date. Please be sure that all required forms for your child are properly submitted and maintained. Failure to comply will force us to prohibit your child's attendance until all records are complete.

Please read the newsletters and flyers your child brings home or which are emailed to you. They will inform you of classroom activities, items your child will need for school, and provide you with information that you and your child can talk about.

Parent Communication

Frequent and open communication between our school and parents is a vital component of our program. This information is usually conveyed verbally, but at times it can be in writing. In an effort to be sensitive to the needs of our environment, we have begun, at times, to communicate with you via an online initiative.

Family Event

You are encouraged to visit and participate in our programs and special events, such as Open Houses, Family Social Events whenever possible. Please refer to the SMS website for information.

Late Fees and Returned Cheques

There is a \$30.00 charge for handling returned cheques. If scheduled payments are more than 30 days in arrears, the school may not release academic records or may not permit the student to attend class.

Fees and Absenteeism

If your child is absent from school due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances, please notify your child's teacher. Any communicable diseases, i.e. chicken pox, fifth's disease, ringworm, head lice must be reported to the program director.

Child Care daily fees are payable on a monthly basis through post dated cheques or pre-authorized payment. You may choose your payments to be withdrawn from your account on the first day of the month for pre-authorized payment option. Your fee payments are based on your child's registration. Payments returned to SMS from your bank will be subject to a \$30 charge. If an adjustment on your payment is required, it is reflected in the following month, unless you notify your supervisor by the 20th of the previous month.

Full fees, based on registration, will be charged for statutory holidays, PA Days, school holidays (winter break and spring break) and any days which children miss due to illness or absence.

Parents with accounts past due will be notified by letter; care will be terminated unless payment arrangements are met successfully. Outstanding accounts will be referred to the credit bureau.

Financial Assistance

If you require fee subsidy, please contact the Childcare Fees Assistance at York Region. Speak with your Centre Supervisor for more information.

Tax Receipts

Child Care fees are tax deductible. A final statement will be available to each family by the end of February for income tax purposes

Withdrawal Policy

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from any of the programs must provide written notice /letter to the Principal sixty (60) days before their intended withdrawal date. Withdrawals with or without notice, the sudden departures are treated the same and are required to pay full fees for the two months following the date of notification/departure/withdrawal.

Parents may be asked to withdraw their child/children from the school based upon the following:

- Non-payment of tuition fees
- The child/children behaviour is unacceptable.

1. Parent Signature Form

Parent/Guardian Name : _____

Child's Name : _____

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Sunrise Montessori School Program Parent Handbook and will abide by the policies and procedures contained within it.

Parent/Guardian Signature : _____

Date : _____