



# Parent Handbook

2016-2017

## Quick Reference Contact Info

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# Table of Contents

<b>WELCOME</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Purpose of this Handbook.....	1
<b>ROSS RECREATION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Non-Discrimination Policy .....	1
Admission/Registration.....	1
Toilet Training Policy .....	1
Payment Policy.....	2
Withdrawal Procedure .....	3
<b>THE ROSS PRESCHOOL</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Mission Statement.....	4
Philosophy .....	4
Goals .....	5
Benefits for the Children: .....	6
Benefits for the Parents: .....	6
Curriculum.....	7
Program Description.....	7
Methods .....	8
Behavior Management.....	9
Discipline Strategies.....	9
Conflict Resolution.....	10
How to help your child prepare for school .....	10
Separation.....	10
Arrival and Departure from the Classroom .....	11
Sign in/out & Late Fees.....	12
School Hours/Calendar .....	13
Daily Schedule .....	13
Daily Program Routine and Schedules.....	14
Attendance and Illness .....	15
Lice Policy .....	17
Prevention of Illness .....	17
Medication Dispensation .....	17
Allergies/Allergic Reactions Policy .....	17
Emergency Policy/Procedure .....	18
Disaster Plan .....	19
Unexpected School Closing.....	20
Food Preparation .....	20
Clothing.....	21
Children's Personal Belongings.....	21
<b>Family Involvement and Communication</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Open Door Policy .....	22
Parent Communication .....	22
Conferences.....	22
Back To School Night.....	22
Child Abuse Reporting.....	22
Grievance Procedure.....	23

<b>Birthdays and Special Events .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Birthday Parties .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Parents' Rights .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Children's Personal Rights .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Rights of the Licensing Agency.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>POEMS FOR PARENTS .....</b>	<b>27</b>

## WELCOME

We welcome you to The Ross Preschool. We provide quality early childhood and education to over many families within the Ross Valley. We hope you enjoy your time with us, and look forward to working with you and your child. We are excited to watch your child grow!

### Purpose of this Handbook

Please use this handbook to familiarize yourself with your child's care, The Ross Preschool's procedures and policies, which help our program function effectively and with quality. *It is your responsibility to read and follow the policies outlined and to ask for help or explanation if needed.*

The purpose of this handbook is to answer most questions parents will have regarding our preschool. It is an important booklet that should be kept in a place for ready reference.

## ROSS RECREATION

Ross Recreation is a department of the town of Ross whose rules and policies are under the auspices of the Ross Recreation manager and the Town of Ross Manager.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

The Preschool Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, or sexual preference.

### Admission/Registration

The Ross Preschool enrollment is taken on a first come, first serve basis. Priority is given to returning students and siblings. In an attempt to balance the class, gender and age of the child is taken into consideration. You may put your child on our waiting list by filling out an application. We require a \$750.00 fee as a deposit to insure your child's space for the school year. The deposit fee is non-refundable. Receipt of this payment is due within two weeks after the date on your contract; otherwise your child's space will be forfeited. We accept children between the ages of 3 years and 5 years. Children must be fully potty-trained.

### Toilet Training Policy

We realize that toilet training takes several months to master. Please make sure your child has the self-help skills needed to toilet him/herself. At The Ross

Preschool, we consider children toilet trained when children are able to urinate and have a bowel movement consistently on the toilet.

We do not do toilet training at the school. All children, regardless of their age, are expected to be fully toilet trained upon their start date. If repeated accidents occur, children will be asked to stay at home for at least two weeks, or until the situation is resolved.

3. Prior to school admittance, the following forms must be current and on file with the office:

- Admission Agreement
- Authorized Pick-up List
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- CA Immunization Card & Health Report
- Directory Information
- Emergency Form
- Identification & Emergency Information
- Parents' Report - Pre-Admission Health History
- Parents' Rights Form
- Permission Slips - Permission to Photograph
- Personal Rights Form
- Physician's Report

4. State of California regulations require that all children have a Tuberculin test and immunization treatment against Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, and Measles. Exception is permitted when a physician recommends against immunization on medical grounds or personal beliefs. The form needs to be signed by your doctor and on file before admittance.

5. By law, children with delinquent or outdated forms will be excluded from school until such matters have been corrected.

6. Parents are responsible for informing the office and the teachers of the The Ross Preschool program as to changes of address, telephone, identification, and emergency information, and/or other pertinent facts.

## **Payment Policy**

1. The balance of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester fee is due and payable by July 1st. If payment has not been received by the first day of school, the child will not be able to attend class until payment is received. A late fee of \$100 will be assessed after the due date has passed.

2. In case of mitigating financial circumstances, please contact the Ross Recreation office prior to the beginning of each semester.
3. Rates are determined annually. New rates are in effect at the beginning of the school year and remain so for the duration of the year. Should an unforeseen rate change be necessary, 30 days notice shall be given.
4. Parents are responsible for paying fees on checks returned for insufficient funds. (Check return fee \$30)

## **Withdrawal Procedure**

1. Thirty days written notification must be given for a child's withdrawal from the school. Prior to December 15th parents are responsible for payment of the first semester tuition, unless the opening can be filled. After December 15th, parents are responsible for payments of the full year tuition unless the opening can be filled.
2. Refunds will be considered only when the space of the withdrawing student has been filled. If a refund check is in order parents will be charged for the time the child has attended, plus one month's tuition after your space has been filled. A refund check will be mailed to the parent.
3. A FULL SEMESTER'S CLASS FEE WILL BE CHARGED IF AT LEAST TWO WEEKS NOTIFICATION IS NOT GIVEN AND YOUR SPACE HAS NOT BEEN FILLED.
4. Once a child has been withdrawn, should the parents wish him/her to re-enter, the child will be placed on the waiting list and must wait his/her turn.
5. Every effort will be made to give adequate professional education to every child. However, the welfare and safety of all children in the school receive first priority. If, in the opinion of the Head Teacher, a child can be better provided for in another setting, or his safety or the safety of others is questionable, every effort will be made to help the family find help in another service. The Ross Recreation Department will reserve the right to ask a family to withdraw a child if the Head Teacher deems this truly necessary. If exclusion of a child becomes necessary, two week's written notice will be given to the parents.
6. If The Ross Preschool requests withdrawal of any parent and child for failure to adhere to school rules, two weeks written notice will be given.

## THE ROSS PRESCHOOL

The Ross Preschool is a developmental, play-based preschool operated by the Ross Recreation Department. We have provided similar programs to Ross residents and the greater community for over 30 years. We focus on developing each child's self-confidence, providing opportunities for socialization, and preparing children for Kindergarten. Our school offers a loving, safe, welcoming environment with individual attention to each student, which is made possible by our small class size and a low student-to-teacher ratio.

### Mission Statement

Our purpose is to offer a nurturing environment in which your child is exposed to the community and world around him. Our curriculum uses a hands-on, play-based, creative and developmental approach.

**For the children**, we strive to maintain a safe, healthy and nurturing environment where the developmental needs of the children are addressed.

**For the parents**, it is our goal to serve as a resource for support and education in the parent community.

### Philosophy

The Ross Preschool is a rich environment that promotes active exploration in all areas of a child's development: emotional, social, intellectual and physical.

Childhood is a magical time of growth and curiosity. Children should be provided a safe and nurturing environment in which all feel respected, appreciated and cherished. It is important for children to have a positive and stimulating introduction to school, as this is the foundation for their future. In a supportive environment, children develop a positive self-esteem, learn self-control and gain independence and confidence. They experience pride and accomplishment, successes and failures, and learn to master their feelings.

Children learn through play. In a play-based program, children are given an opportunity to develop their problem solving, negotiating and communicating skills at

their own pace. They experience friendships, learn techniques for getting along with others and play cooperatively. A child's natural curiosity to learn about the world around them is promoted through playful expression and freedom of activity. Teachers facilitate learning by giving children opportunities to make choices about which activities and materials they will use and explore. Opportunities are provided for the children's imaginations to expand.

Children should be engaged in the learning process. It is an interactive relationship between the teachers and the students. Teachers stimulate and extend knowledge by asking questions and making suggestions. Children are invited to observe, discover, organize, inquire, and anticipate results. Learning activities are interesting, concrete, real and relevant. Emphasis is placed on working independently, following directions, learning to participate cooperatively in a small group and acquiring readiness skills. Extensive materials support our multi-faceted curriculum, and our teachers work together to plan monthly calendars full of innovative projects.

With the understanding that young children are energetic and ever-moving, a child's physical development is supported through many ways. A wide variety of equipment and activities promote the development of motor skills in and out of the classroom.

Teachers set an example by modeling positive and respectful relationships with each other, the children, the parents and the community. Similar goals and expectations are shared among the staff. On-going collaboration and communication promote a positive, successful relationship.

School is a warm extension of the home. The role of parents as primary caregivers is valued and respected. An environment of open communication is fostered and ample opportunities are given for parents to voice their expectations and set goals for their child's school experience. We are a team deeply involved and committed to the children.

## **Goals**

Our goals are to help facilitate the development of creative thinkers, problem solvers, self-confident & independent beings who will grow up to be caring, happy & productive adults.

### **Our program is characterized by the following aspirations:**

- Provide a fun place where children can develop and learn at their own pace.
- Expand the emotional, intellectual, and physical abilities of children through play-based exploration and experimentation.

- Help children build confidence in their own ability to make choices and set sensible limits for themselves.
- Guide children from dependence on adult input toward confidence in their own abilities.
- Maintain a safe environment where the emotional and physical well-being of each child is paramount.
- Develop mutual respect and cooperation among children, participating parents, and teachers.
- Maintain a high regard for the creative thinking process of each child.
- Respect the cultural richness of the school and encourage parents and children to share their own special family traditions.
- Integrate literacy and early math activities throughout the curriculum.
- Promote friendship, fantasy, laughter, and encourage creativity in their play.

### **Benefits for the Children:**

- Make friends.
- Grow more independent and capable.
- Explore and satisfy natural curiosity.
- Experience learning as a joyful process.
- Develop physical skills with a wide variety of toys and equipment.
- Learn to share and take turns.
- Build self-esteem.
- Develop respect for the school environment.

### **Benefits for the Parents:**

- Gain confidence in the parent-teacher role (as a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher).
- Look at role of "parents as teacher" as positive opportunities for self-growth.
- See your child as a unique and capable individual.
- Be a part of a supportive and caring parent community.

**We reach our goals by:**

- Providing a program that is developmentally appropriate, where children are encouraged to learn according to their individual needs and interests.
- Providing many experiences, materials, opportunities, and time for children to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
- Providing a safe and nurturing environment where children explore, experiment, manipulate, and use their natural curiosity to solve problems and learn about the world around them.
- Providing experiences and activities that foster a child's self-esteem, self-trust, and positive feelings toward learning.
- Providing a learning experience that meets the needs of both the children and their parents.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop independence, and a desire to be self-motivated, responsible learners.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop their skills in problem solving, negotiations, social interaction & independence.

## **Curriculum**

Our Curriculum is designed to address the developmental needs of children aged 3-5 years. Children are engaged in reading readiness and language development (e.g. letters of the week, phonics), gross motor skills (e.g. exercise and playground time), fine motor activities (e.g. arts and crafts), social skills (e.g. circle time and "sharing" time to encourage children to speak in front of peers), beginning math skills (e.g. sorting, shapes and games), music, dramatic play, cooking, science and nature, seasonal and holiday activities and field trips. Our classroom environment is rich in materials to support this multi-faceted curriculum, and our teachers work together to plan monthly calendars full of innovative projects.

## **Program Description**

The program is designed to allow children to learn through exploring and experiencing the world around them. Children are exposed to many activities that encourage them to use their developing language skills as well as their curiosity and imaginations. Activities are introduced that teach important socialization skills such as sharing, following directions and self-control.

Since play is a child's work, our class is structured to let children truly enjoy learning wide variety of activities & encourage them to develop self-confidence, self-direction and a positive feeling toward learning.

Exciting opportunities and challenges will be offered to meet the needs of children who will be entering Kindergarten. They will continue to build on their socialization skills and the teachers will help students develop confidence in the areas of reading and math readiness, as well as language development.

The Ross Preschool Pre-K program is for students who will be moving on to Kindergarten in the fall of the following school year. The classroom is a more structured environment, set up to provide the students with a non-stressful and enriched experience. The curriculum is play based and child-centered. Our approach ensures that children are exposed to a diverse array of learning activities and that they thrive in all areas of child development, creative thinking, complex problem solving, empathetic collaboration, curious investigation, and astute decision making. During this year of preschool, each child will be given the opportunity to expand the tools that they have into ones that they will need for entering Kindergarten, and lifelong learning.

## **Methods**

The Ross Preschool's Curriculum is based upon the belief that young children learn best in a safe, nurturing environment that provides opportunities for children to learn and develop through activities that are age and individually appropriate. The program provides a rich environment that promotes children's' active exploration in all areas of development: physical, emotional, linguistic, aesthetic, and cognitive. The curriculum is integrated into the classroom through a thematic approach whereby learning activities are concrete, real, and relevant.

Learning is an interactive process between the teachers and the children. Teachers prepare the environment and plan activities that are appropriate for the age span of the children within the group and consider the different needs, interests, and developmental levels of individual children. Teachers facilitate learning by giving children opportunities to make choices about which activities and materials they will use. Teachers stimulate and extend knowledge by asking questions and making suggestions. Language development and communication are emphasized.

Children have opportunities to play and work with other children, make choices and encounter consequences, and negotiate social conflicts using appropriate language. Teachers respond quickly to each child's needs. Teachers model respect, acceptance and empathy. Teachers support each child's accomplishments by providing positive verbal encouragement.

## **Behavior Management**

An important aspect of learning in early childhood is how to interact appropriately with others, control one's own behavior, and understand social rules. As children learn about the world and acquire social interaction skills (such as how to approach others and join play), they may exhibit "mistaken behavior"—trying a strategy that's not suitable; they may not be intending to "misbehave." At other times, children may act inappropriately to gain attention or for other reasons. In any case, we will not allow a child's behavior to continue if it appears that a child will hurt him/her self or someone else, or that property will be damaged. We believe that children learn acceptable behaviors by modeling the actions of those around them, including parents, teachers and other children.

We expect our teachers to implement this policy with techniques that help children learn positive strategies for interaction and problem-solving, understand the perspectives of others and why his behavior is not acceptable, and to gain self-control. Discipline used by the The Ross Preschool teachers includes a variety of constructive techniques such as redirecting children to other activities, counseling the child in a calm but firm voice about the situation, offering positive alternatives for behavior, or gently separating the child from the group for a brief period of time. Physical punishment and humiliation are never permitted at our school, by staff, children or parents.

Children with significant behavior difficulties, such as repeated hitting or biting other children or staff, will be observed and their behavior documented by staff. We will do our best to work with you and your child to improve inappropriate behavior. Usually, a conference will be requested with parents to discuss possible methods of dealing with problem behaviors once the staff has made several observations. Working with a child's behavior consistently at home and school is essential for improvement. Parents and staff must have shared understanding of the reasons for the behavior and strategies for managing it.

Referral to support services may be made by the Head Teacher if unacceptable behaviors continue to occur. Parents may be asked to seek counseling or attend parenting class as a condition for their child to continue at the Preschool. However, we do consider it in everyone's best interest to exclude a child or parent who exhibits a continuing problem that threatens the safety of other children, staff or the child. Classroom settings and group activities are not appropriate for all children. If we determine that our program is not appropriate for your child, or that you or your child constitutes a safety or legal hazard, we reserve the right to withdraw services.

## **Discipline Strategies**

- Maintain realistic expectations of children.
- Provide clear and simple limits.

- Plan an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere.
- Keep children busy to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.
- Model appropriate behaviors.
- Redirect inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes.
- Give children choices between two appropriate alternatives.
- Encourage children to work together to solve problems.
- Encourage children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation. Provide logical and natural consequences for children's actions.
- Remove children from the situation until they are able to discuss the problem and calm down.
- Conflict resolution (for older preschoolers).

## **Conflict Resolution**

Learning to manage conflict is an important part of preschool. All children need to understand how to resolve conflicts appropriately on their own, and ask for help when they need it. As we guide children toward their independence, we keep in mind that children need to learn to repair their broken relationships on their own without forcing them to be insincere.

- We help children verbalize their feelings and desires, and to listen to one another.
- We give children the opportunity to suggest their own solutions to the conflict.
- We assist children in finding an appropriate solution if needed.
- We help children to recognize and take responsibility for their own behavior.

## **How to help your child prepare for school**

1. Talk about school with your child. Discuss positive experiences that are waiting for him or her.
2. Listen to your child. Discuss concerns that he or she is expressing. Encourage your child and be reassuring.
3. Establish good routines for eating and sleeping.
4. Establish a good communication link with your child's teacher so that you are informed about your child's progress.

## **Separation**

Children handle separation in many ways. The key to your child's adjustment will be

a cooperative effort between the parents and the staff. Children need time to adjust to their "new" routine. As a result of this, while your child is adjusting you may see tears and hear "please, I want to go home." This is simply your child's way of handling a new routine.

During this adjustment period, it is very common for the tears to stop within minutes of the parent's departure. For the benefit of your child, please follow through on your departure after saying good-bye. When a parent says good-bye and does not leave, it creates a sense of fear in the child (ie. Maybe mommy's not leaving because something is wrong).

As your child masters this new routine, the tears will cease. This is all part of the process of growing up, while at the same time helping to build a confident, self-assured child.

## **Arrival and Departure from the Classroom**

### **Arrival:**

1. The Ross Preschool opens at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m.
2. Children must not arrive before 8:30 a.m., as the time prior to your child's arrival is spent in classroom preparation.
3. Children must always be brought into the classroom by a parent or other authorized adult and signed in. Sign-in sheets are located near the door. You must record the correct time and **legibly sign your full name (no initials, please)** when you bring your child in and at the end of the day. Any special circumstances or changes in transportation **MUST** be written in the message section of the attendance sheet. Failure to sign in or out will result in a fine.
4. We encourage you to spend a few minutes in the classroom with your child before you leave for the day. Never leave your child unattended. Parents are to remain with and be responsible for siblings while in the classroom. Please inform the Director of any medication or special circumstances that may affect your child during the day (i.e. poor night's sleep, upsetting event at home, parent travel plans). A child who appears to the staff to show signs of illness may be excluded from class and will have to be taken home. Please note that SMOKING and pets (other than show and tell) are never allowed on the premises (guide dogs are the exception).
5. It is in your child's best interest to arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class and can be uncomfortable for your child. Punctuality helps set the tone of the day and reduces confusion in the classroom. Thank you

for your support in this.

### **Departure:**

1. Please be respectful of the teachers' time. School ends promptly at 1:00 pm. If a child is left longer than the designated school hours, a late pick-up fee will be charged.
2. Your child is not permitted to exit the classroom to meet you. Please inform your child that you will come in the classroom to pick him/her up.
3. At dismissal, we ask that parents please wait in the hallway outside the front door for your child to be dismissed. At the end of the day, the children are listening to a story and we have found it disruptive to have parents and siblings entering and leaving the classroom.
4. SAFETY IS OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY! Sign out your child at the end of the day **-your full name, legibly written (no initials, please)**. Take a few minutes to look over your child's work and talk with the teacher about your child's day. Anyone who is not known by the staff will be asked to show a valid Drivers License or other photo identification. Persons not authorized by you on your child's emergency card will NOT be permitted to take your child from The Ross Preschool without written notification. Phone calls are not acceptable notification. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18, or to anyone who is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or who may be considered a danger to the child. Those parents who may have custody issues should consult an attorney regarding legal protection for their children. Parents must provide us with any court orders so that we can call the police to enforce their legal rights should the need arise.

### **Sign in/out & Late Fees**

1. There is a \$15.00 fee for the first 15 minutes and \$10.00 for additional 5-minute periods. Bills will be sent home the following day and late fees are payable to Ross Recreation. Parents are responsible for notifying the Head Teacher if they are not able to pick up their children at the allotted time. Please notify the school immediately if you are going to be detained so we can reassure your child. Continual lateness will result in loss of childcare services.

2. A fee of \$10.00 will be assessed if a child is dropped off without being signed in or out. State Licensing will fine the The Ross Preschool without these signatures. The parent is responsible for these fines.

3. Bills will be sent home the following day. Please make payment to Ross Recreation.

## **School Hours/Calendar**

1. The Ross Preschool opens at 8:30 a.m. and ends promptly at 1:00 p.m.

2. All public holidays and regular vacations as scheduled by the Ross School District will be observed. We follow the Ross School Calendar.

3. School beginning and ending dates are scheduled by Ross Recreation.

## **Daily Schedule**

Daily activities are designed to provide age-appropriate experiences in the following early childhood developmental areas:

### **Social/Emotional**

- Getting along in groups
- Learning responsible behavior (e.g. sharing, cooperation)
- Respecting ethnic, cultural, and age differences
- Expressing feelings appropriately
- Gaining positive self-image
- Developing independence, initiative, and trust

### **Cognitive /Language /Pre-Literacy**

- Acquiring early language and literacy skills, including pre-reading and early writing skills for older children, and fine tuning these skills in school age children
- Learning numeracy (pre-math) and science concepts
- Increasing curiosity about the world through observation, exploration, and experimentation
- Enhancing language skills and self expression through music, movement, and interactive dialogue between peers and adults
- Promoting experimentation, inquiry, observation, and exploration through play

## **Health**

- Modeling good eating habits and nutrition
- Practicing good hygiene habits (including hand washing and toileting)
- Learning to balance adequate rest periods with activity times
- Sharing healthy, nutritious food throughout the day

## **Physical Development**

- Developing large and small muscle skills
- Improving eye-hand coordination and perceptual skills
- Increasing body awareness
- Exploring and participating in rhythm and movement activities

## **Daily Program Routine and Schedules**

Children thrive in a program environment that offers a variety of activities in a rich, well-equipped classroom with a consistent but flexible daily schedule. They depend on predictable routines and look forward to different parts of the day. Learning opportunities are available to them in unstructured and structured formats including “free play/choice” times, small or large group activities, and routines such as eating, dressing and toileting/washing. Throughout all types of activities, the interactions between teachers and children are critical to children’s learning, social, self-image and communication skills. Teachers strive to get to know each child’s unique strengths and needs so they can provide individualized learning opportunities and guidance in a caring, supportive atmosphere.

During free choice periods, children may select one or more activities in one of the many learning centers prepared for them, such as block building, dramatic play, arts, music, books, manipulatives (puzzles, building sets), science and nature study, outdoor activities and much more. They may play/work alone, with a friend or in a small group, and with a teacher’s guidance or independently. As they finish, they may choose another activity after putting away their materials or toys.

“Circle time” is conducted by the teacher with the whole class and may consist of planning or discussing the day’s activities or special events in school or the community, sharing experiences and belongings from home, singing songs and sharing an interactive story. Children have opportunities to get to know all their classmates as they learn new concepts and practice communication and social skills, such as taking turns. Music and movement activities may also be conducted during circle time.

Small group learning activities are planned and directed by teachers related to

curriculum topics in the areas of language arts (e.g. letter recognition and sounds), mathematics (e.g. counting and sorting objects, measuring liquids), science (e.g. properties of magnets), art projects, cooking projects and sensory exploration for younger children.

Outdoor play is an essential part of children's day too, when children can get exercise and gain physical strength, coordination and skill through running, climbing, ball play and cooperative games. For younger children this would include walks, exploring the environment, and taking activities outside.

Routine activities such as snack, toileting, and hand washing are important opportunities for children to learn self-care skills, good health habits, and independence.

### **Daily Schedule**

8:30	Arrival/Free Choice
9:40	Circle time
9:50	Bathroom & hand washing
10:00	Snack
10:30	Outside Time
11:30	Share time
11:45	Group Rotation
12:20	Bathroom & hand washing
12:30	Lunch
12:50	Mystery Reader
1:00	Dismissal

### **Attendance and Illness**

1. State Health Regulations require a daily health inspection by a teacher upon each child's arrival before admittance. The person bringing the child must wait until the child has been accepted before leaving the premises.

2. Your child may be sent home if any symptoms of illness appear during the day. In such cases, your child will immediately be isolated from the others and you will be contacted. A teacher will remain with or nearby your child as needed to provide comfort and reassurance until you arrive to take him or her home.

**3. Please notify the teachers immediately of any contagious disease or serious illness in the family** (such as lice, strep throat, pink eye, pinworms, whooping cough, etc).

4. If you have a sibling who is ill, please leave him/her at home. If this is not possible, you must keep your sick child close to you while you settle your student as quickly as possible.

5. Parents will be notified if a child has been exposed to a communicable disease.

6. Notify the teachers if your child is absent for more than two days of school.

7. If your child has allergies and chronic runny nose, obtain a doctor's note to keep on file at school.

8. To attend school your child must be well enough to participate in all aspects of the program (i.e., inside as well as outside play). Your child needs to stay home for the following reasons:

- Chills
- Communicable disease
- Coughing
- Diarrhea
- Earache
- Eyes, inflamed or swollen
- Face flushed or unusual pallor
- Fever: 99.2 and over or has one over previous 24 hours
- Headache, severe
- Joints red or swollen
- Nausea or vomiting
- Skin rash or sores
- Sore throat
- Is cranky, fussy & generally out of sorts
- Is just tired. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness

## **Lice Policy**

Please inform the school immediately if your child is infected with lice. In an effort to control its spread in the classroom, your child will need a note from a school nurse, pediatrician or a lice treatment company before he/she can return to school.

## **Prevention of Illness**

Young children in group settings tend to be exposed to colds and other contagious illnesses since they haven't developed immunities yet and are still learning good health habits. Most illnesses are spread by hand contact, not from cold weather. Hand washing has been shown to be the most effective means of keeping children and adults healthy. We help children to practice good habits of hand washing, using and disposing properly of tissues, covering the mouth when sneezing, etc. Families can assist by doing the same at home as well as by keeping the child home if showing symptoms of illness.

## **Medication Dispensation**

Medication will be administered by the teaching staff only in an emergency situation. A written directive from the parent (or guardian) and the physician must be on file prior to the emergency. The instructions for prescribed medication shall contain all of the following information:

1. Medication must be in its original package with a physician's prescription label attached.
2. Potential side effects and expected response as well as actions to be taken in the event of side effects
3. Dose-form and amount to be administered pursuant to the physician's prescription
4. Instructions for proper storage of the medication
5. Telephone number and address of the child's physician

## **Allergies/Allergic Reactions Policy**

1. The management of student allergies is a coordinated approach between parents and guardians, the student and the school. If your child has a specific allergy to food or other item, it is your responsibility to inform the Head Teacher about the nature and severity of your child's condition. It is also your responsibility to notify

the Head Teacher of any specific needs involving allergies, including but not limited to medication and separate food items or activities necessary to avoid exposure to the specific food allergen. It is also your responsibility to maintain current medications at the school as needed.

2. The Ross Preschool makes every effort to avoid exposure to known allergens and to maintain a safe environment for all students; however, the school does not guarantee that children will not be exposed to an allergen and cannot guarantee the safety of children in the event of exposure. The School will make accommodations as necessary to reasonably ensure students' safety, but not to the extent of ensuring total protection and isolation from the real world - total protection is neither achievable nor in the best interests of a child's normal development.

3. An individualized action plan will be developed for any child with an allergy severe enough to represent a threat to the child's health and safety while at school. School staff will work with parents to develop such plans, which may include such items as alternate food and snacks, and additional hand-washing schedules. The parents of any such child with a severe allergy must provide the School with a written directive and a physician's statement, as well as any prescribed medication to be administered. Only oral medication may be administered by staff at school, except in the case of signs of allergic shock (anaphylaxis) when staff may administer an Epi-pen or Epi-pen Jr. if so directed by the parent and physician.

4. A list of children with food allergies is posted each year at the school in order to notify staff of the need to monitor food intake.

5. The School reserves the right to enforce restrictions or an outright ban on certain foods or similar items for all students when a child has a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to the food or item in question and the restriction or ban is a reasonable approach to minimizing the potential for exposure to the allergen.

### **Emergency Policy/Procedure**

1. If your child is injured while in class, Ross Recreation first makes an attempt to contact a parent. If not available, we then call the next designated person on the Emergency Form. An ambulance or paramedic will be called if necessary. Any costs incurred are the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

2. In the event the school cannot reach anyone from the Emergency Form and your child requires immediate medical attention, he/she will be taken to the hospital indicated on the card, unless a nearer hospital is necessary.

3. The Head Teacher will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of your child until the arrival of a parent, the physician, an ambulance, paramedics, or designated person.

**4. It is essential that all information on your child's emergency card be kept up to date at all times.**

## **Disaster Plan**

1. In the event of any emergency, every effort will be made to have the children remain at school, where advance provisions have been made. For emergency information and instructions, tune to Emergency Broadcast Station (KTIM AM or KSFO 560 AM).

2. The Ross Preschool will maintain responsibility of all children on premises until they are released to a parent or other designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected staff will remain with the children until all have been reunited with their families.

3. All teachers will remain on the premises as service workers, as designated by law. Teachers will be subject to whatever tasks are assigned by the Head Teacher or persons in charge at the Evacuation Center and may not leave the premises until the same person or persons give them official permission to do so.

4. Parents should not telephone the school. They should listen to the radio for progress reports on whatever disaster is taking place. Follow official instructions as relayed by officials via the radio. If parents are able to reach the school without danger to themselves or without interference with disaster workers, they should come to pick up their children. Children will be released only to parents, guardians, or other designated persons on the Disaster Pick-up sheet.

Parents need to be familiar with the following:

- Do not call the school.
- Do not come to school, unless you are close and radio reports indicate there is no danger in traveling city streets. Children will be released only to authorized family members or their representatives.

- Community disasters will be reported on the radio. Be sure that your family has a transistor radio. Listen to it for directions. Tune to an Emergency Broadcast Station (KSFO 560AM).
- Be assured that the teachers are giving your child any emergency care that may be needed as well as physical and emotional support and comfort. They, too, are listening to the radio and will be hearing the same instructions as you are hearing.
- The safest place in case of a disaster is off the city streets, out of the way of emergency and rescue equipment.
- Every effort will be made to have the children remain at the preschool. If evacuation becomes necessary, the children and teachers will proceed to the Ross School Gym.
- Please make certain your child has an extra set of clothing available at school as well as other emergency supplies. If your child requires special medication, an extra day's supply should be placed in our disaster kit with instructions.

## **Unexpected School Closing**

If an emergency occurs and the school needs to be closed for a day or two due to safety concerns, such as a gas leak, wiring issues, burst pipe, etc. there will be no reimbursement of tuition. In the event that the school needs to be closed for a long period of time because the environment is unstable (i.e. fire or earthquake), The Ross Preschool will do our best to find an alternate location. Tuition reimbursement will be at the discretion of The Ross Preschool.

## **Food Preparation**

Please pack a healthy snack and lunch for your child. Please do not include hard candy or gum in your child's snack/lunch. Please check the labels when packing your child's lunch. Eating at The Ross Preschool should be an enjoyable and social experience for the children. Children should not be forced to eat foods they don't like, nor should food be used as a reward or punishment. The teachers sit with and talk to the students during snack and lunch, while assisting them in eating and enjoying their meal. The children are encouraged to eat their "healthy" or "growing" foods first.

## **Clothing**

Provide tennis shoes or other closed shoes so that your child may climb and run safely. Please be sure your child's shoes and clothing fit well, as poorly-fitted shoes and clothes can cause accidents. For safety reasons, open-toed, plastic jellies, backless shoes, slippery soles, clogs and thongs/flip flops & party shoes are not allowed.

Mark the inside of your child's clothing with permanent ink or name labels (especially jackets, sweaters, gloves and hats). We encourage children to care for their clothing, but we do not take responsibility for clothing that is lost at the center. Occasionally, your child may wear another child's clothing or shoes home by mistake. If this should happen, please return the clothing the next day.

Dress your child for comfort and active play. It is likely your child will come home with dirty clothes at times. Children's freedom to play and learn is more important to us than clean, neat and tidy clothes at the end of the day. Please send a warm jacket or sweater with your child. In the fall, our rooms take a while to heat, and a sweater or jacket is often necessary for outdoor play.

Accidents happen, so please bring a change of clothes for your child.

## **Children's Personal Belongings**

Your child may bring special items – toy, stuffed animal, photograph, etc.-- to share on "share day." Talk with the teacher about the appropriateness of an item if you're not sure. Shared items will be stored in the Share Basket.

Candy, gum, money, balloons, and violent toys (such as guns) must be left at home. We will not be held responsible for lost jewelry, toys, or other personal items.

Children often take small things home with them to remind them of their school. If you find any small toys, Legos, puzzle pieces or other items that belong to the school, please help your child return them to his/her classroom.

## **Family Involvement and Communication**

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents are always welcome. We encourage you to visit at any time. Open communication between the parents and staff is important, and so is your input. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have, regarding the preschool, with the Head Teacher at anytime. If the Head Teacher is not available immediately, you may set up an appointment to schedule a meeting.

### **Parent Communication**

You will receive a monthly newsletter containing information on activities, and special events. Communication of daily activities will be made using our white board located inside of the classroom. This provides a quick means for you to be informed of your child's daily activities and can promote a conversation between you and your child. Additional memos will be distributed as needed. Please note that it is your responsibility to read them carefully. The information they contain will be of great importance to you and your child.

### **Conferences**

Parent teacher conferences will be held twice per year. However, parents wishing to discuss problems and progress are welcome to make an appointment with the Head Teacher at any time during the year.

### **Back To School Night**

We have a lot of important/valuable information we want to share at the beginning of school. This is the only mandatory event of the year. Curriculum, teaching methods, assessment format, schedules and discipline techniques will be discussed at Back to School Night at the beginning of the year. This is an evening for you to get to know your child's teacher.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

The teachers are required to report to Children's Protective Services any unusual marks or injuries on a child, and statements made by, or behavior of a child that may indicate abuse or neglect. Please understand that this is not an opinion of our staff. It is our obligation as mandated reporters (per California Penal Code Section

11166) and all staff must sign forms indicating their understanding of the requirement.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Parents or other concerned adults who have a complaint or concern regarding The Ross Preschool should follow the following procedure:

- Meet with the Head Teacher initially to resolve any classroom specific conflict.
- If you are uncomfortable or unable to resolve the issue with the Head Teacher, contact the Ross Recreation Manager.

## **Birthdays and Special Events**

Birthdays and holidays are special times for children and for our program. We encourage you to take part in the celebrations if you wish by bringing a treat (food item) for all of the children in the classroom. Please talk with your child's teacher in advance to find out what is appropriate to bring. Let the teachers know if it is your wish for your child not to celebrate events due to religious, cultural or other reasons. If you prefer that your child not participate in a planned activity (such as Halloween, birthdays or Valentine's Day), you should make other arrangements for the care of your child. Our teachers respect individual diversity, and will do their best to make your child feel comfortable regardless of their participation in celebrations.

## **Birthday Parties**

If your child is having a birthday party, please be sensitive to scheduling a birthday party right after school unless everyone is invited. Invitations should always be mailed from home. Discussions of birthday parties, play-dates, and passing out invitations at school may cause hurt feelings for those children not included.

## **Parents' Rights**

You have the right to review your child's file and/or request a conference with the Head Teacher regarding any action that is taken by the center in regard to your child's services or to discuss any concern you have with your child's teacher by

asking for a parent/teacher conference (in addition to those regularly scheduled to review children's progress). Other rights of parents are specified in state law. As a Parent/Authorized Representative, you have the right to:

1. Enter and inspect the child care center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review, at the child care center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the child care center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the child care center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.
7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the child care center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

NOTE: CALIFORNIA STATE LAW PROVIDES THAT THE LICENSEE MAY DENY ACCESS TO THE CHILD CARE CENTER TO A PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE POSES A RISK TO CHILDREN IN CARE.

## **Children's Personal Rights**

Each child receiving services shall have rights that include, but are not limited to, the following under the law. "The right:

1. To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationship with staff and other persons.

2. To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction or pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to : interference with the daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting, or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
4. To be informed and to have the authorized representative informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to the address and telephone number of the licensing agency's complaint receiving unit, and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice.
6. To leave or depart the facility at any time, with a parent or guardian, except for house rules for the protection of clients or for minors and others from whom legal authority has been established.
7. Not to be locked up in any room.
8. Not to be placed in restraining devices without advance approval by the licensing agency and the parent.  
(Sections 80072 and 101223, Title 22, California Administrative Code)

## **Rights of the Licensing Agency**

Our center adheres to rules and regulations that are set by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing. The local licensing agency may be contacted at the following address:

Department of Social Services/Community  
Care Licensing Child Care Office  
851 Traeger Avenue, Suite 360  
San Bruno, CA 94066  
(650) 266-8843

## **Child Day Care General Licensing Requirements (Section 101195) state that:**

“(b) The Department of Social Services shall have the authority to interview children and staff, and to inspect and audit child or center records without prior consent.

(c) The Department of Social Services shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the children, including condition which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the children.

### **Thank You**

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We look forward to a great school year and are most happy that you have entrusted your child to The Ross Preschool.

## POEMS FOR PARENTS

### IF I HAD MY CHILD TO RAISE OVER AGAIN

If I had my child to raise all over again,  
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.  
I'd finger paint more, and paint the finger less.  
I would do less correcting and more connecting.  
I'd take my eyes off the watch, and watch with my  
eyes.

I would care to know less and know to care more.  
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.  
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.  
I would run through more fields and gaze at more  
stars.

I'd do more hugging and less tugging.  
I'd see the oak tree in the acorn more often.  
I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.  
I'd mode less about the love of power,  
And more about the power of love.

By Diane Loomans