

# **Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District**

## **Parent Handbook 2009-2010**



### **Child Development Services California State Preschool Program Head Start**

# *Welcome!*



Thank you for choosing our preschool program. SMMUSD is committed to providing a quality educational program that focuses on the whole child, and support services that address the diverse needs of all of our families. This is all done in an environment that is rewarding, inclusive, and collaborative.

In this Parent Handbook you will find valuable information regarding preschool, opportunities for you to be involved in your child's/children's education, as well as the roles and responsibilities of both parents and staff.

We provide this Parent Handbook to every family. As parents you are your child's first and most important teacher. We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with us, and benefit from being a part of our preschool family!

Respectfully,

Preschool Staff

**THIS PARENT HANDBOOK BELONGS TO:**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD'S TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_ SITE: \_\_\_\_\_

SITE ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ SITE PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Mission Statement

**Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing program where children can learn through their work, which we call play. Through their work, children develop the skills they need to succeed in the future.**



**Santa Monica  
Malibu Schools**

## ***CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES***

**2802 Fourth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
Tel: (310) 399-5865  
Fax: (310) 314-0859**

# Child Development Preschool Sites

## Head Start/California Preschool/Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)

### Child Development Services

2802 Fourth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
Phone: (310) 399-5865  
**Enrollment Fax (310) 314-0859**

### Washington-West Center

2802 Fourth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Head Start/California Preschool  
LAUP/Full Day California Preschool**

### Edison Elementary

2425 Kansas Avenue  
Santa Monica, CA 90404  
**Head Start/\_ Day California Preschool**

### Franklin Elementary

2400 Montana Avenue  
Santa Monica, CA 90403  
**\_ Day California Preschool**

### Grant Elementary

2368 Pearl Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Head Start/\_ California Preschool  
LAUP**

### McKinley Elementary

2401 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Santa Monica, CA 90404  
**Head Start/\_ California Preschool**

### John Muir Elementary

2526 Sixth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Head Start/California Preschool**

### Will Rogers Elementary

2401 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Head Start/California Preschool**

### Pine Street Center

734 Pine Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Head Start/\_ California Preschool  
LAUP**

### John Adams Center

2320 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
**Full Day California Preschool**

### Lincoln Child Development Center

1532 California Avenue  
Santa Monica, CA 90403  
**\_ Day California Preschool**

**Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District  
Preschool Administrative Staff**

**Board of Education**

Ralph Mechur - President  
Barry Snell - Vice President  
Ben Allen - Member  
Oscar de la Torre - Member  
Jose Escarce - Member  
Maria Leon Vasquez - Member  
Kelly Pye – Member

**Administration**

Tim Cuneo – Superintendent of Schools  
Mike Matthews – Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Jan Maez – Assistant Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer  
Sally Chou – Chief Academic Officer

**Preschool Administrators**

Judy Abdo, Child Development Services Director  
Janice Onami, Preschool Program Coordinator  
Diedra Wilson, Muti-Site Supervisor  
Reham Dabash, Multi-Site Supervisor

# Program Description

## **HEAD START/CALIFORNIA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

Head Start/California Preschool is a subsidized program for low-income families and preschoolers with disabilities. The program operates 11 months starting in September and ending in July, and serves children from 3 to 5 years of age within the local community. Priority is given to 4 year olds and families most in need (includes families at risk and/or in crisis, and children with disabilities). Comprehensive services include education, social services, health, mental health, nutrition, and parent involvement. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, *Office of Head Start*, and the California Department of Education, *Child Development Division* determines eligibility guidelines. There are no fees or charges for the Head Start program.

## **PRESCHOOL GOALS**

- Serve as a bridge between home and school.
- Provide a balance of educational, social, and physical development opportunities for all children.
- Respond to the changing needs and interests of children.
- Establish partnerships with families, which include opportunities for parents to volunteer and actively participate in all aspects of the program.
- Form collaborative relationships with community agencies.
- Promote communication between parents, administrators, and staff.
- Be an integral part of the school campuses where sites are located, and support the vision developed for each campus/site.
- Reflect SMMUSD Board adopted goals:
  - 1) Quality Education for All.**
  - 2) Effective Utilization of Human Resources.**
  - 3) Effective Resource Allocation.**

# WHAT WE OFFER

## **CURRICULUM**

The Preschool program uses the ***High Scope Curriculum***®. This curriculum emphasizes that children's goals are based on a developmental continuum. The overall framework is designed to address how children develop and learn, what children learn, the significance of the environment to the process of learning, and the teacher and family's role. The ***High Scope Curriculum***® places a high priority on creating a classroom environment where children experiment, explore, and pursue their own interests and commonly known as active learning. The curriculum is also easily linked to the assessment tools used in our program, and is inclusive of all children – those developing typically, children with disabilities, and English language learners.

## ***EDUCATION:***

- Individualized instruction, ongoing observations and child assessments based on eight domains of development: language, literacy, math, science, approaches to learning, social-emotional, physical/health, and creative arts.
- Two home visits and two parent conferences (Head Start) held during the year to discuss children's progress and plan mutual goals.
- Active learning experiences, building on success and previous knowledge, to develop skills necessary for a successful entry into Kindergarten.
- A five (5) day school week to develop children's abilities to follow routines, work in a cooperative environment, follow health and safety rules, and successfully function in an individual, small group and large group setting.

## ***HEALTH:***

- School nurse on staff
- Health Screenings: medical, dental, height, weight, vision, hearing
- Follow-up referrals for medical and dental treatment
- Immunization reminders

## ***MENTAL HEALTH:***

- School Psychologist is on staff, and serves as the manager for Mental Health and Disabilities Services.

- Family Consultant is available to answer questions about child's growth and development, separation anxiety, divorce, death, etc. Appointments are made through Support Staff.

### ***TRANSPORTATION SAFETY:***

- Integrated pedestrian training for parents and children including: emergency bus evacuation, safe riding practices, safety procedure for boarding and leaving the vehicle, crossing the street safely for pedestrians

### ***PARENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT:***

- Staff is available to assist parents in developing family goals, and with planning to successfully complete goals.
- Follow-up contacts are made throughout the year by the Bilingual Community Liaisons.
- Parent workshops are offered throughout the year, and are based upon parent input and parent interests.

### ***SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES:***

- We provide support and intervention for special needs: speech, developmental/language delays, gross motor or special health case for Santa Monica residents.
- Referrals and assistance for those families residing outside of the district.
- Teams of Specialists
- Developmental screenings within 45 days of the start of school (ages and stages)

### ***NUTRITION:***

- Balanced meals and snacks are served in our program.
- A Registered Dietician completes assessments of each child's nutritional intake, and is also available for consultation.
- Menus are available and posted in each classroom.
- Workshops on nutrition education.

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent participation is essential to the successful operation of each program. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and on field trips if possible. All volunteers must have a current negative TB test or Chest X-Ray on file with Child Development Services and have cleared the Megan's Law Check, in accordance with SMMUSD board policy. The following are additional examples of ways parents can be involved:

## **CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION**

- *Attend parent workshops*
- *Assist with field trips*
- *Donate items from home*
- *Share special interests with class*  
(songs, stories)
- *Join Parent Committee*
- *Share ideas and concerns with the teacher*

## **PARENT SITE MEETINGS**

- *Attend monthly classroom meetings*
- *Plan and vote on program activities*
- *Participate in site decision-making*
- *Attend meetings at LACOE*
- *Elect Parent Group representatives*
- *Discuss successes and concerns*
- *Evaluate the program*
- *District Advisory Committee meetings*

## **PARENT GROUP**

- *Attend monthly meetings*
- *Participate in decision making at the agency level for preschool*

## **DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- *Participate in decision making at the agency level for all Child Development Services*

## **DONATIONS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

- *Wrapping paper scraps*
- *Old ribbon*
- *Toilet paper/paper towel rolls*
- *Old buttons*
- *Craft sticks*
- *Small containers*
- *Empty food boxes*
- *Old calendars*
- *Toilet paper*
- *Old magazines*

## **PARENT CONFERENCES/HOME VISITS**

*Parent Conferences occur throughout the school year. The Head Start program requires that teachers conduct a minimum of two (2) parent conferences and two (2) home visits per program year to discuss children's developmental level, assessments, goals, etc.*

*Parents are also strongly encouraged to ask questions and/or share concerns regarding their children or the program. Parents are also asked to provide input regarding children's goals and program enhancement.*

## **PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

- *Share with teacher any circumstances that may cause the child to be upset at school*
- *Participate as a classroom secretary/volunteer for the teacher*

## **PARENT EDUCATION**

- *Frequent education workshops offered (based on parent need/interest)*
- *Spring Mini-Conference*
- *Adult Education and Reading programs throughout the district*
- *Father/Significant Male Initiative workshops offered three times a year*

*Parents are responsible for documenting volunteer hours on monthly volunteer time sheets*

# **Enrollment & Admission**

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Child Development Services is funded through the State Department of Education Child Development Division, Head Start, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and parents' fees. Policies for providing services are developed in accordance with the "Funding Terms and Conditions Contract" of the State Department of Education, California Child Care Licensing Requirements and Head Start Performance Standards, and have been approved by the SMMUSD Board of Education.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Children are enrolled in the Head Start/California Preschool according to eligibility/selection requirements determined by federal and state funding mandates. We are required to place interested applicants on the Los Angeles County Centralized Eligibility List (CEL.) In addition to federal and state mandates, SMMUSD follows locally decided selection criteria based on the needs of the community to help ensure Head Start eligible families with the greatest need are offered child care and preschool services.

### **CENTRALIZED ELIGIBILITY LIST (CEL)**

California Education Code (EC) Section 8227 requires all Child Development contractors to participate in the county CEL “to be eligible to enter into in to an agreement with the California Department of Education.” The CEL is a confidential database maintained by the County of Los Angeles and State of California. Families seeking services through the State subsidized programs are entered in to this database. State subsidized programs must identify eligible families from this database in order to enroll the highest priority families.

### **SERVICE CRITERIA**

All health requirements must be met before attendance is permitted. If applicable, families must meet and continue to meet all eligibility requirements for Head Start and California Preschool. Participants are also required to report any changes in eligibility status immediately.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information obtained from families to determine eligibility and complete enrollment, is strictly confidential. This information is maintained by authorized district personnel, and can only be viewed by authorized district and funding source personnel. Confidential records will not be released unless stipulated by written parent/guardian permission.

### **NOTICE OF ACTION & UPDATING RECORDS**

The “Notice of Action” is written notification of status change: (i.e. Provision of services and termination of services). Once a child is enrolled, it becomes the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to keep all the documents and the information updated. EMERGENCY CARDS ARE CRITICAL. THEY MUST BE COMPLETE AND CURRENT AT ALL TIMES.

### **PARENT VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT/SCHOOL OR TRAINING/INCAPACITATION**

All families enrolled in Head Start/California Preschool must provide verification of employment and/or school or training as part of the need criteria for the child care services. Parent/Guardians need to provide documentation if a disability/incapacitation or a family crisis is the need for child care.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

- SMMUSD Preschool operates on a non-discriminatory basis; equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, mental or physical ability or handicap.
- SMMUSD refrains from religious instruction or worship.
- ADA-Title II: SMMUSD complies with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. This act requires that no qualified individual with a disability be denied the benefit of Child Development services, programs, or activities.

## **RECERTIFICATION**

Families receiving subsidized services are required to recertify on an annual basis. However, the program has the right to recertify anytime deemed necessary (unreported status/eligibility change, etc.) **Any changes in employment, training, income status, marital status, or other pertinent information impacting eligibility must be reported immediately.**

# HEALTH & SAFETY

It is very important for all of our children to be healthy, because healthy children are best able to reach their full potential! Procedures and routines are established throughout the program to ensure that participating children are healthy and safe while in school.

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

Child abuse and neglect are serious issues for those of us who work with children on a daily basis. We hope never to encounter incidents of child abuse or neglect, but we must accept the possibility that a child in our program may be suffering from abuse or neglect at home. This information is given not to frighten you, but rather familiarize you with our responsibilities as child-care professionals and service providers.

Possible child abuse indicators are (*According to Penal Code Section 11165*):

- **Physical abuse** – Unexplained bruises, burns, welts, fractures, lacerations etc.
- **Sexual abuse** – Difficulty walking or sitting, pain when urinating/defecating, injury or pain to genital area, unusual foul odor emanating from genital area.
- **Mental/Emotional abuse** – Failure to thrive, depression (child appears sad often, empty facial expression), severe aggression towards self and others.
- **Neglect** – Underweight, poor growth pattern, consistent hunger, unattended physical problems or medical needs, general unattended appearance (soiled clothing, inappropriate clothing, and unusual body odor).

## **Immunizations/Tuberculosis test (TB)**

All children enrolled in licensed child care facilities and public schools must have current immunizations, including a current TB test, prior to enrollment. Parents who volunteer in the classroom, or who have extended contact with enrolled children (field trips) must also have a current negative TB test or Chest X-ray on file with Child Development Services.

### **Daily Wellness Checks**

Teachers/teaching staff complete a daily wellness check of each child upon arrival, to ensure children are healthy and are able to participate in daily activities. Children brought to the classroom ill are required to be taken home immediately. *Note: Illness refers to communicable illnesses, not chronic medical conditions that are not contagious and can be contained by Universal Health Precautions.*

### **Illness Exclusion Guidelines**

The observation of illness at home can help prevent inconveniences, prolonged child illness and infectious outbreaks. If you observe any of the following symptoms of illness PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME!

***All potential health-related exclusions are subject to review by the School Nurse.***

**Respiratory illness and colds** – Children with runny noses will not necessarily be excluded. However, if the mucous is profuse and a yellow/green color the child can be excluded at the Teacher's/Director's discretion. A child will also be excluded if the runny nose is associated with an abnormal temperature, infected throat, congestion, persistent cough or general irritability.

**Diarrhea** – A child with one loose or “watery” stool will not be excluded; unless the child communicates he/she has an upset stomach or generally does not feel well. If the watery/loose stool is repeated, the child must be excluded. Children who have diarrhea may not return to school unless they have had at least one normal bowel movement.

**Fevers** – This is considered an oral temperature 101° or greater; rectal temperature of 102° or greater; axillary (armpit) temperature of 100° or greater. Children must be free of fever for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) before returning to school.

**Conjunctivitis (pink-eye)** – Children with conjunctivitis (pink-eye) must receive medical attention. Children can return to school 24 hours after medication has been administered and/or prescribed treatment is initiated.

**Head Lice** – Children who exhibit evidence of head lice will be excluded by classroom staff, and may not return until 24 hours after treatment has begun and **all evidence of head lice (nits) is no longer present.**

**Signs of Possible Severe Illness** – Includes lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and uncontrolled coughing.

**Vomiting** – Two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

**Mouth Sores** – Preschool children exhibiting excessive drooling in conjunction with sores in or near mouth shall be excluded, unless the child's physician or local health department authority states the child is not infectious.

**Rash** – Children who have rashes (in full view or underneath clothing) shall be excluded, when the rash is accompanied by a fever or behavior change, or is associated with a communicable

illness. Children can return when the child's physician has determined that the rash is not contagious.

**All Other Communicable Diseases/Illnesses** - As determined by the American Academy of Pediatrics, & American Public Health Association – Caring for our children – National Health and Safety Performance Standards (1992).

### **Returning to Class after Illness**

Any child or adult who has been absent as a result of communicable disease/illness may not be re-admitted to the classroom until there is written assurance by a physician (or medical professional) that the child or adult no longer has any evidence of the communicable disease/illness.

### **Administering Medication**

Children taking prescription, over-the-counter, or homeopathic medication at school require the following:

1. Medical form with a written detailed description of the condition including the name and dosage of each medication signed by the doctor. Forms are available from the school nurse or staff.
2. Written permission to administer the prescription or medication signed by the parent and the physician. *Dosage and times that medication is to be administered must be included.*

### **Allergies/ Medical Conditions**

All diagnosed allergies and medical conditions must be documented in child's file, and each staff person responsible for supervising the child must be notified. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the staff at the time of enrollment and the child's teacher of any and all known (potentially harmful) allergies or medical conditions, i.e. asthma, diabetes, seizures, etc. Health alert forms are available in the CDS office.

Staff are trained on the use of the EPIPEN in case of allergic emergency.

### **Emergency Preparedness/Response**

Each classroom posts information regarding Disaster Preparedness and Response (earthquakes, fires, floods, etc.). In case of an emergency the staff has access to your child's personal emergency kits. Children will routinely participate in scheduled emergency drills.

Staff will stay with the children in emergency situations until the crisis subsides, and will also make efforts to comfort children during these high-stress situations. Please be reminded children will only be released to persons on the emergency card who present photo identification. Parents/guardians who retrieve children during an emergency/crisis will need to sign a release form indicating the time the child was picked-up.

## **First Aid Procedures**

- At the centers, we make every effort to make sure your child is safe. However, minor accidents beyond our control may occur. Simple injuries will be treated at school by applying ice, soap & water, and/or Band-Aids. In the event that a more serious injury occurs, you will be notified at once. The Santa Monica Fire Department/Paramedics may also be called. All program teachers are CPR and First-Aid trained.

## **Nutrition**

- ✓ The preschool program serves breakfast, lunch, and snack.
- ✓ All food provided must be eaten in class. Food may not be taken home.
- ✓ Sugary and/or high sodium/high fat snacks are not allowed (cakes, donuts, candy, chips, etc.).
- ✓ Only acceptable pre-packaged food items to celebrate birthdays will be allowed (fresh fruit, yogurt, muffins, and juice.) Please no cake and ice cream.
- ✓ Meals are provided for children only. One adult lunch is available to share among all adults at mealtime.
- ✓ Adults must use gloves while handling food items.
- ✓ Children practice brushing their teeth daily.
- ✓ Children engage in preventive wellness practices.

## **Special Nutrition Needs**

**Food Allergy** – If your child has a food allergy, it is very important to let staff know. The child's doctor must complete a special form. This form can be obtained from the CDS Office Staff, and must be completed prior to starting school.

For families who do not wish to participate in the food program for religious or personal reasons, please talk to Support Staff/Administrators at Child Development Services.

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Regular attendance is required.
- Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in termination from the program.
- Parents must notify the teacher when their child is absent for any reason.
- **Excused Absences** include:
  - a. Illness or quarantine of child, parent or sibling
  - b. Doctor, dentist or medical therapy appointment
  - c. Death in family
  - d. Act of nature (earthquake, flood or fire) with damage to home
  - e. Civil unrest / police action in neighborhood
  - f. Court Appearance of child
  - g. Court-ordered time spent with a parent/guardian or other relative
- **Best Interest Days:** Students are allowed ten (10) “best interest” days per program year for vacation, etc. These may include:
  - a. Vacation
  - b. Bereavement/funeral (day of service only)
  - c. Cultural/religious celebration
  - d. Other family occasion (for example, parent graduation)
  - e. School Suspension
- **Unexcused Absences** are absences not listed above and may include:
  - a. Personal family business
  - b. Court Appearance not requiring child
  - c. Too tired or didn't sleep
  - d. No transportation
  - e. School Activities (non-mandatory)

Head Start/California Preschool students are only allowed ten (10) “Best Interest” days per program year for vacation, family visits etc. Any absences in excess of ten (10) days, and not included under excused absences are considered *unexcused*, and may be cause for termination of services.

Children who are absent for five (5) consecutive days due to illness must have a medical clearance/doctor's note prior to re-admittance. Children, who have contracted a communicable illness, must have medical clearance prior to re-admittance, regardless of number of days absent.

## **Recording/Verifying Absences**

Parents/guardians must be as specific as possible when recording reasons for absences. Absence excuses on the back of the sign-in sheet with a parent/guardian signature must also be accompanied by supporting documentation. Please be reminded that general explanations (“sick”, “not feeling well”, “personal” etc.) are NOT acceptable. If unsure about how to record the absence, please consult with the CDS office staff or your child's teacher.

## **Signing In and Out**

According to State Licensing, children *must* be signed-in and out daily. **Full signatures are always required. Use EXACT time when signing in and out.** Only custodial parents and authorized adults (those listed on the emergency card) are allowed to sign out or remove a child from a classroom. Adults will be required to show picture identification if unfamiliar to the staff. Individuals under eighteen (18) years will not be allowed to sign children in or out, unless the individual is the child's custodial parent.

## **Drop-Off**

No child shall be accepted without contact between the classroom staff and the authorized adult bringing the child to the center. Parents/Adults bringing the child to class must ensure that the child has received a daily wellness check, prior to departure. Classes begin at the posted time by the teacher. Children must be dropped off on time as to not disrupt the classroom's routine.

## **Pick-Up**

Children must be picked up from the center as agreed by their contracted time, **which under no circumstance** will be after the closing hours of the school. Authorization for an adult **not** identified on the emergency card to pick up your child must be in writing. Please note that a fax is acceptable, but arrangements cannot be made by telephone. Adults will be required to show photo identification if unfamiliar to the staff, and *adults* are individuals eighteen (18) years or older. Full signatures are required.

**NOTE: It is imperative that there are several authorized adults listed on the emergency card. Please make certain that all contact information is current.**

<b>Consequences for Late Pick-Up</b>		
<b><i>First Incident</i></b>	<b><i>Second Incident</i></b>	<b><i>Third Incident</i></b>
<b><i>Sign late pick-up form</i></b>	<b><i>Sign late pick-up form</i></b>	<b><i>Sign late pick-up form</i></b>
<b><i>Verbal warning</i></b>	<b><i>Receive written warning letter</i></b>	<b><i>Receive written warning letter</i></b>
<b><i>Receive written warning letter</i></b>	<b><i>Conference with Lead Teacher</i></b>	<b><i>Parents volunteer in child's classroom for 30 minutes before the end of class for 3 consecutive days</i></b>
		<b><i>Meeting with Supervisor</i></b>

## **JOINT CUSTODY**

In the event that custody of children is shared jointly, children will be released to either parent and to any adult listed on the emergency card provided by either parent.

Should disagreements arise between the parents related to issues of who may pick-up the child; staff will follow any and all procedures outlined in court orders. Should further disagreements arise, then parents will be asked to return to court for clarification.

# **PROGRAM POLICIES**

- Children should be able to adjust their own clothing to use the bathroom successfully.
- Shoes should be closed-toe, have backs and non-skid soles.
- Staff will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings. Valuables such as jewelry, money, toys, should remain at home. Please label coats, sweaters, and blankets with your child's name.
- Please help and remind your child to use their cubby and care for personal items.
- Do not send food to school.
- "Treasures" from home are allowed only on "Sharing Day" (See your child's teacher for more details).
- Head Start/California Preschool children rest at preschool; each child must bring a blanket from home. Parents are responsible for labeling blankets, and laundering them on a weekly basis.
- Spanking of children is not allowed; please do not spank any child, including your own.
- Staff is required to report suspected child abuse (Penal Code Section 11166).
- Please bring concerns or questions to the teacher first. If the teacher is unable to assist you, feel free to contact the Lead Teacher or call the CDS Administrative office (see page 4). Parents may also use the classroom Communication Envelope, which is regularly checked by the support staff.
- Please park in designated areas only, **handicap parking requires a state permit.** Never leave children unattended. Cars with unattended children will be reported to the Santa Monica Police Department.
- Fundraising activities will be voted on at the Parent Group meetings. ***Only approved agency fundraising is allowed.***
- Inform teacher immediately when your child will be absent.

- Please ensure emergency cards are updated, at least three (3) names and phone numbers are required for emergency purposes.
- CAR SEAT LAW – Children under the age of 6 years (regardless of weight) or less than 60 lbs (regardless of age) must be in an appropriate car seat while in an automobile. Preschool children must be in a child passenger restraint system (car seat) while riding on school buses during field trips.
- Under no circumstances will the SMMUSD Head Start program solicit, encourage, or in any other way condition a child's enrollment or participation in the program upon the payment of a fee/gift.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The purpose of discipline is to help children develop self-control and to become responsible for their own behavior. We help children develop self-discipline by:

- Providing opportunities for children to select activities
- Modeling desired behavior/s such as fairness and cooperation
- Redirecting inappropriate behavior quickly, for instance moving the child to another activity
- Teaching children how to resolve conflicts positively
- Using verbal reminders
- Involving parents
- PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IS NEVER ALLOWED! State of California Child Care Center Licensing Regulation 101223.2

If a child is unresponsive to the above-mentioned techniques, remains uncooperative and jeopardizes the safety of themselves or others, the following steps will be taken:

- Written notification will be provided to the parent/guardian via a parent – teacher conference and/or Incident Report.
- A team, including the Family Consultant, teacher, parent, and Program Supervisor or Coordinator, will develop a plan to be implemented after each incident. The team will meet to review the plan periodically or as needed.

In emergency situations (i.e. a perceived threat to persons or property or extreme disruption to the program) parents may be called to pick-up their child.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The SMMUSD Head Start/California Preschool provides opportunities for children to go on educational field trips throughout the year. To ensure your child's health and safety, the following guidelines apply:

- Children must ride with an appropriate car seat that is self-restraining (has its own restraint straps).
- Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips.
- Volunteers must ride on the bus with children.

- Parents/guardians may not sign in/out their child during the field trip while the class is away from the center. Children must be signed-out upon return to the school.
- Sack lunches are provided. Please do not send any lunches or extra snacks.
- Children must remain under the supervision of their teacher during field trips.
- All necessary permission slips must be signed prior to the field trip date.
- Remember to arrive on time to school on the day of the field trip. Your child might not be able to attend the trip if you arrive late.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

We do not have “Graduations”. Special celebrations are planned throughout the school year and at the conclusion of the year to make the preschool experience memorable. Caps and gowns are not developmentally appropriate practices for young children, and therefore will not be part of our year-end activities.

Birthdays are very important days for preschoolers! Each child will receive special recognition on his/her birthday, with the parent’s approval. Although we do not have birthday parties at school, we will help children celebrate their own special day with songs and other activities. If bringing a special treat to help celebrate the event, please check with your child’s teacher and be sure to adhere to the following district nutrition policy:

- Foods must be purchased from a store. Homemade items are not allowed.
- Foods must be brought in their original packaging; otherwise items will not be served to the children.
- Nutritionally acceptable foods include fresh fruit, yogurt, muffins, and juice.
- Please note that Board Policies do not allow distribution of invitations for off site activities on campus.

# PARENTS RIGHTS

1. Our preschool program invites parents to drop in unannounced at anytime to observe our classrooms. Parents/Guardians, upon presentation of identification, have the right to enter and inspect the child-care facility, in which their child is receiving care, without advance notice. Entry and inspection are limited to the normal operating hours while their child/children are receiving care. The district requires that all visitors check-in at the main school office and obtain a visitor badge to wear for identification purposes.
2. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian for exercising their right to inspect.
3. The law requires that parents/guardians be notified of their right to enter and inspect.
4. The law requires that this notice of Parents' Rights to enter and inspect be posted in the facility in a location accessible to parents/guardians.
5. The law authorizes the person in charge of the facility to deny access to a parent/guardian under the following circumstances:
  - The parent/guardian is behaving in a way, which poses a risk to the children in the facility.
  - The adult is a non-custodial parent and the facility has been instructed in writing through a court order to deny access to the non-custodial parent.

Parents **do not** have the right to engage in disciplinary actions with any child other than their own.

Parents **do not** have the right to threaten, intimidate, or be disrespectful to staff.

## **TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

The following are common reasons for termination from the program:

- Continuous unsafe behavior of child on center grounds, after several behavior interventions, which poses high-risk of injury to self, others, or property damage
- Parent or child engaging in malicious or threatening behavior towards staff, other parents, and/or other children
- Violations of any Education Code regarding firearms, alcohol, drugs, physical violence, theft, willful destruction of property, any conduct by parent, child, or relatives resulting in harm to person or property while on the center grounds
- Failure to provide necessary and/or requested information for continued enrollment

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

***Complaint and fair hearing process: When actions are taken by the program, that directly impacts a participating family (i.e. termination of services, etc.) the family has a right to a fair hearing regarding the action/s.***

Parents are strongly encouraged to meet and resolve issues at the center. The administrative staff is eager to hear your suggestions and concerns regarding programs. However if concerns or issues are not resolved, parents may use the following procedure:

- 1) Complete a Complaint Form, which may be obtained from the Lead Teacher at any center/site. All unresolved complaints proceeding beyond center meetings must be in writing.
- 2) Within three (3) days of receiving the complaint, a program administrator shall meet with the complainant to try and resolve the issue.
- 3) Within five (5) days, all parties to the complaint shall meet to further attempt to resolve the issue.
- 4) Within thirty-days (30) a report shall be given to the complainant describing what actions will be taken to resolve the issue.
- 5) If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of the issue, the written complaint can be forwarded to the SMMUSD Board of Education for a hearing.

The rules above mentioned are according to the "Uniform complaint procedure" of the Board of Education Regulation # AR 1312.3 Title 5, Section 430. The "Notice of Action" Also covers the parent's rights that receive subsidized services for their children.

Parents have the right to appellate or submit a complaint to the State Department of Education/Child Development Division if they feel they have been discriminated by the Department of Child Development Services. The complaint must be in writing to the following address:

Child Development Division  
Complaint Coordinator  
1430 N Street, Suite 3410  
Sacramento, CA 95814

If you are not satisfied with the decision made by CDD, you also have other options through the Federal or State Court. Any person with discrimination allegations or violations has the right to file a Civil Case including but limited to a judicial mandate, restriction orders, or any other legal order. Please be aware that it is recommended that you seek legal help. (Legal costs are paid by the plaintiff) Complaints of discriminations with valid bases can also be made with:

- Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources/SMMUSD (310) 450-8338, ext 375  
1651 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Santa Monica, CA 90404.  
Or to:
- United States Department of Justice (800) 541-0301 (voice TDD/TTY)

# Important dates

## *To Remember*

### Preschool School Year

September 9, 2009 – July 30, 2010

The following are half days due to teacher trainings:

*(School will end at 12:00 PM)*

- ❖ October 15, 2009
- ❖ January 7, 2010
- ❖ March 4, 2010
- ❖ May 13, 2010

### Days School Closed:

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ❖ September 28, 2009                  | Admission's Day                           |
| ❖ November 11, 2009                   | Veteran's Day                             |
| ❖ November 26, 27, 2009               | Thanksgiving Holiday                      |
| ❖ December 21, 2009 – January 1, 2010 | Winter Break                              |
| ❖ January 18, 2010                    | Martin Luther King Holiday                |
| ❖ February 15, 2010                   | President's Day                           |
| ❖ March 29 – April 9, 2010            | Spring Break                              |
| ❖ May 31, 2010                        | Memorial Day                              |
| ❖ June 28-July 2, 2010                | Staff Development/4 <sup>th</sup> of July |
| ❖ July 5 – July 30, 2010              | Selected classes closed                   |

# HEAD START/CALIFORNIA PRESCHOOL

## SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

### 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM (6 1/2 hours)

#### **AM**            ***(Morning Routine)***

8:00	Arrival & Greeting
8:15	Breakfast
8:30	Circle Time
8:45	Choice Time (blocks, arts & crafts, computer, manipulatives, library, writing center).
9:25	Outdoor activities/exploration time
10:10	Indoor- small group activities
10:40	Group activity (e.g. music & movement, storytelling, gardening, etc.)
11:15	Lunch
11:45	Tooth-brushing activity/toileting

#### **PM**            ***(Noon - Afternoon Routine)***

12:00	Reading/Story time
12:15	Rest/Nap
1:30	Snack
1:50	Indoor group time
2:30	Dismissal

**Please Check the Parent Bulletin Board for Weekly Lesson Plans**

## What is Child Development?

Child development is a process every child goes through. It involves learning and mastering skills that help children function and learn independently. Children acquire these skills, called *developmental milestones*, during predictable time periods.

The five main areas of development are:

1. **Cognitive development** - The child's ability to learn and solve problems. For example, this includes a two-month-old baby learning to explore the environment with hands or eyes, or a five-year-old learning how to do simple math problems.
2. **Social-Emotional development** - The child's ability to interact with others, including helping themselves and demonstrating self-control. An example of this is a two-year-old transitioning successfully from home to school. "See you later mommy!" Or, a four-year-old creating a "new" game with classmates while on the playground.
3. **Speech and Language development** – The child's ability to understand and use language.
4. **Fine Motor development** – The child's ability to use small muscles, specifically their hands and fingers to pick-up and manipulate small objects. For example, a two-year-old learning how to hold a jumbo crayon and "draw a picture, or a 4.5-year-old using scissors to cut out the funny picture of a clown in a magazine.
5. **Gross Motor development** – The child's ability to use large muscles. An example of this would be the three-year-old who learns to climb to the top of the climbing structure, or the five-year-old that learns to skip across the playground.

## What is a Developmental Milestone?

A developmental milestone is a skill that a child acquires within a specific time frame. For instance, one developmental milestone is learning to walk. Milestones develop in a sequential fashion. This means that a child will need to develop some skills before he/she can develop new skills (children will learn to crawl and pull-up to a standing position, before learning to walk.). Each milestone a child acquires builds on the last milestone developed.

Each child is an individual and may meet developmental milestones a little earlier or later than his/her peers. **DON'T BE ALARMED!** We have all heard comments such as "He was walking much earlier than his brother." Children are unique and will develop at their own pace. However, there are defined "windows" or "blocks of time" when typically developing children will meet a milestone. This is usually how experts determine if there is need for concern. If a child is well beyond a typical "window" or timeframe, or has never developed prerequisite skills to build upon, then that may be a sign that the child is not meeting developmental

milestones. Whenever you have questions or concerns do not hesitate to ask your child's teacher for more information, or consult with your child's pediatrician.

## Meeting the Developmental Milestones!

Parents and teachers want children to be the best they can be! The research indicates that two important factors contribute to children's development: Nature (genes) and Nurture (environment).

Nature refers to children's genetic "make-up"; in other words, what we are all born with (blue eyes, brown skin, left-handed, etc.)

Nurture refers to children's environments and experiences. This includes experiences children have in their home, community, and school environments. The environment can either improve or harm a child's genetic "blueprint". For example malnourished children may not reach their IQ potential because of the impact of the lack of nutrients on brain development.

We have very little control over nature, but we can enhance nurture! The following are simple things parents can do to encourage healthy development:

- ❖ Give your child lots of love and attention! Regardless of the child's age, holding, hugging, and listening are important ways to show your child they matter!
- ❖ Talk, sing, play, eat with, and read to your child. Your child will grow up feeling special and important to you, and you will learn a lot about your child's interests and skills.
- ❖ READ, READ, READ. Children who are read to by their parents have a larger vocabulary than other children. Reading also provides children with new perspectives about the world they live in, and is great brain exercise!
- ❖ Develop consistent and easily understood rules. Reward behaviors you want to see your child do more of, and have appropriate consequences for behaviors you don't wish your child to continue to do.
- ❖ Limit TV and video time to no more than 1 to 2 hours per day, opt to read or play with your child instead!
- ❖ Don't be afraid to ask for help or more information. Your child's teacher is a wonderful resource, so connect with him/her and develop strategies together.
- ❖ Ensure that your child is eating healthy, nutrient-rich foods. This enhances natural development.
- ❖ Encourage your child to figure things out by experimenting, exploring, and predicting whenever appropriate, and as much as possible. The idea is to create critical and creative thinkers.
- ❖ Run, jump, skip, and play with your child. Exercise is essential to physical development, and is one more opportunity to connect/bond with your child.

For more information you may access: [www.howkidsdevelop.com](http://www.howkidsdevelop.com) (2009)

# **How to Prepare Your Child for the First Day of Preschool**

1. Begin talking to your child about going to preschool months ahead of time. Say things like, “When you go to school you’ll get meet a lot of new friends, or learn a lot of fun, new things.”
2. Drive or walk past the school and point it out. Tell your child, “There’s where you get to go to school.”
3. Let your child pick out a fun backpack for school. They will feel like a big boy or girl the first day of school with their new backpack. They probably won’t have much to put in their backpack but it’s a great place to keep a security object like a stuffed animal or a picture.
4. Make sure to go to the program and class orientations. Your child can meet the teacher and see the classroom. You can also schedule a tour prior to the first day of school.
5. Read books or watch videos about going to school with your child. This will help prepare them and is a great time to talk about school and answer any questions your child has.
6. Prepare a special first day of school breakfast. Make your preschooler feel special with a crown or balloons on their chair.
7. Draw a picture of what the clock will look like when you will be back to pick them up. Separating is hard for some children and this will give them a little extra reassurance that you’ll be back.
8. When you drop off your child at school, give them a hug and kiss and tell them that you’ll be back when the clock is the same as the picture. Tell them to have fun too!
9. If they cry, reassure them and then leave. It will be hard, but if you stay they will just learn that the more they cry, the longer you will stay. In most cases, your child is fine once you leave. If you need to reassure yourself, call and check.
10. Try not to be late picking up your child after school. Greet your child with a big hug. In no time, school will be part of their routine.

*eHow.com contributor*

# Transportation Safety Tips for Children

## TRAVELING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN: THE BASICS

- Everybody needs a child safety seat, booster seat, or safety belt!
- There must be one safety belt for each person. Buckling two people, even children, into one belt could injure both.
- People who are not buckled up can be thrown from the car or around inside the car, and seriously hurt themselves or others.
- Never hold a child on your lap! You could crush him/her in a crash, or the child may be torn from your arms.
- Never ride in the cargo area of a station wagon, van, or pickup! Anyone riding in the cargo area could be thrown out and severely injured or killed.
- No one seat is “best”, the “best” child safety seat is the one that fits your child and can be installed correctly.
- Children age 12 and under should ride properly restrained in back.

## CHOOSING AND USING THE CORRECT SEAT

New child safety seats and booster seats come with registration cards. Be sure to register your new seat so you will be notified if there is a recall. If you don't have a card, call the safety seat manufacturer.

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

# Preventing Injuries to Child Pedestrians

**Parents are the most important models of proper pedestrian behavior for children.**

- *Cross streets safely.* Cross at a corner, using traffic signals and crosswalks. Try to make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of them. Don't assume that because you can see the driver, the driver can see you. Look left, right and left again when crossing, and keep looking as you cross. Walk; don't run, across the street.
- *Walk on sidewalks or paths.* If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- *Be a safe pedestrian around Cars.* Watch for cars that are turning or backing up. Parents and kids should hold hands in parking lots.

**Set pedestrian safety rules for your children.**

- Never allow children under age 10 to cross streets alone. Adult supervision is essential until you are sure a child has good traffic skills and judgment.
- Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.
- Make sure children know to cross 10 feet in front of a school bus, never behind, and to wait for adults on the same side of the street as the school bus loading or unloading zone.
- Teach your child never to run out into a street for a ball, a pet or any other reason.

**Help create an environment that's safe for pedestrians.**

- Make sure your child plays in safe places away from motor vehicles, such as yards, parks and playgrounds –never in the street. Fence off play areas from driveways and streets.
- Buy clothing and accessories incorporating retro reflective materials for your family to wear at dawn and dusk, in the evening and during other low-light situations, such as rainy or foggy weather.
- Check frequently for children when backing out of a driveway or a parking space.

[www.safekidsworldwide.org](http://www.safekidsworldwide.org)

# SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
2802 Fourth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
(310) 399 - 5865

SCHOOL YEAR 2009 - 2010

## PARENT HANDBOOK RECEIPT

I have received a copy of the Preschool Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies of the Child Development Services Program for Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. I have been trained on the Transportation and Pedestrian Safety and the Transition into Preschool information.

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Parent's Signature

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Date

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Student's Name

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Site