

# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Enrollment**

### **Admission**

Shining Star Preschool is open to all families regardless of race, creed, ethnic or cultural background. Shining Star Preschool serves children from three to five years of age. Families wishing to enroll a child at Shining Star Preschool must complete a Registration Form and submit it with the required registration fee. Pending availability of a classroom seat, your child will be assigned to an age appropriate class. In addition, the following forms must be submitted prior to the first day of class.

- All About Me Form
- Child's Authorized Individual Release Form
- Parent Authorization for Emergency Treatment Form
- Activities Consent Form (4 Year-Old Classes Only)
- Photographic and Address/Telephone Release Form
- Enrollment and Tuition Contract
- State of Rhode Island School Physical Form
- Administering Medication Form (if applicable)

Parents of children enrolled at Shining Star Preschool are required to update these forms as necessary to keep the information current.

### **Tuition Payments**

Tuition is a fixed annual amount based on the Shining Star Preschool Academic Calendar that is divided to 10 equal payments. Tuition is due on the fifth of the month from August to May. Payment is due each month regardless of the days your child is ill, on vacation, or does not attend for any reason. Payments by check, money order or cash should be delivered to the Principal.

Prompt payment of your tuition each month is imperative in order for Shining Star Preschool to meet its obligations. A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed to parents whose tuition payment is received after the fifth of the month. Any family whose account is more than two weeks in arrears **MUST** make arrangements to pay immediately or may be asked to withdraw their child.

### **Extended Care Payments**

On occasion parents of the Half Day classes may require their child to remain at Shining Star Preschool beyond 12:30 or come on an additional day. With prior approval of the Principal, this may be arranged at a cost of \$7.00 an hour. Shining Star Preschool closes at 5:30 Monday through Friday. All children must be picked up prior to this time. Shining Star Preschool understands that on rare occasions a parent may be unable to pick up their child by 5:30 due to an unforeseen circumstance beyond their control. In this circumstance, a fee of \$5.00 per each 15 minutes after 5:30 will apply. However, any parent that repetitively picks up their child after 5:30 may be assessed a \$75.00 Late Pick Up Fee for each occurrence.

### Withdrawal Procedure

If you plan to terminate your child's enrollment for whatever reason, you must provide us with two weeks written prior notice of your intention. This allows us time to register another child in your child's space, and to help in the adjustment of your child and his/her classmates to the transition. Without two weeks written prior notice, no adjustment to your account will be possible.

### **Home-School Transition**

#### Separations

Because children are individuals, they tend to respond in different ways to the first days and weeks of preschool. Many children will become acclimated to Shining Star Preschool quickly and will not be the least bit concerned with saying good-bye to Mom and Dad. Some children may be apprehensive initially but rapidly adjust to the new environment. A few children will take longer to adjust. The Staff of Shining Star Preschool will assist families in making this transition as smooth as possible.

At Shining Star Preschool, to accomplish this, we do the following things:

- Before enrollment, families are encouraged to come for visits with their child so the child can investigate the environment with the security of a nearby parent. You will be invited to attend an open house prior to the start of school where your child will be able to see his/her cubby and meet the teacher and some classmates.
- Adjustment to school will be easier if your child is prepared for it. In addition to visiting with your child, you should begin talking with your child about going to school several weeks before the

starting date. Talk about things the child will be doing at Shining Star Preschool such as playing with blocks, painting, playing in the playground.

- With the initial few separations, parents are encouraged to let their child know when they will be returning. Due to the developmental characteristics of preschoolers, it is recommended that parents use event times like “after lunch” instead of clock times.
- Teachers will assist parents in establishing a consistent routine for the separation. This routine may include waving at the window, walking to the door together or finding a friend to play with.
- In the case where the child is upset at the separation, teachers will comfort the child and encourage the parent to complete the separation routine and promptly leave.
- Parents are encouraged to call later in the morning to find out about their child’s progress if separation is difficult for the child.

### Items From Home

Children like to bring toys or other objects from home to school. While this practice often assists the child in the transition from home to preschool, it must be noted that problems of sharing, breaking, and lost items often occur. At Shining Star Preschool, parents are asked not to bring toys from home except when using them as a Show and Tell item.

Guns, war toys, or other toys of destruction are not allowed at Shining Star Preschool. Although aggression is developmentally appropriate behavior for preschoolers, we feel that when a child is given a weapon as a toy it encourages and magnifies violent behavior. Children must have alternative means to express their feelings of aggression. The Staff of Shining Star Preschool will assist children in redirecting and expressing these aggressive behaviors in socially acceptable ways.

### Clothing

Shining Star Preschool provides a variety of experiences for young children that may involve clothing getting soiled. Parents should send children to school in casual clothing that is easily laundered and shoes with non-skid soles. Children dressed inappropriately may feel inhibited about becoming involved in some messy activities.

Shining Star Preschool believes that the children should go outside for recess every day weather permitting. Parents should ensure that their children bring the appropriate outerwear each day (jacket/coat, hat, mittens, snow pants, etc.)

At the beginning of each year, parents are asked to pack extra clothing in your child's backpack if you feel your child might need it. The Staff at Shining Star Preschool will help your child change his clothes if required and place the soiled clothes in a plastic bag for return.

## **Parental Involvement**

### Family Involvement

Integral to Shining Star Preschool philosophy is the belief that parents are the primary source of knowledge for their children. It is our function as teachers to support and facilitate the parent/child relationship because parents are the "expert" when it comes to knowing their own child. Shining Star Preschool functions best when we are able to take advantage of parent's perceptions, feeling, and observations about their children. It is critical that our teachers form a partnership with the parents to best meet the needs of the children attending Shining Star Preschool.

Shining Star Preschool welcomes parent involvement in the program as an important way to build this partnership.

### Parent Functions

Each year, Shining Star Preschool has a number of functions for parents to join us. From a Christmas Party to "Just Dad and Me" and "Mother's Day Tea Party", parents are invited to join their child at Shining Star Preschool for a special time. We ask that each family donate 2 rolls of 35 mm color film at the beginning of the school year to help us record some of the activities your child will be involved in at Shining Star Preschool.

### Parent-Teacher Interaction

The teachers at Shining Star Preschool welcome the opportunity to talk informally with parents for a few minutes each day. In addition, each teacher will maintain an informal diary in which the highlight of each day for each child will be recorded. This diary will be available to the parents each day for

review. Parents are encouraged to request any additional information about their child when they deem it necessary. On occasion, teachers will invite parents in to discuss special concerns about their child.

### Parent Visits

Parents are welcome at Shining Star Preschool at any time. They may come and observe the program, help out in the classroom or even visit for lunch. We also welcome their assistance on our field trips.

### Monthly Newsletters

Each month parents will receive a Class Newsletter that will highlight important events and projects/academic goals of the coming month.

## **Health and Safety**

### Arrival and Dismissal

Shining Star Preschool follows a Half Day/Full Day format to better accommodate the working parents and to simplify the arrival and departure schedules of all our parents. Half Day is 7:30 to 12:30 and Full Day is 7:30 to 5:30. Parents will have the flexibility to arrive at any time after 7:30 knowing that preschool activities will normally begin at 9:00. This should also eliminate the traffic problem when everyone arrives at the same time. Lunch will normally be 11:30 to 12:00 or 12:00 to 12:30, which will allow parents to pack a lunch for their student or pick up early if they wish.

Full Day students must be picked up at least 15 minutes prior to 5:30 in order for all to depart and the building be secured at 5:30.

Moving cars make the parking lot a particularly dangerous place for young children. Therefore, it is critical that drivers NEVER drop off a child in the parking lot or at the door of the building. Parents/drivers must ALWAYS accompany the child into and out of the school. At the time of arrival and departure, parents/drivers must avoid blocking already parked cars. Common sense and courtesy by all parents/drivers will ensure a safe arrival and departure by all.

In order to ensure security and safety of the children at Shining Star Preschool, the following policies are in effect:

- Each child must be escorted into the classroom by a parent or authorized adult each day. We encourage parents to arrive with enough time to bring their child into the classroom and get settled at an activity before saying good-bye.
- Each child will be released only to his/her parent or authorized person unless written notice is given to the Principal.
- Parents must sign their child in and out each day as they arrive and leave with the child. This is done on a sign-in/out sheet located in each classroom.
- When parents are at Shining Star Preschool to pick up or drop off their child or attend school functions, they are responsible for their own children and are expected to enforce Shining Star Preschool Safety rules.
- Parents must not allow their children to leave the classroom without them.
- Parents are asked to turn off or mute their cell phone prior to dropping off or picking up their child. Cell phone use in the building is prohibited.

### Release Policy

An Authorization to Release Form with the names, relationship, and telephone numbers of all those people authorized to pick your child from school will be maintained in the school office. Your child will only be released to those people whose names are on the list. Thus, parents are asked to keep this list current. If a parent will not be picking up their child on a particular day, they must write a note to their teacher indicating a particular individual on their Authorization to Release Form will be picking their child up. Shining Star Preschool will not release your child to anyone other than you, the parents, unless the following conditions have been met:

- A note from the parent indicating a specific individual will pick up their child.
- This specific individual is on the child's Authorization to Release Form and has photo identification with him/her.
- In case of an emergency where the parent does not know in the morning that someone different will be picking up their child, in lieu of a written note, after telephoning Shining Star Preschool your child will only be released to a specific individual on the child's Release Form that additionally knows the secret code word

on the child's Release Form and has photo identification with him/her.

- On very rare occasions it may be impossible for a parent or anyone on the Release Form to get to school to pick up a child. In this situation, when a parent calls to tell us the name of a person not on the Release Form is picking up the child, Shining Star Preschool will ask for the child's birthday. If for any reason you DO NOT want your child to be released to the named person, you should tell us the wrong birthday. We will not release your child unless you tell us the correct birthday. This named individual will also be required to present photo identification and know the secret code word.

### Shining Star Preschool Snow Days

Shining Star Preschool follows the Middletown Public School decision concerning snow days. If the Middletown Public Schools are closed due to severe weather, Shining Star Preschool will also be closed. Local radio and television stations will broadcast school closing when known. You may also check for school closings at [www.wpri.com](http://www.wpri.com), [www.turnto10.com](http://www.turnto10.com), and [www.abc6.com](http://www.abc6.com) .

### Field Trips

Shining Star Preschool believes that field trips are an important part of a child's learning experience. Because of their young age, our 3-year-old class field trips will be limited to nature walks around the school to focus on seasonal changes and events brought to the school (fire truck/police cruiser/dentist/etc.) Field trips for the 4-year-old classes will be to a variety of places of interest on Aquidneck Island. Parents were asked to sign an Activities Consent form at the beginning of school that lists the anticipated field trips for the year. When a field trip is scheduled, it will appear on the monthly newsletter. Approximately one week prior to the field trip, a "Driver Sign Up" sheet will be posted requesting parents to drive and participate in the field trip. The children will be divided into groups and assigned to drivers based on the number of child safety seats that can be placed in their vehicle. No child will be placed in a front seat. The driver will be responsible for supervising their group of children for the entire trip.

Parents should leave a car seat with the child's name on it in the foyer on the day of the field trip and retrieve it at the end of the day.

## Hand Washing

Hand washing has been identified as the major way to prevent the spread of most communicable diseases. Children will be required to wash their hands after toileting, sneezing, wiping their noses, before meals, and after messy activities. The staff at Shining Star Preschool will follow these practices as well to model proper health practices for the children.

## Lunches and Snacks

Eating is a social activity that children and adults will participate in for all of their lives. Good eating habits are acquired through imitation, practice, encouragement, and guidance. It is important that children enjoy meal times and the foods they eat. The staff at Shining Star Preschool will facilitate this by allowing mealtime to occur in a relaxed atmosphere, which allows for social interaction with peers and adults.

At lunch times, children will be encouraged to eat a portion of their main course. Once they have eaten a portion of their main course, they may eat the rest of their lunch in any order they choose. Children may not share lunches with each other since some families have dietary restrictions. Children's uneaten food will be returned to their lunch boxes to go home unless this is impossible without creating a mess. Children are not required to eat snack or lunch if they are not hungry.

Shining Star Preschool serves one morning and one afternoon snack daily. Snacks are provided by Shining Star Preschool however, parents who voluntarily bring in a 64 oz bottle of juice and a box of snack crackers each month are greatly appreciated.

Lunch begins at 11:30 or 12:00. Children bring their own lunches from home. Lunches should be in lunch boxes or bags that have the child's name clearly marked on the outside. Lunches should be placed in the child's cubby.

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youths, and Families (RIDCYF) regulations mandate that we must provide written guidelines highlighting aspects of nutritionally balanced bag lunches. For your information, below are their suggestions outlined by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council:

<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Ages 3 to 6</u>
• Fluid Milk	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
• Meat or poultry or fish or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut butter	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces 1 ounce $\frac{3}{8}$ ounce 3 tablespoons
• Vegetables and/or fruit (2 or more for a total)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
• Bread or bread alternate	$\frac{1}{2}$ slice

### Illness

Shining Star Preschool is dedicated to maintaining a healthy environment for children and staff. In order to do this, we ask that parents be aware of and respect the following guidelines:

- If a child is judged ill while at Shining Star Preschool, the family will be contacted and requested to come for the child as soon as possible. The child will be moved to the cot in the Office and supervised until the parents arrive.
- Families are expected to call Shining Star Preschool and leave a message for the Principal or his/her classroom teacher when a child will be absent due to illness.
- If a child should come down with a contagious condition of any kind, the family is expected to notify the Principal so that other families if appropriate can be notified of the potential for this contagious disease.
- Shining Star Preschool is committed to safeguarding the health of all children attending the school by requiring families to follow the guidelines below when deciding if a child is well enough to attend. The final decision rests with the Principal.

<u>SYMPTOM</u>		<u>KEEP CHILD HOME UNTIL</u>
Fever (100 degrees & up)		Fever free for 24 hours (non-medicated) and child is acting well.
Runny Nose		Thick yellow or green discharge clears up.
Earache		A physician examines the ear and recommends returning to school.
Rash		A physician determines the cause and recommends returning to school.
Sore Throat		A physician determines the cause and that no strep infection exists and the throat is healed.
Cough		Coughing subsides.
Pale or Flushed		Color returns to normal.
Red or Watery Eyes		Eyes return to normal.
Upset Stomach or Diarrhea		No further problem exists and the child is eating normally without causing upset stomach or diarrhea
Draining Sore		Until draining stops.

## Medicine

Shining Star Preschool will administer prescription or non-prescription medication to children only when a parent completes an Administering Medication Form stating the date, name of the medication, dosage, and time at which it should be administered. The medication must be in the original container with the child's name on it. State regulations mandate that teachers cannot under any circumstances give a child a prescription drug that has another person's name on it.

Parents are required to hand the medication to the child's teacher. Medication should never be placed in the child's cubby or lunch box. Medication that requires refrigeration will be placed on the top shelf of the refrigerator in the Project Room so the children do not have access to it. Medication that does not require refrigeration will be placed on top of the refrigerator. The teacher who is responsible for administering the medication will document this administration on the Medication Administration Form that

lists the date, time, name of the child, name of the medication and the dosage. This form will be kept on a clipboard on top of the refrigerator.

### Allergies

It is not unusual for children with allergies to food or other substances to be enrolled at Shining Star Preschool. With food allergies, the staff will provide snack substitutes when possible. Parents should provide substitute snacks for their child if the condition is severe. A list is posted in the project room that documents children and their food allergies. Additionally, allergy conditions will be posted above the child's cubby. Parents should provide this information on the Preadmission Immunization & Health Examination Form and the All About Me Form completed on enrollment. Adjustments are made as necessary to ensure individual children with other types of allergies can safely participate in activities at Shining Star Preschool.

### Accidents

In the case of minor accident that requires simple first aid procedures, the child's injury will be cleaned and treated as necessary. The staff will then complete an Accident Report. Whenever possible, parents will be verbally informed of the incident and treatment when picking up their child at the end of the day and asked to sign the Accident Report. When this minor accident involves injury to the head or insect bites, the teacher or Principal will attempt to contact you to inform you of the incident. Otherwise, the procedure noted above will be followed.

If the injury requires a doctor's treatment, but it is not an emergency, parents will be called to pick up the child. While waiting for the parent's arrival, the staff will administer temporary first aid and complete an Accident Report as specified above.

If a child or an adult receives a serious injury and the injury requires immediate, professional medical treatment (severe bleeding, head injury, severe allergic reaction to insect bite or sting) the staff will:

- Immediately call 911 and request an ambulance.
- Call the child's parents.
- Send someone to meet the ambulance and accompany the child until the parent arrives.

- After the child's needs are attended to, complete an Accident Report as specified above.

### Fire

In case of fire, Shining Star Preschool is directly radio alarm connected to the Middletown Fire Department that is just minutes away from the school. The children will be evacuated to the parking lot and attendance taken. The staff has evacuation procedures in each classroom. Fire drills will be conducted to ensure that all staff and children are familiar with the procedures. At least 15 fire drills will be conducted during the academic calendar year.

### Tobacco Use

Shining Star Preschool is a SMOKE FREE environment. Smoking or other tobacco use is not allowed by anyone in the school or on school grounds at any time.

### Custody and Restraining Orders

Any child attending Shining Star Preschool which is the subject of a Custody Order or a Restraining Order shall have, in their personnel file, a copy of such order. Shining Star Preschool shall be kept advised on status of such orders by the parent involved.

It is the policy of Shining Star Preschool to request a violator of a Custody Order or Restraining Order on file to leave the premises immediately and inform the legal guardian of the child involved of the incident. Failure to leave the premises immediately will result in a request to the police to remove the violator from the premises.

### Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

Rhode Island state law requires that anyone who suspect's child abuse or neglect must report the suspicion to the RI Department of Children, Youth, and Families (RIDCYF). The Division of Child Protective Services handles child abuse cases. The toll free number is:

1-800-RI-CHILD

It is the policy of Shining Star Preschool that when child abuse or neglect is suspected, the staff role will be to request an investigation; not to investigate.

## Parental Evaluation of Shining Star Preschool

Shining Star Preschool strives to be the best preschool on Aquidneck Island.

Part of this effort, when warranted, is incorporating new ideas, new points of view and constructive criticism from parents of children attending Shining Star Preschool. We also want to know in your opinion what we are doing right.

A Parental Evaluation of Shining Star Preschool form will be provided in the enrollment registration package. Please submit this form to the Principal any time during or after the academic year when you desire to express your opinion.