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South Orange Country Day School

## **Everyday Policies**

### **Morning Arrival**

Morning drop-off is between **8:30-9:00am**. Please park on the street on the **side closest to the school**. This might require that you drive around the block. Walk your child to the top of the circle and sign them in on the clip board. Your child will be escorted by a teacher to the back playground.

### **Late Arrival**

Late arrivals are Very Disruptive to the classroom schedule and to students that are transitioning to a new environment. **We really need families to plan to be here before 9:10am. We expect students to be at school no later than 9:10am for morning message.**

The obvious exceptions of pre-scheduled appointments will always be accepted. Please let Ms. Annemarie and your teacher know **at least the day before of any scheduled appointments and the expected time** that your child will be arriving at school. If you are going to be late, please call prior to 8:00 am.

### **Backpacks**

All children need a backpack that is big enough to carry the things that they need for school: a folder, a change of clothes, and their water bottle and lunch box (for their snack for morning students, and snack and lunch for full day students).

**If you are expecting a message and do not find it in the backpack or folder, please contact Ms. Annemarie immediately (call (973) 762-6451 or email Learn@socds.com).**

### **Nap**

All students (with the exception of kindergarten) are required by state regulations to have a rest period on their cots during the day. Please provide your child with a child-size blanket and a pillowcase for storage. Please label the bedding with your child's name.

Bedding will be sent home on Friday and expected to be returned Monday washed and clean.

### **Clothing**

Since children have an active day, their clothing should be comfortable, appropriate and allow them freedom of motion. Send in a complete change of clothes (season related, and labeled) for your child in a **large zip-lock plastic bag**.

### **Using the Bathroom**

All students must be potty trained before joining SOCDS. The teachers will follow a routine to remind students to use the bathroom. They will also guide students through using the bathroom

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independently. It is our goal that children learn to wipe themselves, pull up their clothing, and wash their hands independently. Through each step the teachers are verbally guiding students through that process.

### **Birthday Parties**

We celebrate birthdays at morning message with a birthday song. During the school year, PEP arranges a celebration for all the birthdays on the last school day of the month (Pizza Cupcake Spirit Day). Please do not send in piñatas or “grab bags”, balloons, party favors, candy or gum, or confetti. These items are not allowed in the school.

### **Snacks / Meals**

Please provide a nutritious morning snack for each child in a lunch box. If your child stays full day please send in a lunch for them as well.

#### **Peanuts and Peanut Products and Shellfish are NOT ALLOWED.**

Please check food labels and make sure they do not contain peanuts or shellfish. Labels that say **may contain traces of nuts are not allowed**, while the general phrase may have been manufactured in a facility with nuts is ok.

Staff members will check all food and will not give a child the item if it does not comply with our Peanut Free and Shellfish Free Environment (as described below).

**Please label the lunch box and all utensils.**

### **School Closing or Early Dismissal due to Inclement Weather**

South Orange Country Day School will follow the lead of the **South Orange-Maplewood public school district** in terms of closure for inclement weather. If the South Orange-Maplewood schools are closed for weather reasons, we will also be closed. If there is a delayed opening (of any time frame) we will open at **9:30am**.

In the event that hazardous weather develops during the school day, the director may close the school regardless of the public schools. In that case we will contact each parent to arrange for early pick-up.

Please note that preschool attendance is not mandatory. If you feel your child would be safer staying home or being picked up early then please feel free to do what you think is best for your child.

### **School/Class Trips**

We will inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing or special event away from school. You will be asked to provide written consent before we take your child on any trip. This is to ensure that you are aware that we are taking your child off the school campus.

### **Policies on Safety**

#### **Playground Rules**

South Orange Country Day School has the biggest playground in the area. Our students are outside every day except in severe weather. Please make sure your child is appropriately dressed for outside play and that **all shoes are closed toe – flips flops are not allowed**.

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Please help explain and reinforce the following playground rules with your children.

- Do not leave the playground area without the teacher's permission.
- Do not hide from the teacher when asked to line up.
- No karate chops/kicks or action hero type play-fighting.
- No stick-throwing or sword-fighting, but independent stick play is allowed in the stick area.
- No pushing, shoving, or pulling other children by their clothing, hair, or body parts.
- No throwing sand, snowballs, toys or wood chips.
- Do not climb on the fence or on any of the playhouses.

### **Alternate Pick-Up People**

If you have approved alternative pick up people in advance, we will release your child to them if you have mentioned to us that someone else is picking up and if your child feels comfortable with that person. If your child is uncomfortable we will call you first before releasing your child.

Please ask your pick up people to be patient with us.

We will also ask for photo id and we will keep a copy of the ID. If you need to add any additional people to pick-up your child the office can provide you with an authorization form for that person. You will need to sign the form in advance before we will release your child to that individual.

Please remind your alternate pick-up people to bring photo ID.

### **Parents who Fail to Pick-up – DCF Policy**

If your child is still at our school after their normal pick-up time, we will place a call to the parent. If we cannot make contact with a parent, we will start calling the authorized pick-up people that you listed on your registration form. We will make every effort to contact someone to pick up your child.

If we cannot make contact with a parent / guardian / authorized pick-up or emergency contact person we are required by state law to call the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610) to begin procedures for an exchange of custody from the school to the state.

### **Releasing Students**

Staff members will not release children to any (including pre-authorized) individuals if that individual appears to be physically, mentally, or emotionally impaired to the extent that the child would be placed at risk of harm. If this situation arises we will contact the other parent/guardian or another pick-up person authorized on your registration form for guidance. In addition, if your child is hesitant to leave with this person we will retain the child and call the guardian for further guidance.

### **Visitation**

Our school is very lucky to have an active parent community led by PEP. Parents of enrolled children are entitled to visit our school at any time without having to secure permission before hand. You are welcome to come and participate at your convenience and arranged with your child's teacher. We usually start this more formally in January once the class has settled into a routine.

### **Statement on Security/Access to Punch Codes**

As you are aware we have punch codes on the door locks. **Only teachers know the code.** Please ring the buzzer and wait for someone to let you in.

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We also have video cameras on the front entrance, the side driveway and the back playground. In addition each classroom has a camera. This is for added security as well.

If you see something that makes you uncomfortable or concerns, please let Ms. Annemarie know immediately. We are all responsible for keeping our campus safe and secure.

### **Policies on Child Welfare**

#### **Discipline**

The teacher must be an observer, sensitive to each child, so that she/he can initiate work and demonstrate materials that are meaningful and purposeful for that child. The children will grow in self-discipline as they become interested in and challenged by the classroom exercises and work. The staff will practice positive reinforcement, noticing and praising good behavior. Specific misbehavior rather than the child will be criticized, e.g., "Hitting is bad" not "you are bad for hitting."

The child who does not respond to having his attention redirected to meaningful work or is repeatedly misbehaving may be asked to cool down within the classroom to reflect on his misbehavior until he says he is ready to behave and re-join the class. The teacher will try to have the child restate in his own words why he was given a cool down to reinforce appropriate behavior.

In cases of physical assault, serious destruction, disregard for the adult in charge or any other discipline matter considered serious by the teacher, the Director will be asked to speak with the child. The child's parent will be contacted immediately by telephone and an action plan will be discussed.

If misbehavior involves more than one child, treatment for all children involved will be impartial. The teacher will work with each child involved to get a true picture of what happened and will assist the children in acknowledging their behavior and expressing appropriate feelings to the other children.

There shall be no use of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule or harsh or humiliating treatment of any kind. If you become aware of any situations or occurrences that may not seem appropriate to you, please call for the director immediately. It is your responsibility as a member of our South Orange Country Day School to protect all our children and staff.

#### **Child Abuse**

The size and structure of our school helps to protect a child from child abuse or neglect.

The classroom doors have clear plastic panels and the Director frequently visits the classrooms on an unscheduled basis.

We are very careful in our selection of employees, giving preference to experience and personal and professional recommendations. It is our policy to exceed the state requirements for qualifications and staff/child ratios. To the best of our knowledge and as confirmed by the State of New Jersey, none of our staff has been charged or convicted of child abuse.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening

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treatment or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any person, whether working at the school or not, is required by state law to report that concern to DYFS Office of Child Abuse Control toll free 1-800-792-8610. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: Community Education Office, Division of Youth and Family Services, One Montgomery Street, CN 717, Trenton, NJ 08625.

### **SOCDS Expulsion Policy**

Our approach to interacting with children that are having trouble adjusting to our school or our routines is to always examine what we are doing that is preventing this child from developing trust with us and attempting to follow the routine of the school. Unfortunately there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. This is a last resort and we work very hard to make all children feel safe and secure at school so that they can use their words to express what is really bothering them. Except for reasons stated below which are immediate causes for expulsion, we will work with parents on a transition plan over one week to help find an alternative placement.

#### Immediate Causes for Expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or to him/herself
- The child has uncontrollable and non-responsive tantrums
- Excessive biting
- Guardian threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members
- Guardian uses inappropriate language in front of students
- Failure to complete all require medical forms or school forms
- Habitual tardiness in dropping off or picking up children

### **Health Policies**

#### **Health Forms**

For Full Year students, children must have an **updated Universal Health Record** signed by your child's doctor. These forms are required by regulations and must be updated annually. They are required by October 1st.

All Students (including summer students) - You must also provide a record of your child's immunizations by the start of your time at SOCDS. (Current students have already provided this documentation).

**For full year students,** flu Immunization is mandatory this year and must be scheduled and received by December 31<sup>st</sup>. If you do not provide documentation of the flu immunization by December 31<sup>st</sup> your child will not be able to attend school until documentation is provided. There will be no exceptions!

#### **Management of Communicable Diseases**

As a member of our school community it is your responsibility to keep our students and staff members healthy by reducing their risk of exposure to a sick child. If you are planning on keeping your child home for the day please call the school (973-762-6451) before 8:00 a.m. Let us know the reason for keeping them home.

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If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms **while at school** you will be notified immediately and asked to take your child home. **A child may return to school when they have been symptom free for 24 hours.**

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms while at school you will be notified immediately and asked to take your child home. Once the child is symptom free for 24 hours or if you have a doctor's note that states they are no longer pose a serious risk to him/herself, they may return to school unless contraindicated by local health department or NJ State Department of Health. Once your child is symptom-free, it is your responsibility to notify the school so that we can also monitor this symptom-free 24-hour period. If your child is out for more than two days we will require a doctor's note stating that the child does not pose a health risk.

Severe pain or discomfort	Acute diarrhea
Episodes of acute vomiting	Oral temperature above 101.5
Sore throat or severe coughing	Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
Lethargy	Severe Coughing
Yellow eyes or jaundice skin	Red eyes with discharge
Infected, untreated skin patches	Difficult or rapid breathing
Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes	
Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding	
Mouth sores with drooling	Stiff neck

### Excludable Communicable Diseases

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease may not return to the school without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others. These diseases include respiratory, gastrointestinal, and contact illnesses such as Impetigo, Lice, Scabies, Shingles, strep, influenza, mumps, scarlet fever, etc. For a complete list please refer to [www.nj.gov/health/cd](http://www.nj.gov/health/cd).

Note: If a child has chicken pox, a health care provider's note is not required for re-admitting the child to the center. A note from the parent is required stating either that at least six days has elapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried and crusted.

When in doubt, please keep your child home. It is our experience that children that are uncomfortable in the morning are going to be uncomfortable all day. In addition children that stay home and rest at the beginning of an illness seem to recover quicker.

We are in constant contact with the local health department and we must report any communicable diseases, including the flu, present at our school. Throughout the year we may need to change this policy based on direction from the local health department.

### Administration of Prescription Medicine

Medication (prescribed or over-the-counter) will be administered only after receipt of a signed Medical Permission Form (see the office). No medication will be give if the written approval form has not been filled out and signed. The director and the parent will designate those staff members

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who are authorized to administer the medication. If the child needs to take medication for more than one day, a new form must be filled out each day.

All medication must be in the original bottle or it will not be administered. Please inform us if medication requires refrigeration. Prescription medication must be prescribed in the child's name and must be stored in the original prescription container, labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the date it was prescribed, directions for administration, and the doctor's name, address, and telephone number.

If you, the parent, guardian, or nanny has given medication to a child on a school day, please fill out the Medication Permission Form so that we are aware that your child is on medication for that day. This helps us react appropriately in case your child has a late reaction to the medication.

### **Peanut Free and Shellfish Free Environment**

All possible steps are being taken to avoid exposure to allergens at school. **If we prevent exposure to offending allergens, then we are well on our way to preventing anaphylaxis shock.**

These are our classroom procedures.

- Information will be kept in the classroom about students' food allergies. These foods will not be used for class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts and crafts, science experiments, cooking, snacks, or other purposes.
- Sharing or trading food in the classroom is prohibited. If a student inadvertently brings a restricted food to the classroom, he/she must not be allowed to eat that snack in the classroom. The snack will be thrown out upstairs in the staff kitchen and a note to the parent will be sent home reminding the family about the Peanut Free school zone.
- Parents of the student with food allergies are responsible for providing safe classroom snacks for their child.
- Tables will be washed with a mixture of bleach and water in the morning, and before and after each snack or lunch period.
- Proper hand washing technique by adults and children will be taught and required **before and after** the handling/consumption of food.

### **Allergy Management Plan**

If your child has any allergies you must fill out an **allergy information form**. This form is meant to help us interpret the reactions that your child might be experiencing. If your child has an allergy that might cause respiratory distress (including peanut/nut allergies, and others) you must have an EpiPen available for the school to use and one EpiPen must be available in your child's backpack.

If a child has any respiratory distress we, South Orange Country Day School, will immediately do the following:

- Administer the epinephrine using a family supplied EpiPen.
- Call 911 and request a paramedic response.
- Contact the parent via cell phone.
- Contact the child's physician if parent cannot be reached.

**Administrative Policies**

**Licensing**

South Orange Country Day School is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing Law to be licensed by the Bureau of Licensing of the New Jersey Division of Child and Family (DCF). Copies of our current licenses are posted in the foyer of the main entrance. To be licensed, our school must comply with the manual of Standards for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment, life-safety, staff qualifications, staff-child ratios, program activities, rest requirements, parent and community participation, etc. These guidelines are available in the office or online New Jersey DCF.

Please see the following titled "Information to Parents."

**DCF INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, state licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care center matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

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Our center is required by the State Child Care Licensing Law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you are in the center. To be licensed, our center must comply with the current Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life safety; staff qualifications; supervision and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food, and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record-keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at [www.state.nj.us/DCF/providers/licensing/laws/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/DCF/providers/licensing/laws/index.html) or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Licensing Publication Fees, PO Box 34399, Newark, NJ 07189-4399.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center, or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing standards, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll-free at 1-877-667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parent(s) to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medication and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please refer to the parent guidelines for details.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so that we can work together to keep your child in our center.

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Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review. Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space. Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to participate in and observe the activities of the center.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of any field trip, outing or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c.169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or to provide parents with the CPSC website at <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772. We also inform all families of any recalls on a weekly basis.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, **is required** by State law to report that concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll-free at (877) NJ ABUSE or (877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously.

Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609)-292-0422 or go to [www.nj.gov/dcf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf) and select Publications.