



Sacramento Street Preschool Fact Sheet 2010-11

Excerpt from our Parent/Guardian Handbook – a full copy of the handbook will be available at our Family Orientation and on our website at: <http://agassiz.org>.

Calendar

Sacramento Street Preschool follows the Cambridge Public School's calendar. If CPS is closed (i.e. holidays, vacations or snow days) then the preschool will also be closed. You can locate closures on the news or the Cambridge Public School's website: <http://www2.cpsd.us>.

Parking

Parking is a challenge in this small residential Cambridge neighborhood. Please be respectful of our neighbors by not parking in or in front of their driveway — even for a quick drop-off. As a preschool, we have a **five-minute consideration** period for pick-up and drop-off throughout the day. If you are staying longer than five minutes, there is metered parking available along Mass. Ave. Please be aware of the street signs and know that cars may be towed promptly, *especially for street cleaning*.

Records

Please make sure to update us with any new information pertaining to your child, including any changes to contact information for family or emergency contacts.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent for the day, please let us know by 8:00am that day. The preschool number is 617-349-6287, ext 13.

What to pack for preschool

- It is important that your children have extra, season-appropriate clothing at all times left in their bag at school. Please make sure your child has an extra: shirt, pants/skirt, socks and underwear in their bag. An extra pair of shoes is also helpful as sometimes accidents can leave them with wet feet, which can be uncomfortable.
- In order to keep track of clothing and accessories, we ask that it be mandatory to label each of your child's items with ID tags or permanent markers.

Parent/Teacher Communication

- Please keep in mind that mornings and pick-up is a very busy time for teachers and their attention is on the children. If you have a question or concern that will affect things for your child that day, please speak with one of the teachers. However, if it's a long-term question regarding your child, curriculum or school policy, please call or set up an in person discussion.
- You may contact our Early Education Site Director or the Director of Children's Programs via email or phone if you have any questions or concerns during the day. Voicemail and email messages are checked periodically throughout the day.
- Please check your email and family mailbox (located above the children's hooks) to keep informed about school events, classroom happenings and policy changes. Special notices and sign-up sheets are often placed near the sign-out sheet on the mantel, as well as on the front doors where parents will see them as they enter/exit. The Lead Teacher/Director sends an email each Friday with the week's highlights.
- Our parent liaisons on the Agassiz Baldwin Community board of directors will attend parent meetings and are also available to speak with you upon request.
- Sacramento Street Preschool understands that every family has unique parenting philosophies, techniques and beliefs. It is our goal to honor these differences and incorporate them into the program when applicable. Teaching and administrative staff is always open to discussing different philosophies and pedagogies, and will work with families individually to reach a mutual understanding should a conflict arise.

Snack and lunch

Sacramento Street Preschool supports a healthy, nutritious lifestyle for children and staff.

- The preschool provides children with a snack each morning. Snacks are planned with attention to nutrition and appeal to children. Snack items may include crackers, cheese, fruits, vegetables, cereals, yogurt and milk. Sweetened beverages are not served. On special occasions, juice (100% all natural) may be served, but in general, water is served at each meal. Parents are asked on enrollment forms to provide information about any food allergies, sensitivities or restrictions in their child's diet.
- **Sacramento Street Preschool is a peanut and nut free zone.** Teachers, parents, babysitters and children must avoid peanuts and nuts in any products — this includes peanut oil and possible cross contamination in products such as granola bars. Good substitutions include: soy butter or sunflower butter.
- Candy and gum are not allowed at school, please save these treats for home. Difficult situations can arise when children bring candy and want to share it. Please help us maintain a healthy eating community.
- Children who remain at preschool for lunch are asked to bring a lunch from home. Although the preschool does not provide lunches, we are able to keep cold items refrigerated and to heat “warm meals” in our microwave. Teachers sit with the students during lunch and engage them in conversation during snack and meal times. Lunch is a peaceful time for the students to socialize in a smaller group.
- While all parents are aware of their children's individual preferences, some suggestions for a nutritious lunch include:
 - Sandwiches or crackers, rice cakes and spreads such as tuna, cheese, soy or other butters, hummus, egg salad.
 - Hard-boiled eggs (please peel), rolled meat, sushi, soup, cold pizza, noodles, mac and cheese, ravioli, pasta or rice.
 - Fruit: apples, oranges, grapes, strawberries, bananas, berries, dried fruits.
 - Veggies: carrots, celery, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, peppers with dip or cottage cheese.
 - Dessert: pudding, applesauce, fruit, granola (nut free), yogurt, cookies.
 - Drinks: milk, 100% juice, water.
- Please prepare the lunch the way your child prefers it (for example: if your child likes apples peeled, please peel them – if they do not like oatmeal bread, please do not send it). Please include a napkin, with a fork and spoon if needed.

Behavior Guidance

- It is the Preschool's goal to have a behavior guidance policy that is consistent with the everyday lives of the children in the program. We seek a balance between fostering the growth of individual children, while ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for all. We believe it is important to maintain consistent behavioral standards that are firm, yet age-appropriate and attainable.
- At times, “rules” are talked about by teachers and children, thus allowing children a better understanding of these rules and giving them an opportunity—when possible—to contribute to the development of the rules. Teachers also model appropriate behavior on a daily basis and engage the children in activities and discussions to aid positive identity development and foster an inclusive classroom environment.
- When the behavior of any child/ren proves disruptive to the group or detrimental to the individual, child/ren involved are encouraged to work out their difficulties with each

- other verbally—and with teacher intervention as necessary. Teachers might redirect the child/ren to more appropriate behaviors.
- In situations that involve children being teased or rejected, teachers will intervene to help the children involved or involve the group in a discussion or activity to encourage more positive play.
 - If the child/ren are not ready to play appropriately within the group, they will take a brief break to calm down and regroup in a quiet area before they re-join the group. All of our methods are designed to promote the social growth of children and to help them to learn skills that they can carry with them into future group settings.

Family involvement

- Families are encouraged to play an active role in their children’s preschool experience. They are welcome to visit the program any time that their child is present. Parents/caregivers are also invited to share any special skills or interests that they might have in an activity with the group.
- Through the “Mystery Guest” program, family members are invited to sign-up in advance to come in at a scheduled time to read a story with the children or help with some other activity: art, music, science, etc! The preschool makes every effort to provide an inclusive environment that supports all backgrounds and customs. We encourage families to come in and teach a brief lesson on a language they speak at home, a cooking activity of a special family food or an art form or musical form that is special to their family’s heritage.
- Parents are also invited to be involved in planning and carrying out special events in the preschool. Many parents enjoy bringing a snack-time treat to preschool on their child’s birthday. (Please see our policy on birthday snacks).

Toileting and diapering

- At Sacramento Street Preschool, children are free to use the bathroom whenever they need to. Throughout the day, teachers will remind children to use the bathroom in a positive and helpful way. Children routinely go to the bathroom during the morning, before nap and before going to the playground. All accidents are handled in a way that does not embarrass or shame the child.
- We realize that toilet training is a difficult process for all involved. Children can be very cautious when starting to use the toilet, but with a lot of support and encouragement this can happen easier than you might think. It is especially helpful for the children to be in a large group and go through the process together. We understand that there will be a lot of practicing and reminding the first few weeks, but this will also eventually bring much self-confidence and a sense of achievement for all of our students. Practicing with a parent or guardian in the classroom bathroom can also be extremely beneficial. A few reminders to help make this process easier for all involved:
 - 1) Elastic waist pants are the easiest to pull up and down independently.
 - 2) Overalls and belts on pants are quite challenging for children to manipulate.
 - 3) Please send at least one set of extra clothes for accidents (which includes an extra pair of shoes and socks).

Thank you very much and we look forward to assisting your children in accomplishing this developmental milestone. Please feel free to come to us with any questions or concerns.

Pick-up

In consideration of children as well as of staff, it is important that parents (or persons authorized in writing by parents) be prompt in picking up children at their registered times. This is by 12:00pm for regular day and by 2:30pm for extended day. This allows our staff to clean up and check-in before going home at their regularly scheduled hours.

**Please pick up your child promptly and no later than:
12:00 p.m. for regular hours.**

At 12:00 p.m. the late fee policy is in effect as stated below.

2:30 p.m. for extended hours.

At 2:30 p.m. the late fee policy is in effect as stated below.

We will charge a late fee of \$10.00 for the first five minutes of a late pickup, and \$5.00 for each additional five minutes thereafter. If we have not heard from you by 15 minutes after pick-up time, your emergency contacts will be called. In any case, a late fee will be assessed without exception and you will be billed on your next invoice. After an excess of five late pick-ups, your fee will increase to double the original amount. Ten late pick-ups may result in dismissal of your child from the program.

Daily schedule

Our daily activity schedule is tailored around the group's needs. Typically, the schedule follows the pattern outlined below.

8:30-9:00	Drop off and hand-washing
8:30-9:30	Free choice: includes dramatic play and various manipulatives
9:30-10:00	Circle time with morning songs, stories, calendar and weather discussions.
10:00-10:30	Clean-up and snack time
10:30-11:20	Arts and crafts, science, cooking (in art room) and small group activities, music and movement, puzzles, manipulatives (in meeting room)
11:20-12:00	Outdoor/Active Play
12:00	Regular Day Pick-Up
Extended Day	
12:00-12:30	Bathroom/washing up/Lunch
12:30-1:45	Rest time
1:45-2:30	Free play/ short activity
2:30	Extended Day Pick-up

It is our goal that all members of the program—family members, children and staff—have a pleasant and fulfilling experience at the Sacramento Street Preschool!