

S.N.A.C.S. Preschool Program Handbook



S. N. A. C. S. Preschool
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Dear Family,

Welcome to the SNACS Preschool! SNACS Preschool is a subsidiary of Sierra Nevada Academy Charter School serving grades K-8. Our mission is to provide young children with a developmentally appropriate program promoting academic, physical, social, and emotional growth through play.

Why Play? Young children learn and develop their understanding of the world through play. Children learn and develop a multitude of skills through play in the areas of: literacy and language development; mathematical logical and scientific thinking; social and emotional relationships; music; art studio; theatrical arts; and in physical fitness.

Curriculum is designed to provide developmentally appropriate activities in which young children learn. Using the Reggio Emilia approach, children explore their "hundred languages" through making choices. As a result, children learn early childhood academic skills as well as independence, and develop social skills.

SNACS Preschool staff work together, with parents as our partners, to provide young children with a positive school experience in a warm and supportive environment that incorporates the whole child. Our goals for all children attending SNACS preschool is to foster and develop a love of learning, an awareness and knowledge of the world in which they live and to help them to make decisions about their relationships in the world.

The SNACS preschool is a licensed program accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Being accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children is the Gold Stamp of Approval on the program and practices. SNACS Preschool Staff has worked to ensure all 400 criteria in 10 categories were implemented in the program. The 10 areas examined include: Relationships, Curriculum, Teaching, Assessments, Health, Teachers, Families, Community, Environment, and Leadership. We believe our program establishes a solid foundation for successful transition into the primary grades.

SNACS Preschool is excited to be awarded the Nevada Ready Preschool Development Program Grant, a federally and state funded high-quality preschool grant opportunity. The grant will provide funding for preschool children to attend a free 5 hour per day preschool program that will run in conjunction with the traditional school year. Achievers was chosen by the Nevada Public Charter School Authority (NPCSA) as one of two charter school sites in the state and the only Northern Nevada charter site to offer the program. Achievers will provide a developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness program. Achievers will continue to provide tuition-based full-day preschool and an extended-day program for those families enrolled in the Nevada Ready Program. SNACS Preschool accepts Children's Cabinet and other subsidy programs. Both programs will run simultaneously to ensure access to high-quality program for all children. Children in the program will be eligible to attend Sierra Nevada Academy Charter School for kindergarten. The program faculty will be working toward being rated in the Nevada Quality Rating and Improvement System. The program will include access to high-quality instruction that includes field trips and parent engagement opportunities. The program currently offers 20 spots and may extend to 40 in the next year.

Thanks for allowing us the opportunity to work with you and your child. We are proud of our preschool and expect you to be too!



I. The SNACS Preschool Mission:

To become the leading choice of preschool education in which educators, parents, and students are partners in fostering a small community and exemplary academic and social achievement in a cost-effective way.

II. Center Philosophy

We at SNACS Preschool believe in the development of the whole child. Young children learn and develop their understanding of the world through play. Children learn and develop a multitude of skills through play in the areas of: literacy and language development; mathematical logical and scientific thinking; social and emotional relationships; music; art studio; theatrical arts; and in physical fitness.

Our goals for young children are to:

- feel important and honored.
- be competent and confident in their abilities.
- be self-directed in a constructive, creative manner.
- learn cooperation with children and adults.
- develop self control and a sense of right and wrong.
- develop a love for learning and the ability to know how to learn.
- reach their full potential in emotional, intellectual, physical and social development.
- be successful in future educational experiences.

Curriculum

Curriculum is designed to provide developmentally appropriate activities where young children learn. Using the Reggio Emilia approach, children explore their "hundred languages" through making choices. As a result, children learn early childhood academic skills as well as independence, and develop social skills. In addition, we offer specialized time to explore theatre, art studio, music, and social skills.

SNACS Preschool staff work together, with parents as our partners, to provide young children with a positive school experience in a warm and supportive environment that incorporates the whole child. Our goals for all children attending SNACS preschool is to foster and develop a love of learning, an awareness and knowledge of the world in which they live and to help them to make decisions about their relationships in the world.

III. Parent Policies and Procedures

Required documentation for enrollment

1. Complete Enrollment packet
2. Complete Emergency form
3. Updated Immunizations
4. Well Check (30 days)
5. Payment including first, last and registration.
6. A signed and approved Financial Agreement.

Staff will verify the previous items and make copies when necessary for the centers records. If there is a custody issue, SNACS Preschool must have documentation on file.

Arrival and Departure

The SNACS Preschool is open from 6:30 am -6:00 pm. The infant/toddler room is open from 7:15am-6:00pm. We encourage students to arrive by 8:30 so they may fully participate in the morning activities. Parents/guardians must always accompany children in and out of the classroom. Upon your arrival and departure, please be sure a staff member in your child's classroom is aware that you are present and are either dropping off or taking your child home. Please share information that will help teachers with your child, in turn they will share information about your child's day. According to the Nevada Childcare Licensing regulations, you must your child in and out every day. Please do so on the sheet provided in each classroom, as well as on the Life Cubby ipad.

Communication

Communication Centers are located in each classroom. This is where you will sign your child in and out of SNACS Preschool. Students are provided with cubbies, folders and/or take home bins that will contain artwork, newsletters, announcements and financial billing statements. Please be advised it is your responsibility to check these everyday.

Life Cubby is a great communication tool we will use every day in the classroom. Life cubby has attendance, notes, boo-boo reports, pictures, lesson plans, and email blasts that will help with day to day communication between parents and teachers. Life cubby is an app that you can download on your phone to get notifications about your child's day. The email and phone number you provide is the way we will connect you to your individual child. Parents should sign students in and out every day on the parent communications iPad.

Blackboard Connect is used as a school wide home communication system via phone calls, texts and emails. These notifications will be sent to update parents on events, announcements, and emergencies. Please make sure your information is up-to-date with the preschool as well as the front office.

Class Dojo is a class point system to keep students on track throughout the day. Students get very excited about earning points in the classroom. Class Dojo is an app that you can download on your phone to track your child's progress throughout the day. The email and phone number you provide is the way we will connect you to your individual child.

Phone calls: We have a school phone in the classroom where we can be reached at any time, however if it is not an emergency, please make phone calls outside of our 8:00am-1:00pm window. Teachers are available to meet before or after school but we will start class right at 8:00am each day.

Meals and Nutrition

Early Morning Snack is served at school around 8:30. Breakfast items may include; pancakes, muffins, english muffins, bagels, oranges, apples, and milk. It is advised that students also eat breakfast at home to be truly prepared for the learning day.

Mid-Morning Snack may also be provided by the facility but it is advised to bring snack as well. Snack includes; various crackers, yogurt, string cheese, celery, cucumbers and juices.

Lunch is not provided by the facility at this time. Please provide your child with a nutritious meal and additional snacks. Please notify your child's teacher of any known allergies in writing and on the Emergency Contact Information form.

Afternoon Snack is served at school around 3:00. Snack may be provided by the facility but it is advised to bring snack as well. Snack includes; various crackers, yogurt, string cheese, celery, cucumbers and juices.

Quiet Time

SNACS Preschool follows Social Service regulations for nap/rest time. The children have a rest period each day. Please provide a familiar cuddly blanket for your child. 2 year olds rest 60-90 minutes. 3 year olds rest for 45 minutes and 4 and 5 year olds rest for 35 minutes. Rest time is a quiet time and doesn't always mean a child will nap. While we encourage napping, we also work with each individual child to promote rest. This may include providing them with books to read or other quiet activities that do not interrupt the rest period for their peers.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

We ask that all clothing be appropriate for child care. We do many fun and messy activities. Although children always have access to smocks and are asked to wear them for messy types of activities, there may be mishaps. We don't want to ruin anything that is special to you or your child. We ask that you leave at least one complete outfit and shoes for your child here at school. Always label everything with your child's name. Please do not bring any toys to school.

Financial Agreement

Registration:

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50 per child is due at the time of registration. The first and last week's tuition deposit (used prior to disenrollment) is due with the registration fee. An annual renewal fee of \$50 will be billed on July 1st.

Payments:

Payments to "SNACS Preschool" may be made by check or money order. There is a \$25 charge for returned checks. Late payments will be subject to a 5% late fee. Payments must be made the Friday in advance.

Cancellations:

Cancellations of enrollment require a two-weeks' notice in writing. If SNACS Preschool is not notified in written form, we will continue to bill your account for two weeks. Your one-week deposit will be used for final billing.

Vacations/Holidays:

After one full year of enrollment, students may receive a one-week "vacation". No tuition is charged for this week and the child does not attend. Accounts must be current and payments consistently maintained to use accrued vacation days.

Your account is not credited for days when your child is sick, during holidays and/or snow days. SNACS Preschool will be closed in observance of the following holidays: New Year's Eve at 2 pm. And New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Nevada Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve at 2pm., Christmas Day and the day after. Tuition is not reduced for holidays. Please see the SNACS Preschool Calendar specific closure dates.

Delinquent Accounts

In the event your account becomes delinquent and there is any default with any payment agreements made, your account will be turned over to collections and the defaulting party will be responsible for all collection fees. Please provide primary guardian social security number and primary guardian driver's license number. Please be aware that this is required for enrollment and will only be used in the event your account is turned over to collections.

Volunteering and Parent Participation

We would like parents to have many opportunities to become involved at the center. In order to give families the opportunity to participate in our program any member of the family can become involved. Parents will be required to read and sign the Parent Statement of Confidentiality when performing in-class "Parent Hours" to insure confidentiality. Our parent involvement activities are meant to be fun and informative. Parents are required to participate in a minimum of 30 hours per year. There are a variety of ways for parents to participate. Here are some examples:

- Workdays- clean up, painting and maintenance of the school.
- Fundraisers- Open House, Harvest Festival, Spring Fling, Farm day, Etc.
- At home projects- repairing books, cutting out art activities, making flannel stories, etc.
- Attending Parent Engagement Nights provided by the center.

Please check with the Head Teacher in your child's classroom. The Preschool office will track how many hours you have accumulated. There will be a "Parent Hours" sign in sheet in the volunteer binder. Each parent or representative will need to sign a Statement of Confidentiality and complete the Volunteer requirements *before* spending any time in the classrooms. Thank you for your support in advance!

Parent Expectations

1. Parents are expected to participate in parent engagements nights. Staff will be holding engagements nights where parents can meet the teachers and parents can participate in the education of students in multiple ways. Engagement nights can be found on the calendar.
2. Parents are expected to volunteer in the student's classroom. We expect each family to donate 30 hours per school year in some capacity to SNACS Preschool. Those who choose not to volunteer are asked to donate \$150 in lieu of volunteerism hours (\$5 per hour for 30 hours).
3. Parents are expected to have students on time for school. Being that we have a limited amount of time, it is important to be at school no later than 8:00 am. If students are continuously late, we are at liberty to drop the current student from the SNACS Preschool Development Grant Program.

IV. Center Policies and Procedures

Employee Training

Center employees participate in multiple trainings per year. The center will be closed one day per year to participate in the NAEYC Conference training, please see the SNACS Preschool for this specific date. These training/workdays are very important to our professional development and to providing quality care and education. Staff is required to participate in on-going training of 25 hours per year. In addition, all staff will be provided the following training within 90 days of hire: Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases & Blood Borne Pathogens, CPR, First Aid, Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and three or more hours in child development or guidance and discipline.

Assessment Policy and Procedures

Assessments are defined as the process of observing, recording and otherwise documenting what children do and how they do it as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the

child and the program. Assessment provides tools to support children's learning. Assessment is done both summative and formative. Family home language, culture and experience is always considered. Individual child ability and disability is always considered. All formal assessment results will be maintained per the Privacy Policy.

Summative

- Star Renaissance- an early literacy assessment completed 3 times per year.
- Brigance Screenings- a preschool and kindergarten readiness screening completed at the beginning and end of the school year.

Formative

- Classroom-level curriculum-based assessments both formal and informal.

Personal Learning Plans or PLP's are completed for each student progressively throughout the school year. This tool is used for teachers to track student progress and share the progress with administration and parents.

SNACS Preschool creates and progressively maintains student portfolios throughout the school year. These portfolios help ensure teachers and parents to track the progress of each individual student. Portfolios and Assessments will be shared with parents during Parent Teacher Conferences preformed 3 times per year. Please see the attached calendar for these dates.

Assessment Results Privacy Policy

All assessment results are used to enhance the program and to address the needs of individual students. These results will be utilized and shared between SNACS Preschool staff as a means of problem solving and brainstorming ways to better serve the children in our program. Confidentiality will be maintained as per our Statement of Confidentiality; however, within the Center it is both appropriate and necessary to share information so we can better meet the needs of the children. Assessment results may also be shared, upon consent from parents, with identified professionals for referral.

Illness Policy

For the safety and health of all our children and teachers, sick children need to be at home. Please do not send your child to school if s/he has had any of the following medical conditions during the previous 24 hours. Also be advised, if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms while at school, s/he will be isolated immediately and you will be contacted to pick up your child. When you have been contacted because of illness, please pick up your child within the hour. It is very important for you to have alternative care for your child when s/he is sick. We know it can be a very frustrating time when a child is sent home because of illness. No tuition adjustment will be made for absences due to illness.

Caring for Our Children: Standard 3.065

Inclusion/ Exclusion/Dismissal of Children

- Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools).
- Difficulty or rapid breathing.
- Asthma or severe upper respiratory infection unless parent provides evidence that child is under physician's care.
- Vomited within last 24 hours.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or has had a fever during the previous 24 hours.
- Mucus with green or yellow color, unless child has been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
- Undiagnosed rash.
- Sore throat.
- Severe cough.
- Chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, diphtheria or herpes simplex.
- Untreated scabies, tinea corporis or capitis (ring worm).
- An ear infection, unless provided notification that child is under physician's care.
- Untreated head lice.
- Pinkeye.

Please notify the school at once if your child has been exposed to a Communicable Disease. **SNACS Preschool is not allowed to administer any medications to students.**

Child Discipline

We expect all children to behave in ways that are positive and productive for learning. Every classroom teacher is trained in classroom management and positive reinforcement. Some of the most important lessons for a child to learn are to respect authority, him/herself, and others including taking care of his/her own and other's property. Additionally, no child is allowed to disrupt the education of other children. We are at preschool to learn. Although it is necessary for maintaining order, our emphasis for rules is not on the "dos and don'ts", but on guiding children to develop problem solving skills. In order to accomplish this, we must set discipline standards that are enforced fairly and consistently.

The classroom teacher may consult with the Executive and Education Directors for intervention strategies to implement, as necessary, on an individual basis. It is the intention of SNACS Preschool to utilize positive reinforcement and other behavioral interventions to teach students appropriate social skill and academic behaviors. It is of the utmost importance that the teachers, administrators, and parents work together as a team in discipline matters. Without order, safety and a sense of security and civility, schools cannot work and learning will not occur.

SNACS Preschool has procedures to deal with such cases of severe behavior. In these situations, the parents will be contacted. The parents will meet with the teacher and/or Preschool Coordinator, and/or Executive Director to discuss the situation and appropriate measures. Behavior that is chronically unacceptable may be an indicator that further support or assessment

is needed. This support may include a referral process for further assessment and additional outside services. If the center's procedures for dealing with severe behavior problems do not result in the restoration of an acceptable and safe environment, the center reserves the right to temporarily or permanently remove a child from the center.

Safety Regulations

The SNACS preschool is under video surveillance and recorded records are maintained for 30 days. Additionally, SNACS may videotape preschool activities and events for educational and promotional purposes. By enrolling your child, you acknowledge and agree to your child's participation in the videotaping.

V. Programs

Infants and Early Toddlers-6 weeks to 30 months

The infant program provides a loving and nurturing environment for 6-week to 30-month-old children. Our goals for the infant program include care, education and love. We provide gentle care to meet the daily needs of diapering, feeding, and sleeping while working to meet the needs of a healthy and safe environment. Infants and early toddlers are provided with various stimulating activities enhanced through choice and play. Communication between home and the infant room is vitally important to meet the needs of the child. We ensure to provide the best in quality care, education, and love.

Toddlers- 2.5 years to 3 years

This program is designed to accommodate the development of self-help skills needed for children 2.5 years to 3 years. The children are introduced to new and exciting experiences in many different learning areas. A consistent program of developmentally appropriate activities helps to nurture a positive "can-do" attitude.

The program provides a well-balanced curriculum and monthly themes that includes teacher and child-based activities, large group, center choices, indoor and outdoor play, fine and gross motor fun, individual and group needs, and structured and unstructured activities. Children are allowed to choose from activities in various learning centers: art, blocks, dramatic play, language arts, manipulatives, music, reading, and sensory play. The child's ability to choose activities fosters a positive outlook toward the learning process. We encourage the toddlers to learn basic hygiene and tidiness skills for life long habits including; washing hands, participating in toy cleanup, setting and clearing the table, tying shoes and learning how to use the bathroom appropriately are a few of the self-help skills we work on with each child.

Preschool - 4 to 5 years

This program offers a variety of hands-on activities and experiences. Through play, children age three to five create, explore, and pretend. Planned activities based on curriculum with a consistent

daily schedule and free choice centers using the choice board provides students with daily activities to look forward to.

The purpose of the preschool is to provide a safe learning environment for children, while meeting their individual creative, emotional, intellectual, physical, linguistic, and social needs. As students become more independent learners, we encourage students to participate in on-going hands on experiences and value their ideas and input for learning our various monthly themes. Through choice centers and exploration, children gain a sense of empowerment and self-esteem. We encourage parents to continuously participate in the education of their children. We promote play as an important avenue for learning.

Transitions between classrooms

Children are often acquainted with all the caregivers and teachers within the building. To ensure a smooth transition between classrooms, caregivers and teachers work with children by initiating the bonding process early. A shared group playtime with children up for transition and current and new teachers alleviates the stress of separation from the current room environment.

We thank you for expressing interest in SNACS Preschool! Please relay any questions or concerns to our SNACS Preschool staff regarding information on our center. For additional information please visit our website at www.snacs.org. ☺