



# PARENT HANDBOOK

Sparrow Academy

2021-2022

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## **Our Philosophy**

**The mission of Sparrow Academy is to approach the whole child in a compassionate, safe, progressive learning environment, where all students are able to reach their maximum potential.**

At Sparrow Academy we believe all people are created by God and therefore deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. We believe that all students have a right to learn and to be instructed in a manner that works for their particular needs. All staff and volunteers at Sparrow Academy will view each child as a chosen child of God, who deserves the best we can offer. We will provide an environment where all students feel safe and loved. We strive to live up to our motto, “Sparrow Academy, Where Learning and Healing Meet.”

Our core belief at Sparrow Academy is based on the paradigm of a compassionate, progressive approach to education. We understand that children respond to their environment and we strive to take a purposeful, relational approach to our children, parents and teachers in order to create a place of safety and acceptance for children to learn. Sparrow Academy is attuned to the latest research and studies in education, neuroscience and the healing arts, and has taken that knowledge to create a school for children who need that understanding.

Educators have long understood the stages of child development and have linked learning goals and strategies to this understanding. What we haven’t known until recently is how adverse childhood experiences affect brain development. We now know that chemicals released during periods of extreme distress disrupt early brain development and compromise functioning of the nervous and immune systems.

The educational program at Sparrow Academy is based on the paradigm of Emotional Regulation. Emotional Regulation is grounded on the premise that social, emotional, and behavioral challenges are symptoms of a disorganized brain. Optimal organization of the brain and our stress response system develop early in life and depends on the health of our earliest relationships and environment. The brain, whether optimally developed and organized or not, becomes the boss of our emotions, socialization, and our behavior.

Emotional Regulation is an implicit paradigm for the treatment of trauma, attachment challenges, and dysregulation through relational, integrated neurophysiological (mind/body)

interventions. It is an intervention based in relationship and always operating in the background of the organization and the family. The faculty and staff of Sparrow Academy understand the importance of emotional regulation and increased attachment, how those processes are impacted via trauma, and how the trauma manifests in negative behaviors. With this knowledge, we approach children through explicit, brain based methods and scientific interventions for reorganizing the brain around regulation and secure attachments.

Once a child's emotional regulation and attachments are increased, there will also be a decrease in negative social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes. No person acts out when they feel safe. At Sparrow Academy we work to create emotionally safe and accepting relationships and environments in order to decrease acting out in the classroom and at home. The result of building the relationships is increased student achievement, a decrease in classroom disruptions, less staff turnover, and increased organizational health. However, by far, the most important outcome is safer, happier and healthier kids.

# Admission Policies

## Academic Qualifications

At Sparrow Academy, we understand that all children learn at a different pace. Therefore, we will assess your child upon acceptance to our program. We will then meet with you to explain the results of the assessments and work together to develop a learning path.

## Student Qualifications

We admit students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin. Students receiving services outlines in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 should make a copy available to the school prior to admittance.

## Health Qualifications

A doctor's examination within one year prior to entrance must be on file in the office. An up to date immunization certificate must be on file prior to the first day of school.

## Tuition and Fee Schedule

| <b>Tuition</b>      | <b>Annual</b> | <b>10 Payments</b> | <b>12 Payments</b> |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary (3-5)    | \$9,300.00    | \$930.00           | \$813.00           |
| Middle School (6-8) | \$9,300.00    | \$930.00           | \$813.00           |
| High School (9-12)  | \$10,400.00   | \$1,040.00         | \$910.00           |

### Fees

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| New Student Application Fee                                     | \$200.00   |
| Enrollment Fee  | \$200.00   |
| Book and Material Fee (2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)  | \$300.00   |
| Book and Material Fee (6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade) | \$350.00   |
| Interventionist Services (Per Unit, As Needed)                  | \$500.00   |
| Building Strong Families Intervention Program                   | \$1,200.00 |

*(All fees are due upon acceptance to Sparrow Academy.)*

Both parents, guardians, or other persons responsible for payments should read all the provisions of the enrollment Contract, complete the required information, sign and return the Contract to the Admission Office. A student is accepted for enrollment or re-enrollment when the Contract has been delivered to Sparrow Academy, countersigned and dated. A copy of the accepted Contract

will be returned prior to the start of the school year. No amendment to this Contract and no alteration or addition to the printed terms hereof will be effective without the express prior written approval of the Sparrow Education Foundation Board of Directors.

## **General Information**

### **Attendance**

Regular school attendance is extremely important for student success. While we understand at times students will miss class due to appointments, these should be kept at a minimum. The school day begins at 7:45 each morning and ends at 2:30. Any student arriving after 7:45 will be considered tardy. All early check outs will be documented on the student's attendance record. Excessive tardies and early dismissals (10 or more per quarter) could result in dismissal from Sparrow Academy.

### **Bullying**

The staff of Sparrow Academy will strive to maintain a bully free atmosphere. All accusations of bullying will be investigated and dealt with in an appropriate manner. In order for an incident to be considered bullying, the following criteria must be met.

1. The behavior is unwanted, offensive, threatening, intimidating, insulting, causing discomfort or humiliation, or interferes with the individual's school performance which results in the victim feels stressed, injured, or threatened.
2. The behaviors are repeated.
3. There is an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim.

### **Clinic**

Student safety and well-being is of the utmost importance. All staff members will be on the lookout for unsafe practices and will make corrections, as needed. All accidents are reported to administration as soon as possible through the Online Incident Report. Accidents requiring medical assistance will be reported over the two-way radio system. If needed, the school nurse will come to the scene of the accident. Otherwise, the nurse will direct the staff member at the scene to escort the injured student to the clinic.

Students requiring on-going medication administration will be served by our on-staff nurse or clinic para. The nurse will inform each teacher of the time and procedure for medication

administration for individual students. Any student who becomes ill during the school day and requires clinic services will be sent to the clinic only after a staff member has contacted the school nurse over the two-way radio system.

## **Dress Code**

**Tops:** A Sparrow Academy T-shirt is to be worn daily.

**Bottoms:** Students may wear pants or appropriate length shorts made of any fabric desired.

**Shoes:** Students must wear closed-toe shoes of the appropriate size. No boots are allowed.

***Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to others is unacceptable. Examples include but are not limited to: drug references, violent images, skulls, profanity, etc.***

## **Individual Behavior Plans**

Students at Sparrow Academy will work with teachers and staff to develop personal behavior goals and a plan to reach the goals. The plan will be individualized for each child and will include short and long term targets, steps for reaching goals, student, teacher and parent interventions, and rewards and consequences. Once developed, the plan will be reviewed with each student's parent or guardian. This individual plan will list specific, inappropriate behaviors and will list the progressive disciplinary actions that will be taken for individual students. All plans will be reviewed and revised as needed to meet the changing needs of the student.

## **Morning Routines**

Students will come directly to the classroom starting at 7:30 each morning. Class will begin at 7:45. The teacher will then lead the class in the pledge to the American flag, give a short bible-based devotion, and will lead the class in prayer.

## **Outdoor Learning**

Students at Sparrow Academy will take part in outdoor learning through the use of our outdoor classroom. The philosophy of the outdoor classroom is that all students need and benefit from more time outdoors. This benefit affects development and learning. It is critical for physical health. Nearly every activity that can be done indoors can be done outdoors. Some activities can only occur outdoors. Other activities occur best outdoors. Development and learning outdoors is often easier and more beneficial than it is indoors.

## **Parent Communication**

Teachers are expected to maintain an open and ongoing communication with parents. Teachers will send home general notes daily in each students' agenda. All communication with parents concerning individual students will come from the teacher. Paras will not discuss concerns with parents, unless they are involved in a teacher-parent conference.

Parent conferences are to be scheduled as needed. Teachers are required to have a minimum of three face to face conferences with each family per year. Each conference should be documented with an agenda and parent signature.

## **Student Breaks**

All of us need breaks from activity at regular intervals. With this in mind, teachers will develop classroom activities and lesson plans that meet the needs of students. Teachers will purposefully plan to allow stretch and brain breaks throughout lessons. Just simply allowing students to stand up, do a quick breathing exercise, and then getting back to the task at hand can be very beneficial for students.

In addition to quick, in-class breaks, each class will take a morning break from activities. The teacher will allow 10 minutes for students to go outside, eat a snack, and have a bit of free time. This break will be fit into the instructional schedule in a manner that will be least intrusive to student learning.



## **Textbooks and Library Obligations**

All teachers will encourage their students to read books on their level. The media center will be used by classes for weekly check-out of books. Each teacher will have an assigned time to come to the media center. This weekly visit will take about 30 minutes and will include a story or brief media lesson and time for students to check out books. Each student will be allowed to checkout two books. One must be on the student's reading level. The other book can be a book of the student's choosing. Students are responsible for maintaining all books and materials in good, usable condition. Any lost or damaged materials will be the responsibility of the student/parent.

## **Visitors**

Students will be able to have visitors during lunch and break time only. Any parent or parent representative wishing to observe their child in class must obtain permission from the principal prior to the visit. Any outside counselors or other professionals wishing to visit with students must have proper documentation and should arrange visits in a manner which would minimize the disruption of the student's educational process.