

# Happy Time Preschool **PARENT HANDBOOK**



**HAPPY TIME  
PRESCHOOL**

**47th Location**  
4518 47th Ave,  
Sacramento, CA 95824  
(916)422-6777

**Elsie Location**  
7610 Elsie Ave,  
Sacramento, CA 95828  
(916)689-8889

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This handbook is intended to familiarize families member with current Happy Time Preschool policy, practices and standards. A print copy of the handbook is available upon request. Happy Time Preschool reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook.

## Mission Statement

At Happy Time Preschool, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create and become a lifelong learner. "A place for all children to be Happy."

## Philosophy

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following principles are excerpted from the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* (2008) and serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials and events.
- Learning is sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences.
- Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understanding in any one area of development.
- Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context.
- Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance.
- All children have the potential to achieve the California Learning Standards with appropriate support and instruction.

## General Center Information

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Executive Director: Michelle Lucas  
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Office: (916) 422-6777  
Cell: (916) 698-0685

Director (Elsie): Marcia Faulk  
[faulk.marcia@yahoo.com](mailto:faulk.marcia@yahoo.com)  
Office: (916) 689-8889  
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Director (47th):  
Giselle Wallace-Delaney  
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Assistant Director (Elsie):  
Maya Patel  
Cell: (916) 800-2666

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Happy Time Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 6:00pm (47th location) 7:00am to 6:00pm (Elsie location). The center is closed for the following holidays:

*New Year's Day MLK Day*

*Presidents Day*

*Memorial Day*

*Independence Day*

*Labor Day*

*Veterans Day*

*Thanksgiving (2 days)*

*Christmas Day (2 days)*

*New Year's Eve*

### **WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS**

Happy Time Preschool will remain open during most severe weather. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

In the event that Happy Time closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children and staff can travel home safely. Families will still be charged during weather closings, however vacation days may be applied

### **LICENSING**

Happy Time Preschool is a public program voluntarily licensed by the California Department of Social Services. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office, the staff break room and on the web <https://www.cdss.ca.gov>.

## **PROGRAMS**

- Infants/Toddlers 3 months to 24 months
- Two's 24 months to 36 months
- Early Preschool 3 years to 4 years
- Preschool 4 years to 5 years
- Pre-K 5 years to 6 years
- School Age\* 6 years to 13 years

\* This specific program is only available at the 47th location. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with the Director/Assistant Director.

## **RATIOS**

At Happy Time Preschool, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

### Age of Children

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3 months to 24 months  | 1 staff for every 4 children  |
| 24 months to 36 months | 1 staff for every 8 children  |
| 3 years to 4 years     | 1 staff for every 12 children |
| 4 years to 5 years     | 1 staff for every 12 children |
| 5 years to 6 years     | 1 staff for every 14 children |

Children of different age groups may be combined if the following guidelines are followed:

- Infants are never combined with children over the age of 24 months, except in certain circumstances (e.g. at open or close of the center, if the children are siblings).
- Children 2 years old may be combined with children who are 3 years old as long as the ratio of 1 to 8 is maintained.
- Classrooms of children 4 years and older may be combined, with the ratio determined by the age of the younger children in the group.

During nap time, at least ONE staff member shall be present in every room where children are sleeping and/or resting. Staff-to-child ratios can be reduced to one staff member per room where children are resting for a period not to exceed one hour. Staff should remain in the center so, if needed they can assist in a classroom.

**Ratios must be maintained at all times, including when emergency procedures are in effect.**

## **UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS**

Happy Time completes an audit of enrollment records quarterly. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent Form. Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physicals and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's most recent immunization record.

In addition, any time information changes such as address, phone number, etc. a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is a top priority for Happy Time. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual. When discussing child'd activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or incident reports, names of children involved will never be given to families.

## **Curriculum Planning**

### **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum at Happy Time includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans should be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES**

The classroom teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children thrive on consistency! Routines should be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

Lesson plans and the daily schedules are posted in the classroom and visible at all times.

### **THEMES**

The use of themes is a practical and logical way to begin curriculum planning. The themes are based upon what the children know and see every day, as well as the children's interests. The themes are age-appropriate and may span the length of one week, or one month depending on the interest level.

### **FREE PLAY**

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free play, teachers actively participate with the children during free play activities by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc.

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. Our teachers refer to the Child Care Weather Watch poster from the California Department of Public Health to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outwear for the weather conditions (coat, hats, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather appropriate clothing.

## **NAP/REST TIME**

The California Department of Social Services requires that all children must be provided a regularly scheduled nap or rest time. Children enrolled in the program will be napping from 12:00pm-2:30pm. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

## **WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY**

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Happy Time. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Happy Time, the weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

## **PETS & VISITING ANIMALS**

Staff may introduce a class pet to the classroom. Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Happy Time without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director and/or Assistant Director. Once approved by the Director and/or Assistant Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

## Assessments

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held at least once per year or each time your child's transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it is necessary.

### **ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS**

A permanent assessment portfolio will be kept for each child, and passed to the next teacher when a child transitions. Assessment portfolios will contain a variety of items, including photographs, examples of artwork, assessment profiles, and parent-teacher conference forms. Portfolios may be periodically taken home by families but should be returned promptly. When a child leaves Happy Time, the assessment portfolio should be given to the family.

## Meals and Snacks

At Happy Time Preschool, children are provided a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snacks. Happy Time follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Programs. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board near the main entrance. You may request a copy to take home if you would like.

Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered, but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat certain foods or has different dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary restrictions., you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Based on the needs of the children at each center, a facility may be peanut/egg free. Please contact each center for further information. In the case a center is peanut/egg free, no food containing, or processed in a facility with peanuts/eggs, are allowed in the center. Children are welcome to bring special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and California Department of Education is available from the Director and/or Assistant Director.

## Infant, Toddlers and Two Year Old Program Information

The following information is specific to the infant, toddler and two year old program rooms:

- Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers and blankets. Please label all items with child's name.
- Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day.
- If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breastmilk and when you would like to come in and feed your child.
- Breastmilk must be brought in ready to use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers daily of any new foods your child has tried.

## **SIDS**

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected, sudden death of a child under age 1 for which a cause of death cannot be identified. It is not known what causes SIDS, however several sleeping practices have been linked to an increased risk for SIDS. Therefore, Happy Time has a strict policy for infant sleep placement.

All infants less than one year will be placed on their back to sleep.

Infants shall not be allowed to sleep in a car seat or swing for a period of longer than 15 minutes.

Once a child has been placed in his or her crib for nap, if the infant rolls from back to front - and is also able to roll from front to back - it is acceptable to leave the infant sleeping on his or her stomach. NO heavy blankets, stuffed toys or pillows should ever be placed in a crib. A request for alternative sleeping positions must be accompanied by a signed and dated physician's note stating the reason for the request.

## **Clothing and Items From Home**

### **PLAY CLOTHES**

Please send your child to Happy Time in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum. We expect all children to be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenish as needed. Due to health reasons, if a child soils their underwear, it may be thrown away. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

### **ITEMS FROM HOME**

We ask that all items such as toys, stuffed animals, jewelry, etc. be kept home. Happy Time Preschool is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items that are brought to school.

## Arrival and Departure

### **ARRIVAL**

Parents are required to accompany their child to center. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher, about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc.

Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- Establish a regular, predictable routine. Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is the uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation won't be as difficult.
- Separate once. If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- Be reliable. Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

It is mandated by law that each child be signed in and out daily by a responsible adult. The sign in binder is located at the entrance of the center. Any day a parent/guardian fails to sign in or out using a full legal signature and time, there will be a \$10 penalty assessed which will be due with the following weeks' tuition.

### **DEPARTURE**

Happy Time closes at 6:00pm Monday through Friday. If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. Please note that there is a late fee of \$1.00 per minute for arriving after 6:00pm or as stated on your Government Program Certificate (Child Action). If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her.

Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Happy Time Preschool is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Director and/or Assistant Director will be notified and she will then notify the Department of Social Services and/or the Sacramento Police Department.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom as a whole. If your child will be absent, please call the center by 9:30am so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan.

### **ILLNESS**

Our first priority at Happy Time is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 101 or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications; multiple loose or watery instances within an hour; or accompanied with fever and or vomiting) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- Scabies, until after treatment has been complete
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Happy Time must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible. The ill child may not return to school for 24 hours symptom free without medication.

Happy Time reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

Please contact Happy Time by 9:00AM whenever your child is ill.

## **NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE**

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted at the front door or on the door to your child's classroom. Additionally, families who have provided an email address will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately.

## **HAND WASHING**

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival. Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Happy Time staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director and/or Assistant Director.

All medications will be stored in the office and only administered by directors or lead teachers.

Prescription medications will only be given if a doctor's note is provided with a beginning and end date. A medical authorization form must also be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian. Prescription medication will only be given at the center if they are not able to be given at home. (ex. Twice daily can be administered at home. Three times per day requires a middle of the day dose and can be given at the center.)

Over the counter medications will only be given for special circumstances, with a doctor's note that has a beginning and end date.

## **PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS**

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Happy Time. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records and physicals may be faxed to Happy Time directly from your healthcare provider.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS**

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Happy Time using an Accident/ Incident Report. Please document all biting incidents as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child, an accident/incident report needs to be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. Use great detail when explaining events, but never include other children's names. If the injury is serious, a parent needs to be contacted before pick-up. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director and/or Assistant Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF HEALTH INCIDENTS**

Each time a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, a Health Incident Form will be completed. A copy of the form will be given to the parent and the original to the Director and/or Assistant Director to be placed in the child's permanent file. All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the center explaining the illness. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGIES**

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food- related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE**

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Happy Time Preschool staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director and/or Assistant Director until a parent arrives. If the child requires immediate medical attention:
- The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.

- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director or Assistant Director will contact the parent(s).

### **SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLANT**

Between the months of March and October, all families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. Sunscreen must be SPF 15 or above, and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Happy Time for the day, as Happy Time staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

### **PETS AND VISITING ANIMALS**

Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Happy Time Preschool without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director and/or Assistant Director. Once approved by the Director and/or Assistant Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

### **CLOTH DIAPERS**

Only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups may be used at Happy Time Preschool, unless the child has a documented medical reason that does not permit their use. Documentation from the child's physician must be provided to the Director and/or Assistant Director before cloth diapers will be used while the child is at the center. Families must provide a container for storage of soiled cloth diapers while at the center.

### **POTTY TRAINING**

When your child appears ready to start using the toilet and is having success at home, our staff will work with you and your child to assist in this process. If your child is dry at diaper change, we will encourage him/her to try and use the toilet. Together with you, we will modify this process to meet the needs of your child.

### **MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS**

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Happy Time Preschool is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the California Department of Social Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

### **TOBACCO USE**

Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on happy Time premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products is also prohibited in Happy Time vehicles or in personal vehicles being used for the transportation of Happy Time children.

### **ACCESS POLICY**

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to

child ratio. Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.

Person who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Lead Teacher unless he/she delegates it to the Full Time Assistant Teacher due to a conflict of interest with the person.

Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If a staff member is unsure about the reason, the Director or Assistant Director to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the “Dangerous Adult” procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian or custodian) who is required to register with the California sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
- Shall not be on the property of the child care center without written permission from the Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child to and from the center. The Director is not obligated to provide permission and must consult with their DHS licensing agent first.

## **AFFIDAVIT POLICY**

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Happy Time Preschool staff member to provide such a statement. Our program’s priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Happy Time Preschool staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledges the child’s efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, is likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. Happy Time staff will use only positive guidance techniques.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

“Am I...”

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children’s choices?

- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child’s eye level?

## **REASONS FOR MISBEHAVIOR**

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

- Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

## **PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR**

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (e.g., walking feet; gentle touches)
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested for longer periods)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (e.g., “You may pick up the blocks or art center.”)
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided. (e.g., “Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.”)
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (e.g., “Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.”)
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be quiet)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

## **RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR**

Below are strategies Happy Time staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

### **Redirection**

This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and it's now Logan's turn."

### **Logical consequences**

These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing

on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him sad.

• Participate in the solution

If a child damages something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."

• Natural consequences

Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Laura does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.

• "Take a break" or "Calm down chair"

In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to "take a break" or sit in the "calm down chair." This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from others. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to the calm down chair. For example, "Hannah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit John, please leave the blocks center and go to the calm down chair. I will talk to you when you are ready."

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and/or Assistant Director(s).
2. The Director and/or Assistant Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director and/or Assistant Director, Lead Teacher and Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.

\*\* If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period of time.

## Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Happy Time to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, "Stop biting. Biting hurts" in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child's needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
  - Was the space too crowded?
  - Were there too few toys?
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and Director and/or Assistant Director will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the office.

## Home and School Partnership

### **NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION**

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Director to complete a "New Family Orientation." This orientation is a great time for parents to drop-off routine care items (diapers, bottles, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child's routines at Happy Time. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, "New Family Orientation" is scheduled one week prior to the start date.

### **DAILY SHEETS**

For children enrolled in the infant, toddler, and two year old programs, a daily "recap" sheet will be completed to tell you about your child's day. This chart contains information about toileting, meals, naps, and activities. Some classrooms send electronic daily sheets to parents via email or text.

### **ROOM TRANSITIONS**

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, you will receive a letter containing information about your child's transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child's current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to

schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

### **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's Happy Time experience:

- Leading or assisting special projects (sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Construction or collection of raw materials for art projects, dramatic play props, etc.
- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance
- Volunteering in your child's classroom

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held each time your child transitions classrooms and two times per year for our preschool programs. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

### **PROGRAM EVALUATIONS**

Happy Time asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent's point-of-view is different from a teacher's point-of-view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

## **Fees and Billing Policies**

### **FINANCIAL AGREEMENT AND TUITION**

This agreement should be carefully reviewed, checked for errors. The tuition rate are subject to change with a 30 day written notice.

### **LATE PICK-UP FEE**

Happy Time closes at 6:00PM, Monday through Friday. Parents will be charged \$1.00 per minute a child is present after 6:00PM or past the time stated on the Government Program Certificate (Child Action). Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Director stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week.

### **BORROWED DIAPER AND/OR WIPES**

If there is not enough diapers or wipes for your child, the center will supply diapers at the cost of \$1.00 per diaper. Wipes will be supplied at the cost of \$5.00 per package.

## **RETURNED CHECKS/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS**

All returned checks or direct debit payments rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a \$35.00 penalty. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within 3 working days. Repeated incidents of returned checks or insufficient funds notices could result in termination of child care services. A payment plan should be discussed with the Director if a family is having trouble making tuition payments. Once a check is returned, we will no longer accept checks from that account holder. Future payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or money order.

## **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

Families that are more than 4 weeks or \$800 behind in payments may have their child care services terminated. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of child care tuition, please speak with the Director. A payment plan must be agreed upon between family and Center before an account will be considered "in good standing" and no longer eligible for termination.

## **Holidays and Vacation**

### **HOLIDAYS**

Happy Time is closed in observance of the following holidays:

*New Year's Day MLK Day*

*Presidents Day*

*Memorial Day*

*Independence Day*

*Labor Day*

*Veterans Day*

*Thanksgiving (2 days)*

*Christmas Day (2 days)*

*New Year's Eve*

If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Happy Time will close during the week. For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Happy Time may close on Friday or Monday. Families will be given one month's notice in the event of additional closings.

### **VACATION**

After your child has been enrolled for one full year, we allow for one week vacation per family with written notice. Vacation time must be used as whole week and not a partial week.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **FIRE, EARTHQUAKE, BOMB OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Fire drills are conducted each month; all classrooms are required to participate.

In the event of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will immediately leave the building and meet on the sidewalk northeast of the building. In case of an earthquake, each classroom has a designated area to seek shelter until the emergency is over. Parents will be called as soon as safely possible following an emergency situation.

For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents do not attempt to pick up their child during an emergency situation.

### **MISSING OR ABDUCTED CHILD**

- In the event of a missing child, the Lead Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director and/or Assistant Director to help with the search.
  - If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the Sacramento Police Department –and the child’s parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the Lead Teacher must immediately contact the Director and/or Assistant Director, the Police Department, and the child’s parents.

### **POWER FAILURE**

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.

If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the center will close and parents contacted.

- Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as possible until parents arrive.

### **WEAPONS**

Happy Time Preschool will not permit or tolerate the possession, display, or use of weapons by any person on school premises or vehicles, while the person is participating in or attending Happy Time events and activities, or while the person is away from school grounds if such conduct directly affects the good order and management of the District. Students who violate this policy may be subject to expulsion and/or other disciplinary action. Weapons shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto school premises, vehicles or to school activities. Violations of this section will be reported to law enforcement agencies in accordance with law. Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials shall be exempt from this policy. The principal may allow authorized persons to display weapons for educational purposes on a limited basis.

Definition.

Any object which could be used to injure another person and which has no school-related purpose will be considered a weapon. An object which has a school-related purpose but which is used to threaten or inflict injury will also be considered a weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, knives of all types, guns, firearms, fireworks, explosives or other chemicals, and simulated (including toy) weapons.

Sanctions.

Students may be subject to expulsion for violating this policy. The administration may impose a lesser sanction if in their judgment all of the circumstances surrounding the incident warrant a less severe sanction. The following serve as guidelines for the administration when weapons which are not firearms are involved.

1. Suspension for three to five days for possession of a weapon.
2. Suspension for five to ten days for display of a weapon.
3. Suspension with recommendation for expulsion for displaying a weapon in a threatening manner or for use of a weapon to inflict harm or injury to another person or for placing others in imminent danger.

### **FORMS REQUIRED FOR ENROLLMENT**

## Required Documentation and Complaint Information

The following forms must be completed for enrollment:

1. Personal Rights
2. Parents Rights
3. Child's Pre-Admission Health History Parent's Report
4. Identification and Emergency Information
5. Consent for Medical Treatment Form
6. Immunization Requirement
7. Physical Examination Requirements/TB Test Requirement
8. Admission Agreement
9. Needs and Services plan for any Special Needs Children
10. Infant Needs and Service Plan. (Infants only)
  - a. Parents will receive a caregiver background check process form (LIC 995E).

### **COMPLAINTS**

If there are any concerns, complaints, or comments regarding the policy, program, or personnel at this center, please phone Ms. Michelle Lucas, Executive Director at (916) 422-6777.