

PARTICIPATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Sandy Hill offers a unique opportunity to "keep in touch" with your child. As a parent helper, you are able to observe your child's school activities and behavior with other children. By working with other children in the class, you have the opportunity to notice common behavior patterns among preschoolers and possibly gain a better understanding of your own child's behavior. In any case, your classroom experience is likely to provide you with a number of new insights and a fresh perspective.

Before the beginning of each month, you will sign up on the participation calendar for the day or days you would like to work. Once you have signed up for a day, you are responsible for either working or finding a substitute if you are unable to work. If something comes up which you absolutely cannot avoid, go straight to your membership list and start calling parents in your class. Your room parent may also be able to help you locate a substitute. The teacher and director should be informed of any changes in the participation schedule.

Fathers are encouraged to participate whenever possible. Grandparents, other relatives, or friends are also acceptable teacher aides as long as they are mature, responsible, and know your child very well (someone your child is close to and enjoys).

When you are participating in the classroom, you are generally expected to do or help with the following.

- Arrive at 8:45AM.
- Ask the teacher what they need help with.
- Supervise children. This includes everything from observing, to helping, to joining in activities, depending on what seems appropriate at the time.
- Prepare for snack. Wipe off table with disinfectant solution, help children wash their hands and serve food.
- Cleaning: washing dishes after snack, cleaning up after messy activities, sweeping when necessary, keeping things in reasonable order.
- Help children get to the bathroom.
- Cleaning table at snack time, lunchtime or as needed.
- Vacuuming
- Bringing trash to dumpster
- Departing at 12:45PM.

An outline summarizing what each teacher would like for the parent helper to do is posted in the classroom. If you are unsure of what is needed, please ask your child's teacher.

As a parent helper you are not expected to prepare a special activity. However, if you have an activity in mind that you would enjoy sharing with the children, you are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Your creative talents are appreciated. In the past parents have contributed music, art, cooking projects, homemade snacks, stories, games, etc. As you spend more time in the classroom and become more familiar with the children, you will get a feel for what their interests are. It is recommended that you discuss your ideas with the teacher beforehand.

The suggestions and guidelines given below may be helpful to you.

- The safety and physical welfare of the children come first. When in doubt consult a teacher but if a child's safety is involved, take action immediately.
- Always be aware of the fact that you are under the guidance of the teacher, and should defer to the teacher for decision-making. Issues can be addressed in greater depth after class if needed.
- Long discussions among adults should be taken away from indoor and outdoor classroom areas or saved for after class.
- Strive to be alert to the total situation.
- Give the children a choice whenever possible.
- Avoid using home discipline with your own or another child at school. For example, don't force a child to finish her juice, to say "please" or "I'm sorry" even though you may customarily do so at home. At the same time, there may be limits at school that do not apply at home. Please respect these, and your child will.
- Treat toilet accidents casually.
- Discourage improper language only if it becomes a disrupting force.
- Do not allow a child to strike you—restrain gently.
- Avoid discussing a child when other children are present.
- Use a quiet voice and physically get down to the child's level when speaking to her/him.
- When there is a conflict between children, try to find out the whole story. Avoid accusations or labeling. If you wish to express dissatisfaction with a child's behavior, share your feelings about it (like, "That made me feel sad...") and/or help the other child express her/his feelings about it rather than making a judgement (like, "That wasn't very nice").
- Differentiate between a child's "self," a child's feelings, and a child's behavior. It is only appropriate to correct a child's behavior.
- Never ask a child "What are you making?" S/he may not have a name for it. Try instead, "That is very interesting. Will you tell me about it?"
- Come to school with plenty of energy. At the same time, don't expect too much of yourself. Realize that some days the children will charm you, some days they will exhaust you, and some days they will do both! *Enjoy yourself!* Working with your child and her/his friends can be rewarding, fun, and educational for you!

ADMISSIONS

Eligibility

Children may attend Sandy Hill if they are between the ages of 2 years and 9 months to Kindergarten age. Children must be 3 years old by December 2 for enrollment.

At Sandy Hill we recognize that children are all individuals who grow and develop at different rates. Therefore, we expect not all children will be toilet trained for admission. However, it is expected that this developmental task will be mastered by the time the child enters the 4-5 year old classroom.

Registration Procedure

A waiting list is maintained throughout the year for each age group. A registration form must be completed for each child in order to be added to the wait list. Once the Director has offered a space to a child, a non-refundable deposit must be paid to ensure enrollment. The deposit will not be refunded if your child does not attend Sandy Hill. See tuition schedule for current tuition rates.

Class placements are based on:

- Age
- Gender
- Child needs/parental needs
- Development
- Registration date
- Alumni status - or families with siblings currently attending the school
(Not necessarily in the order listed above).

Admission to Sandy Hill is without regard to race, color, creed or national origin.

Behavior

Your child's safety and happiness is our first concern at Sandy Hill. We will always strive to create a classroom environment where respect of one another is foremost and where children are nurtured and nurturing.

On occasion, participation in our group environment may not be the right situation for a child. If that becomes apparent, our teachers will always attempt to redirect the child's behavior to resolve conflicts. If, however, behavior cannot be redirected and a child exhibits negative behavior, which may include hitting, biting, or other physical contact, our Director, will be notified. Attempts to correct behavioral problems will always be tried, with the cooperation of the parents. However, at any time, our Director may, at her discretion, make the decision that a child may not be suited for our nursery school. If so, she will notify the child's parents directly.

Required Forms

Alumni enrollment for fall begins in February. The enrollment process for non-alumni children on our wait list begins in March. The enrollment forms required by the State of California or Sandy Hill Nursery School for a child new to Sandy Hill include:

- Parent Participation Agreement
- Field Trip Release
- Auto Insurance Form for field trip drivers
- Two 3x5 Index Cards (front and back)
- Consent for Medical Emergency Information
- Parents Report
- Physicians Report
- California School Immunization Record
- Identification and Emergency Medical Treatment Information
- Personal Rights
- Parents Rights and Caregiver Background Check Process
- TB Clearances Form – documentation attached*
- Committee Requests
- Sandy Hill Parent Questionnaire
- Class Preference (if applicable)

*The State of California requires schools to verify TB clearances of all volunteers. Each Sandy Hill family is required to have at least one parent available to work with the children in the classroom.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Drop Off and Pick Up

An adult must accompany every child to and from the classroom. Sandy Hill cannot be responsible for any child until s/he arrives at the classroom. It is also important that you walk on the paved pathways to help us preserve our natural environment.

Please bring your child to school promptly at 9:00 a.m. Please do not bring children early unless it is your day to be the parent helper. The State of California requires full signatures each time an adult signs a child in and out on the daily attendance record. Pick up time is 12:30 p.m. unless you have arranged for Extended Day Care with the school. After a 15-minute grace period, you will be charged the hourly EDC rate beginning at 12:30 p.m. The school closes promptly at 3:00 p.m. All children must be picked up before this time. At 3:00 p.m. a \$10/per 15 minutes late fee will be assessed for tardy parents.

Please remember to pull into the parking lots slowly and carefully. Children may be playing nearby. The driveway must be clear at all times in case an emergency vehicle needs access to the property; do not park along the red curbs at any time. We share the use of the parking lots with the Fellowship. See parking policy for details on where to park.

Illness

Sandy Hill's Sick Policy is adapted from recommendations by the American Public Health Association. *Do not send your child to school when s/he is ill or showing a possible sign of illness.*

Please keep your child at home if s/he has any of the following symptoms:

- Nasal discharge that is heavy enough to require frequent wiping especially if accompanied by sneezing and/or coughing (colds are most commonly spread by air droplets from sneezing and coughing).
- Cough that is persistent enough to limit his/her activity especially if accompanied by other symptoms (runny nose, sneezing etc.).
- Temperature of 99 degrees or greater within the past 24 hours.
- Vomiting one or more times in the previous 24 hours.
- Diarrhea in the previous 24 hours.
- Conjunctivitis or pink eye. Defined as pink or red eyes with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep.
- Infestation (such as head lice). Keep at home until all nits (eggs) have been removed.
- Rash with fever or behavior change (until seen by physician who determines the illness is not communicable).
- Streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Signs of possible illness including lethargy, irritability, crying etc.

The need to send a child home from school shall be at the sole discretion of his or her teacher. We want to keep your child, the classmates, and the teachers as healthy as possible.

Field Trips

Age appropriate field trips will be offered. A permission slip must be signed by the parent and on file for the child to attend. Should transportation be necessary, children will be driven in parent's vehicles. The Auto Insurance Form for field trip drivers must be on file. Parents should provide a car seat if their child is less than six years old and 60 pounds.

Tuition

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. A \$10 late fee must be assessed when tuition is received after the 10th. Your payment can be mailed to PO Box 628, Solana Beach CA 92075 or brought to school and deposited in the tuition envelopes available in each classroom. Any questions concerning billing should be addressed to the Director. The Director should also be consulted if you have financial difficulties and need to make special arrangements for payment.

As a non-profit school our financial goal is to simply maintain and to improve the quality of our program. The Board of Directors determines the ways in which we spend our income, as representatives of the parent body, and by the general membership. Financial decision-making is accessible to you as a member through the monthly Board meetings.

Absentee Policy

Because we keep our class size small, the amount of income we can generate is limited. Because our expenses remain consistent, so must our income remain consistent throughout the school year. Sandy Hill does not reduce tuition for absences, school vacations or for family vacations. December tuition is at the regular monthly rate despite a two-week holiday break. June is the only month billed at a partial tuition rate, based on the school calendar.

Sandy Hill requires 30 days paid notice if you wish to withdraw your child for any reason. If 30 days paid notice is given, Sandy Hill will refund your tuition for June, which is billed on your first statement of the school year. The prepaid tuition serves as a deposit to insure the school's financial stability. Without 30 days paid notice this prepaid tuition will not be refunded.

Peanut allergies

Due to the life threatening nature of peanut allergies, a "No Peanut Butter Policy" has been approved by the Board and adopted at Sandy Hill. It is as follows:

- The school will not knowingly serve peanut/peanut butter foods. Peanut/peanut butter foods will not knowingly be used in classroom crafts, projects etc.
- No student or parent may bring peanuts/peanut butter foods to Sandy Hill. If they are brought, the teacher will hold them and return them to the parent at the end of the school day. Eating the peanuts/peanut butter food items will not be allowed during school hours.
- Any class with a child identified as having a peanut allergy will receive a letter from the Director, addressed to the parents of the class, describing the nature of a peanut allergy. This letter will be sent to the parents *before* (or by) the first day of school (or prior to the child's enrollment). This awareness letter will serve as a reminder that peanut butter and peanut products are prohibited in school lunches, snacks and class treats and it will further explain the issues and severity of a peanut allergy.
- Alternative nut butters (soybean, almond) are allowed at school (as long as a child does not have an allergy to these items). If these nut butters are brought to school, the food item *must* be labeled and the child will be seated away from the child with the allergy.
- Any child eating nut butter will wash his/her hands immediately after lunch with adult supervision.
- An EPI pen (to be supplied by the parent of the child with the allergy - available by prescription only) will be brought, along with the First Aid Kit, on all school field trips that are attended by the child with the allergy. (This will be the responsibility of the child's teacher.) The child with the allergy will be assigned to the teacher's care while on the field trip.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A MEMBER

As a parent cooperative school, Sandy Hill is founded upon, and dependent on, the participation of all its members. We welcome the participation of mothers, fathers and grandparents. As members of the co-op, you will be asked to participate in important school activities. Sandy Hill parents:

- Assist teachers in the classroom.
- Participate in fundraisers.
- Attend work parties twice a year to help clean and maintain the classroom and school grounds.
- Assist in the management of the school either by being a member of the Board of Directors or by participating on a committee.
- Complete all required forms on time, pay tuition and fees promptly, and keep a current TB clearance on file for the parent(s) or family members who can assist the teachers in the classroom.
- Attend orientation and parent meetings and accompany children on field trips whenever possible.

Classroom Participation

Sandy Hill offers you a unique opportunity to participate in your child's first educational experience by helping in the classroom. To make it easier for parents to participate, older siblings may usually be brought to help in the classroom with you. However, to help you and the teacher keep your attention focused on the children's needs in the classroom, younger siblings are not allowed to come with you on the days you participate.

Fundraising

Sandy Hill has various ways of raising money each year. The School Spirit, Winter Fundraiser and Spring Fundraiser Committees plan appropriate fundraisers during the school year and your participation is pertinent to our success.

Work Parties

Twice during the school year, a work party is scheduled for cleaning and general upkeep of the school. Work parties are usually held on Friday afternoon from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday morning from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Each family is expected to contribute one adult to participate on one of these days for both work parties. If you do not attend, a fee is due by the end of that month. The amount of the fee is decided on by the Board of Directors and indicated on the Parent Participation Agreement.

If you are absolutely unable to attend the work party on the designated days, but would like to work, you must obtain special permission from the Director. If your request is approved, four hours of work will be assigned and completed within two weeks.

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors meets once a month to discuss current business. The general membership is always welcome to attend these meetings. Dates, times, meeting agendas, and locations will be posted at each classroom. When an issue of major importance arises, it is crucial to have as much input as possible from the membership; everyone will be encouraged to attend. Minutes from each meeting will be published in the newsletter.

Orientation and Parent Meetings

In August each year, there is an orientation meeting to familiarize incoming families with our classrooms, policies, and procedures. We also have social events for parents and families throughout the school year. In addition, parents can take advantage of our Parent Talks during the school year, which feature speakers from the community.

Committee Descriptions

The school committee list follows. The workload for each committee varies considerably. Some take a concentrated effort for a short period of time, while others require 2-3 hours work each month. Please note that the committees are subject to change based on the needs of the school at the Board of Directors discretion.

Administrative Support - 2 members

Serves as a consultant to the Director. Delivers and picks up photocopying as needed, meets weekly with the Director to assist with on-site tasks and off-site errands. May include research projects, phone calls, preparing flyers, filing and distributing paperwork and more!

Bathrooms - 2 members

Each member would clean the bathrooms once each week for the school year. Your child would receive one free hour of EDC the day the bathrooms are cleaned. The cleaning would need to be completed prior to 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and after 1 p.m. on Fridays. Includes inventorying supplies and notifying the director of purchasing needs.

Board of Directors - 7 members, including President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and 3 Members at Large

The Board of Directors monitors enrollment, school finances, the needs of our parent committees, the upkeep of our facilities and equipment and the relationship between Sandy Hill and the Unitarian Fellowship. Each board member also enjoys a liaison relationship with at least one committee, as well as with new Sandy Hill families.

Community – 3 members, including 1 chairperson

Organizes two or three parent education workshops for the school year. Polls the members for topics of interest in September. Invites local speakers to discuss topics, organizes set-up and clean-up, provides appetizers and beverages for the parent talks. Locates recipients for and organizes two community benefit drives (such as food, clothing, book and/or toy drives) during the school year. Prepares flyers/posters for each event.

Computer Support – 1 member

Updates parents' email addresses as needed; provides Director with list of parents requiring hard copies of communications. Manages SHNS website, sends newsletters, minutes, memos, surveys. Assists Board and Director with correspondence throughout the school year.

EDC for Board Meetings – 1 member

Supervises Sandy Hill children from 12:30 to 2:30 on the playground, then to a classroom once each month. The Board members usually meet the third week of the month. Your child receives free EDC the days of the meetings.

EDC for Staff Meetings – 2 members

Supervises Sandy Hill children from 12:30 to 2:30 on the playground, then to a classroom once each month. The staff members usually meet the second week of each month. Your child receives free EDC the day of the meeting.

Laundry and Recycling – 1 member

Collects paper and mixed recyclables from each classroom and transfers to the recycle bins on site at least twice each week. Collects and launders towels from each classroom weekly, launders painting shirts and dress-up clothes upon request.

Maintenance – 2 members

Performs routine repairs throughout the school year. Inspects and maintains playground equipment on a monthly basis, includes completion of playground equipment maintenance checklists. Communicates with the Director on a regular basis. May occasionally need to repair items within 24 hours.

Purchasing – 2 members

Inventories and purchases frequently used items once or twice each month (paper towels, bathroom supplies, cleaning supplies, first aid items, disposable cameras, office supplies, etc.). Economically shops for items as requested by the Director. Costco membership preferred for best prices on bulk items, shop at Smart and Final for some classroom items. Delivers appropriate items to the storage shed, bathroom supply closet and/or classrooms. Checks the expiration dates on the medicines stored in the emergency supply closet in September and in June, requests and rotates items as needed. Accurately computes receipts and requests reimbursement on a monthly basis.

Room Parent – 6 members, one for each class

Communicates with parents on a regular basis regarding projects, class activities, school events, field trips, etc. Organizes special activities before Winter break, during teacher appreciation week, for the teacher's birthday and in June to celebrate the end of the school year. Coordinates class parties, potlucks and special occasion snacks. Tracks parents' help days, ensures each class day has a parent helper, then creates monthly parent participation calendar and distributes to each family in the class by the first of each month. Purchases cloth napkins (washcloths work great) and small, stackable, identical plastic cups for snack use prior to the first day of school. Organizes class effort in creating a gift basket for the Spring Fundraiser.

School Spirit – 3 members, including 1 chairperson

Coordinates annual sale of Sandy Hill t-shirts and sweatshirts in October. Collects orders, payments and distributes shirts. Educates parents about eScrip program and promotes eScrip throughout the school year. Notifies parents via flyers/posters about each of the above fundraising opportunities.

Snacks – 2 members

Checks local grocery stores for weekly specials and seasonal produce. Purchases organic snack items for the Sandy Hill children. Delivers case items to upper classroom's refrigerator and stocks small refrigerator in lower classroom on a regular basis. Requires checking the upper refrigerator weekly to ensure snack supply is adequate. Adheres to the budgeted amount for snack expenditures. Accurately computes receipts and requests reimbursement on a monthly basis.

Social Committee – 3 members, including 1 chairperson

Organizes the parent's potluck, the family picnic, and the end of the year party. Arranges location, notifies parents via flyers/posters, organizes sign-up sheets, sets up the event, plans activities and cleans up.

Spring Fundraiser/Silent & Live Auction – 16 members, including chair, 2-3 co-chairs

The event of the year! Solicits sponsors to donate items. Mails invitations to Sandy Hill parents, alumni, and associates. Organizes donations for bidding purposes and drawings. Coordinates location, entertainment, food and beverages. Requires participation in organizing gift baskets, helping with set-up and clean-up duties and assisting during the event. Sends thank-you notes to donators.

Summer Session Support – 1 member

Assists the Director with various duties throughout the summer of 2004 while the regular school-year committee members are on hiatus! Responsibilities will include on and off site tasks throughout the summer – please see the descriptions of Administrative Support, Purchasing, and Snacks.

Teachers Supply Coordinator – 1 member

Collects from members and supplies school with wood scraps, bubble wrap, cardboard tubes, shoeboxes, egg cartons and other recyclable items for class projects as needed. Assists teachers with cut-outs for class projects on a monthly basis.

Winter Fundraiser/Orange Sale – 2 members

The committee will organize the mandatory fundraiser in February. Prepares flyers and posters to inform parents about the event. Collects orders, payments, arranges delivery and storage/distribution location. (The Board of Directors will determine whether 2004-2005's mandatory fundraiser will be oranges or another product).

Work Party – 9 members, including 1 chairperson

Each Sandy Hill family agrees to send one parent to work either on Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. or on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the fall and in the spring. The Work Party Committee coordinates paint and repair, landscape and cleaning teams. Organizes the workload for each day. Arranges for pick-up/delivery of necessary items for tasks (sand, wood, paint, sandpaper, hardware, trash, etc.). Provides tools, cleaning supplies and refreshments for Sandy Hill parents. Notifies parents via flyers/sign-up posters. Arrives early to prepare for jobs and stays late to make sure classes and grounds are ready for use by both Sandy Hill and the Unitarian Fellowship. Work parties are scheduled twice a year, for one weekend in the fall and again in the spring. Each work party committee member is in charge of two work party sessions per school year.

For your information, Sandy Hill holds policies that include Liability, Property, Student Accident coverage and Director/Officers coverage.

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