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Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577
(641) 673-9472

Website: www.sonshinepreschool.org
Teacher email: teacher@sonshinepreschool.org
Director email: director@sonshinepreschool.org

MISSION and PURPOSE

SONshine is an interdenominational Christian Preschool designed to offer the Oskaloosa area a quality Pre-Kindergarten program that not only teaches school readiness skills, but also proclaims the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

SONshine Preschool believes that early childhood Christian education is important. We want to assist parents in nurturing their children by offering a well-rounded program of age-appropriate activities, in a Christian setting, that will develop a love of learning.

These are some of the principles that influence what is taught at SONshine Preschool:

- Scripture is the inspired Word of God, and is the ultimate and final authority in all aspects of our faith, life and practice. *(2 Timothy 3:16-17)*
- Jesus Christ is the only way to Salvation. *(John 3:16; 10:7-9,; 14:6; Acts 4:12)*
- God created each of us male or female and His design for marriage/family is one man and one woman. *(Genesis 2:24, Malachi 2:15; Ephesians 5:22-23; John 10:7-9; 14:6; Acts 4:12)*

SONshine Preschool is a bona fide Religious Institution, according to Iowa Code sections 216.6(6)(D), 216.9.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

We welcome you and your child to SONshine Preschool. This handbook explains our policies and guidelines. Please save this information for future reference. SONshine Preschool is a faith-based Pre-kindergarten program of activities for 4-year-old children set up under the Iowa Department of Education guidelines to meet the Iowa Early Learning Standards for preschools. In addition, we are verified as a Quality Preschool meeting the recommendations of the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards for all the physical and curricular criteria required. Our head teacher holds a current Iowa teaching license, with Early Childhood Endorsement.

GOALS

Our goal is to provide a Christian atmosphere of love and acceptance which will help each child develop to his/her full potential:

***Mental development**

1. To develop curiosity and joy of learning
2. To develop speaking and listening skills
3. To develop pre-reading skills
4. To recognize colors, shapes, and letters

***Physical development**

1. To develop large motor skills, i.e. skipping, running

2. To develop small motor skills, i.e. drawing, cutting
- *Social and emotional development
1. To develop friendship skills
 2. To develop self-control by sharing and learning appropriate and polite behavior
 3. To learn cooperation through group activities and free choice play time
 4. To develop creativity through art, music and drama
 5. To develop a sense of worth and independence
- *Spiritual development
1. To nurture a child's young faith through the modeling of a Christian teacher
 2. To learn Christian values

ADMISSIONS

- *Students must be 4 years old by September 15 of the year entering SONshine.

HEALTH INFORMATION

All health records, health insurance covered required for emergency treatment, physicals, immunization records, emergency and consent forms must be current and kept up to date. (*Immunization cards and exemption forms are available on our website.*)

Please inform staff of any instructions related to any of your child's special health needs such as allergies, chronic illness or special nutritional needs (*e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes*).

REGISTRATION

A copy of the child's birth certificate is required for age verification. If your child is put on a waiting list, you will be called as soon as there is an opening. If you are registering twins, both will be enrolled unless your registration is spot #40.

TUITION

Parents do not have to pay for their child to attend SONshine. Tuition for children who are 4 before September 15 of the enrollment year will be covered by state funding (Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program) unless the state legislature decides to change the funding process. Religious instruction is funded through donations..

CLASS SESSIONS

Classes are limited to 20 students each session. Each class will meet twice a week, as possible, for 6-hour sessions. You may be able to choose a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday class. We open at 8 AM and dismiss at 2 PM. All children should arrive by 8:10 when our Opening Group begins.

HOT LUNCH

We consider hot lunch as part of our learning experience. We strongly encourage participation in the hot lunch program. Milk will be available for purchase for students that bring a home lunch. Separate payment is made to Oskaloosa Christian Food Service which provides the meals. Carol De Ronde, the food service director, can be reached at 641-672-2174 or by email: derondec@oskaloosachristian.net. Parents may eat lunch with their child, but must inform the teacher or the school kitchen before 9 AM of that day. Lunch costs, as well as Applications for Free and Reduced Lunches, will be available in August.

CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

Because we are housed in the Oskaloosa Christian School facility, we follow their

calendar as well. An annual calendar will be available with home visits. A monthly calendar is sent designating all events occurring with your child's class. This calendar is also available online at www.sonshinepreschool.org.

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Parents are responsible to educate themselves on weather related changes in class schedules. Early dismissals and cancellations due to weather will follow the Oskaloosa Christian and/or Community Schools times. SONshine Preschool is canceled/delayed whenever Oskaloosa Christian and Community Schools are canceled/delayed. Please listen to KCWN 99.9 or KBOE 104.9 FM radio stations and WHO-TV (Channel 13), WHO Radio (1040 AM) WHO website - www.who.tv, KCCI-TV (Channel 8), KCCI website - www.kcci.com WOI-TV (Channel 5) for all announcements. With 2-hour delays our day will begin at 10:00AM. Snow days will be rescheduled using Fridays as make-up days. You will be notified when your class is scheduled.

ABSENCES

You are required to call the preschool at **641-673-9472** or send an email to teacher@sonshinepreschool.org before 8:00 am or the evening before to leave a message concerning a child's absence.

ENROLLMENT TERMINATION

A two weeks' notice is requested if a parent/guardian wishes to withdraw a child. A conference with the Director is also recommended.

PROBLEMS

SONshine's main goal is to provide a high-quality program for your child. Should there be a situation where you are less than satisfied with our program, please let the Director know immediately. If a child develops a behavior problem that doesn't fit into our program, we reserve the right to dismiss a student. This will be discussed privately with the parents, teachers, Director and a board representative.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Partnering with parents is an important component of preschool communication to help support your child's development.

* In order for your child to feel comfortable while meeting the teacher for the first time, **a home visit will be scheduled** before classes begin. The teacher will contact you to find a time when it is convenient for you. This is a good opportunity to discuss the program and answer any of your questions.

* SONshine's phone number is 641-673-9472. Use this number as it rings directly to our classroom. This is different from the Oskaloosa Christian School number. Feel free to contact us anytime to share information or concerns about your child.

* Monthly **calendars** will be sent out prior to the start of a new month listing the leader and topics for each day. All important topics/events are included on the calendar, as well as, in the weekly updates or newsletters. Please post at home in a prominent place and check daily.

***Weekly updates** will summarize activities of the week along with suggested questions to ask your child for engaging conversation. Please read each week. These will be sent home

electronically to the email you have given us at registration or otherwise requested.

* Opportunity will be given for **parents to volunteer** in the classroom. If you would like to volunteer/visit the classroom, please email the teachers ahead of time. We encourage all parents to take a turn helping with the activities planned, as well as, giving you the chance to see your child in action at school.

***Parent-Teacher Conferences** will be held in the fall and spring. Scheduling will be online using SignUp Genius; however, they may be requested any time of the year by either teacher or parents.

*Parents are always welcome to discuss their child with his/her teacher after school, either face-to-face or via phone. The teacher will be in the classroom at least 30 minutes after class ends.

*Parents will be asked to complete 2 online **Surveys** of the program and provide input for changes.

*Information will be sent home in the spring, concerning local area Kindergarten programs and their contact information.

* **Home Visits**- Staff will complete home visits at the start of the school year. During home visits, staff will meet your child on their territory to ease those first days. Staff will also share information about our program, gather necessary paperwork. This is a great opportunity for parents to share any information about their child, concerns and goals.

OUTSIDE SUPPORT SERVICES

The services from the AEA are available for students of SONshine Preschool. You may view these services at www.gpaea.org. Please see Appendix B for Speech Articulation Developmental Norms.

FIELD TRIPS, SERVICE PROJECTS & SPECIAL EVENTS

During the school year there are scheduled field trips, service projects and special events as well as “holiday” events/procedures.

Field Trips are when the class leaves the building to travel by bus to a particular place for an educational opportunity. Please consult the calendar for notice of when your child will be out of the building. We inform the school secretary of where we are going, the time we leave and time we expect to be back. (One teacher always has a cell phone with her and the Oskaloosa Christian School secretary has the number if a teacher needs to be reached.) Parents are encouraged to attend if space allows. Since parents may be chaperoning preschoolers, bringing younger siblings would not be appropriate.

Service Projects are opportunities for children to share God’s love through service. Two examples: We collect and count pennies to share with Mobility Worldwide based in Leighton, IA. We may visit residents in local care centers (We do utilize a bus for travel).

Fall:

- Autumn Acres (Field Trip)

Winter:

- Penny Count to build a P.E.T. (*Personal Energy Transportation*) Cart through Mobility Worldwide (service project)
- May visit local care centers (service project)- *depending on restrictions*
- We do **not** have a Christmas Program

Spring:

- Spring Musical Program with Oskaloosa Christian K-4 students
- SONshine Grandparent's Day activities will be planned for the spring (*This is a different day from Oskaloosa Christian's Grandparents Day*)
- *End of year*- TBD (Field Trip)
- We do not have a graduation ceremony

Events may be added or changed during the school year.

"Holidays" are not usually celebrated with parties or dressing up. On Valentine's Day you have the option to bring valentines for classmates, if you desire. We suggest that you have your child just "sign" their own name on the valentine (not their classmate's name) and then they can easily be distributed without the need to read each classmate's name.

LEADER DAY/SNACKS

Your student will be assigned as LEADER for a day which will be their day to bring a "Show and Tell" item and are welcome to provide the snack for 20 students (**no** drinks please). Leaders will be clearly marked on the monthly calendars and will rotate throughout the year giving them at least 3 turns as the Leader.

SONshine Preschool will follow the state guidelines for preschool with regard to food that is brought for snack time. It states that:

"Food that comes from home for sharing among the children is either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers." (NO homemade items)

**Due to numerous incidents of peanut allergies each year,
please NO SNACKS CONTAINING PEANUTS/PEANUT BUTTER.**

Because SONshine is a Christian Preschool, please make sure items brought to school for snacks or treats do not offend others, especially around holidays. See **Appendix A** for more information concerning snacks.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

- Any food items unless it is your leader day
- Any toys, except for "Show and Tell"
- Toy weapons - this complies with public school policy

ILLNESS

If your child has an elevated fever (*99 or above*) or has vomited within 24 hrs, DO NOT bring him/her to preschool. For the health and consideration of others, students must have been fever free for 24 hours (without the aid of a fever reducer) before returning to school. If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be allowed to rest quietly in the office area, separate from the other children, until a parent arrives to pick up the child. Parents will be notified promptly when their child becomes ill.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING A CHILD TO PRESCHOOL WITH A SUSPICIOUS RASH, DIARRHEA, COMPLAINTS OF A SORE THROAT, STOMACH ACHE or has VOMITED in the previous 24 hrs.

We ask that you inform the teacher if your child has an infectious disease (chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, fifth disease, influenza, etc.; even head lice). These are very contagious prior to a parent's knowledge of the sickness and, most likely, other classmates have been exposed. Parents will be informed, when necessary, of any contagious sickness within the classroom.

In the event medications are needed while at school, students will be taken to the school office where their medication shall be stored in a locked closet. Certified personnel shall administer both prescription and over-the-counter medications to a child only if the child's record documents that the parent or legal guardian has given the program written permission. The child's record must include instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended the medication for that child. Medications shall be labeled with the child's first and last names, the date that either prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's licensed health care provider, the name of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it.

ACCIDENTS

Parents will be notified, as soon as possible, by school personnel any time an injury occurs and the need for a doctor's examination is either obvious or in question. (Teachers are encouraged to err on the side of safety.) School personnel will take your child to the local clinic or hospital for examination, should the need appear immediate or if in question, and a parent cannot be reached. A designated staff member will continue to try to make contact with you or a relative until successful.

TOILETING

SONshine encourages its students to be potty trained. If this is a concern to a parent, please keep staff informed. Staff will check with your child at each restroom break throughout the day, changing as needed.

OUTDOOR PLAY

When the weather is favorable, we go outside for large motor development. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing and boots when necessary. Rain boots are needed whenever the playgrounds are wet in the fall and spring. Winter attire includes a warm coat, snow pants, hats, gloves and warm boots. We go outside if the "feels like" temperature is 10 degrees or above. **Please label** boots and all outdoor clothing items. Rain boots should not be your child's only footwear for the day.

LOST ITEMS

Our staff will make every effort to keep your child's apparel and belongings in an organized manner to avoid damage or loss. Part of our program is to instill a sense of responsibility in the children by looking after their own things. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Please label all personal items brought to preschool.

DRESS CODE:

We will be following the dress code of Oskaloosa Christian School since we hold classes within their building. The following is a copy of that dress code as it appears in OSCI

Handbook.

Dress Regulations

The purpose of the dress code at OSCI is to clarify standards of appearance that reflect human dignity as God's image-bearers on this earth. With clear standards of dress, students will be free from distractions that extreme forms of dress and fashion competition can create. OSCI will allow freedom in dress within reasonable parameters. Enforcement of the dress code will remain within the spirit of creating a proper atmosphere in which to learn and develop Christian character.

1. School clothing will:

- *Be neat, clean, modest, and in good repair. Includes skirts and/or shorts that are modest (between fingertip and mid-thigh length or longer)*
- *Be properly buttoned and able to tuck in.*
- *Be worn with a belt if necessary.*
- *Also, includes shoes and/or sandals to be worn at all times.*
- *Leggings, yoga pants, or running tights are not acceptable unless a fingertip length tunic shirt, sweater, skirt, or dress (not jacket or coat) is worn over top. This does **not** ban the wearing of leggings to school. Rather, we are asking that a top be worn that, in essence, will cover a student's backside while wearing them. This could be a shirt, skirt, sweater, or dress.*

2. Inappropriate clothing is identified as:

- *Indecent, provocative, too low, too short, too tight, revealed undergarments.*
- *Skin showing while standing or sitting (either bare back or bare midriff)*
- *Spaghetti straps, tank tops or halter tops (not including sleeveless shirts)*
- *Calling attention to oneself (ie: piercing, hair color, style, anything in excess, etc.)*
- *Cut-off shorts or sweats, spandex, and/or bandanas, hats and caps.*
- *Clothing with logos or labels that promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco, secular rock groups, or suggestive of a non-Christian attitude or behavior.*

3. Since opinions of appropriate attire differ, the administration reserves the right to serve as the final authority on student appearance during the school operations.

In addition to these above, we would appreciate the following observed at preschool as well: If girls wear skirts or dresses, please wear a pair of shorts underneath.

In regards to shoes, footwear must be worn at all times while in the classroom. If your child comes to school wearing boots, they will need an extra pair for recess. We would appreciate shoes that can be worn safely for play outside or in the gym without flying off the foot. *(We know that flip-flops are common wear for all ages, but please consider the safety aspect.)*

Student Evaluations:

SONshine students will be evaluated by our staff using Teaching Strategies, Hatch and Bracken Testing. These evaluations serve as screening or referral, identify interests and needs, describe the developmental progress and learning of children, and aid in adapting teaching practices and the environment. Evaluations, individually or as a group, through Teaching Strategies will be done on a continual basis throughout the year, by the teaching staff as well as from parent reports given to staff. Hatch is a collaborative play technology solution that fosters social-emotional development and introduces new vocabulary words as preschoolers play and learn together. Bracken Testing and individual tests are administered two times throughout the year, fall/spring by the SONshine teaching staff. Data gathered through these assessments will be shared at Conferences or at parent/legal guardian request. We do add parent reports of student achievements to assessment data. All of these forms of evaluation are used by the Oskaloosa Preschool Partnership and are approved by the Department of Education.

Visiting and Volunteering

SONshine does appreciate parents visiting and volunteering in the classroom and on field trips. We do request that you wait until after Oct. 1 to visit. This allows us time to establish routines and the students to gain confidence in our teachers.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

SONshine staff exercise routine cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces following: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/accreditation/early-learning/clean_table.pdf These cleaning products are kept out of reach of children.

Procedures for standard precautions are followed according to: <https://educate.iowa.gov/media/7266/download?inline=>, pg 18, 5.18, 1.19

Policies about Discrimination

SONshine Preschool, Inc. is a participant of the Statewide voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). SWVPP is a publicly funded program meant to provide access to quality preschool curricula for all four-year old children. As such, during SWVPP hours, SONshine Preschool shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age or political party affiliation by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the civil Rights Act of 1964 (42U.S.C. 2000d and 2000e).

SONshine Preschool is a bona fide Religious Institution, according to Iowa Code sections 216.6(6)(D), 216.9.

If we are aware that a parent/guardian cannot read, we would verbally go over all our policies as well as the contract to make sure that they fully understand them. If there is a language barrier or if the parent/guardian has a learning disability, we would request that a close friend or relative could accompany them for orientation to make sure they understand the policies. If a parent/guardian cannot provide another person to be present, we will do everything we can to find someone who will be able to help them understand the policies. It is very important that all parents/guardians understand the policies of the program they enter their child into.

Names to know at Oskaloosa Christian School 641-672-2174

Joel Rietema, Principal

Patti Westra, Secretary

Carol De Ronde, Food Service Manager

SONshine Preschool Board

Parents serve as members of the SONshine Preschool Board. The board is a three-year volunteer commitment. There are typically ten evening meetings per year; the first Thursday of the month.

New members begin their term in August. For a list of current Board members, see SONshine's website (www.sonshinepreschool.org).

Appendix A

Information Concerning Snacks

SONshine Preschool will follow the state guidelines for preschool with regard to food that is brought for snack time. It states that:

“Food that comes from home for sharing among the children is either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.” (NO homemade items)

*** If your child has a food allergy, please alert the teacher; a note will be sent home with the rest of the class to make them aware.**

Some suggestions are as follows:

- Apples (bag of slices), bananas, grapes, etc.
- Broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, etc. (pre-cut in sealed bags)
(if providing ranch dressing, it must come in a sealed container)
- Granola bars
- Cheese sticks
- Meat sticks
- Pudding or gelatin cups (please provide spoons)
- Yogurt in a tube
- Fruit snacks
- Cheese and cracker packs
- Crackers, pretzels, etc.
- Any individualized packaged snack

We request that you **do not bring** cake/cupcakes-frosted or plain.

If ever there is a time when your child is the leader and it is a burden to provide a snack, please contact one of the teachers. We keep some snack items on hand for such situations.