

sprout

Kids Academy

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Sprout Kids Academy! We are delighted to be a part of the growth and development of your child. Please use this handbook to become more familiar with the policies, procedures, and philosophies of Sprout Kids Academy. This handbook is designed to give you an overview of our day-to-day operations; however, it is by no means all-inclusive. You are always welcome to call or stop in with questions or concerns.

Philosophy

Early childhood (birth to age eight) is considered to be the most important developmental phase in a child's life. At this time, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive learning is happening at astounding rates. While the development of a child is a continuous process with a predictable sequence, each child is unique and progresses at a different rate. Each period of development prepares a child for the next. If children are properly prepared in one period, they are more able to fully develop their capabilities in later periods.

We believe children learn best through play, as well as having the opportunity to make choices. A child's growth and development are best achieved through individual attention, nurturing, exposure to a variety of activities, resources, and experiences. An Early Childhood Development Center such as Sprout Kids Academy is a very effective agency for teaching compassion through example and experience. It provides time for quality education and training in a warm and friendly atmosphere where young children can learn to play creatively with one another. It provides an opportunity for nurturing principles to be applied to daily activities. Teachers exhibiting compassion provide an environment where children develop meaningful relationships. At Sprout Kids Academy, our goal is to help every child reach their full potential, one developmental milestone at a time. We believe that given the opportunity and freedom to play and learn, your child will flourish.

Sprout Kids Academy Purpose and Objectives

- To provide a variety of experiences and materials that enable each child to learn and mature at his/her own rate of development.
- To maintain a caring atmosphere where each child is loved and accepted as a unique individual.
- To provide a safe environment for learning and experiences that will increase self-esteem.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

At Sprout Kids Academy each child will be guided to discover the world around them and learn by hands-on experiences. They will be encouraged to follow directions, show consideration to others, and develop skills at their own rate in a developmentally appropriate way. Each child will be encouraged to be compassionate with others and to develop a positive pattern of behavior. Through curriculum and play, each child will develop physically, socially, intellectually, and emotionally. Each child will be encouraged to solve problems, use their skills, and discover their place in the world as they begin to understand the role of others. Through music, each child will learn to sing in a group, listen to music and develop a sense of rhythm. During creative arts, each child will be taught to express their imagination with a variety of materials. Sprout Kids Academy will maintain a delicate balance between control and freedom, and between formal and informal activities. The entire day's program will be planned to provide a rhythm of active and calm periods to meet both physical and emotional needs. Lesson plans are also available for review from the lead teacher and posted outside classrooms. Nutritious meals and snacks will be provided throughout the day. When possible, part of the morning and afternoon will be spent outdoors.

We are delighted you have chosen to make Sprout Kids Academy a part of your family's life. We are committed to you and your child and will work hard to create a loving and enriching environment that is essential for the growth and development of your child.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to nurture every aspect of a child's life through social, emotional, physical, spiritual and cognitive experiences in a developmentally appropriate child-directed environment.

Tadpoles Software

The quality of early childhood development is dependent on the connection between parents and care providers. Sprout Kids Academy uses a web-based childcare software program called Tadpoles. Tadpoles is an excellent tool to help promote and simplify the parent/provider connection. Tadpoles can be accessed both via personal computer and/or a smart phone. Each parent will have their own unique Tadpoles user ID that will be entered when dropping-off or picking-up their child. User IDs will also be given to other individuals picking up your child such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other authorized individuals. Having unique user IDs provides parents (and providers) an accurate record of drop-off and pick-up data.

Tadpoles software will also be used to keep an ongoing line of communication with parents. Throughout the day your child will have photos, videos, notes about their

care, or other information uploaded to his or her account. Parents may also receive alerts or notifications from Tadpoles with information such as photos of rashes or minor skin lesions, injury notifications, weather-related concerns or reminders of information in need of updating. Any information posted to your child's Tadpoles account will be emailed to you at the end of the day in the form of a "daily report". After checking your child out for the day, a "daily report" will be automatically generated and immediately sent to all parent/guardian email addresses on file. The daily report will include care notes, photos and a summary of your child's day. If you do not wish to receive "daily reports" you are able to opt-out. By enrolling, parents consent to photos/videos being taken and shared via Tadpoles unless otherwise requested in writing.

If you are having trouble logging in to your Tadpoles account, are not receiving "daily reports" or forgot your log-in information, please contact Sprout Kids Academy for assistance.

Communication

Sprout Kids Academy would like to stress the importance of open communication between parents, Teachers and the Director**.** Creating an environment where parents and staff communicate freely is crucial to the success of our program. Please make sure to communicate any changes in your child's behavior at home or school, medication, living arrangements, etc. to the Director so that we may best help your child adjust and succeed. If at ANY time you have questions, comments or concerns you are encouraged to share them with the Director, Assistant Director or an Owner. Contact information is available on our website www.sproutkidsacademy.com.

In addition to utilizing our web-based software, Sprout Kids Academy will also communicate with parents via phone calls, notes, conferences, etc. If you are not comfortable with web-based communication or do not have access to the internet, please let us know, and we will do our best to make sure you receive all necessary information in another format.

It is the parent's responsibility to check and take home written communication from teachers and projects from their child's cubby, as well as check their child's classroom information board.

State of Iowa regulations require Infant and Toddler classrooms to record specific care notes to inform parents of their child's day. These notes may also contain information pertaining to the supplies needed for your child when those supplies are running low. Your child's care notes can be accessed by logging in to the Tadpoles website or by waiting until the end of the day when you receive your "daily report" via the Tadpoles app. These "daily reports" open the gateway of communication between teachers and parents. Please read through them carefully. The busiest times of the day are drop-off and pick-up. Teachers will do their best to contact each parent at both of these times, however, sometimes this may be difficult. For this reason, it is important that parents thoroughly read the "daily reports" sent via email.

Admission/Enrollment

Registration is required for enrollment. Any child age 6 weeks to 5 years old is eligible for enrollment into one of the Sprout Kids Academy Infant through Preschool programs. Any child 5 to 12 years old is eligible for enrollment to Sprout Kids Academy's Before and After School Program (BASP). Enrollment into the Before and After School Program does NOT automatically follow completion of the Preschool program. Enrollment into the Before and After School Program is completed separately. Enrollment into all programs at Sprout Kids Academy is subject to availability. All children are welcome regardless of age, race, gender or religion.

Enrollment begins with re-enrollment of those students currently attending Sprout Kids Academy, followed by those on a waiting list. Waiting lists will be kept when enrollment for a specific age group meets capacity. When an opening becomes available, parents will be contacted and encouraged to come and observe a classroom and are given information about required enrollment forms. Enrollment forms are available on our website and by hard copy upon request. When you are ready to enroll your child at Sprout Kids Academy, please contact the office at (319) 545-5437 and schedule an enrollment meeting. At that meeting we will verify that all required forms are completed and signed properly, collect your enrollment fee, and register your child at our Center. Completed enrollment forms, along with a non-refundable enrollment fee are required to confirm enrollment.

Sprout Kids Academy serves all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made to the environment and staffing patterns to include children with special needs. Staff will be made aware of the identified needs of individual children and is trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion of children with disabilities in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families.

Sprout Kids Academy is licensed through the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS).

Sprout Kids Academy is required by Iowa HHS to have a complete medical examination (current within the past 12 months) and immunization card on file for every child enrolled in our Center. This information must be completed and submitted to our office before a child can attend. These forms are updated annually. Please update these forms as necessary with new address, phone/cell number, etc.

A child's file must contain the following completed forms before their first day of enrollment:

- Enrollment Contract
- Completed Physical Examination Form
- ACH Debit Origination Authorization
- Immunization Certificate/Record (no exceptions/exemptions)
- General Information Form
- All About Me Form

Sprout Kids Academy welcomes children with disabilities and will consider reasonable accommodations through an individualized assessment, consistent with applicable laws. Your child will be included in a small group with one primary caregiver. While teachers in classrooms all work together, small groupings within each class will provide your child with a sense of security and will ensure your child is familiar and comfortable with his/her primary caregiver.

Every child with special health care needs will have an emergency care plan in place before the first day of attendance. Every staff person will be made aware of these special health care needs and emergency care plans. Such special health care needs may include asthma, food allergies, etc.

Classroom Placement/Advancement/Transition

The developmental stage of your child, age of your child, along with available space based on staff-to-child ratios required by State Licensing Authorities, will determine which classroom your child will be assigned. Your child will go to the same room on a daily basis until it is time to transition to a new room. Children will transition to a new room in accordance with licensing regulations, your child's ability to adjust, and enrollment needs. Before permanent transition is made, you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's teachers to discuss the transition process, your child's progress, and of course any concerns or questions you may have. The transitioning process usually takes a week or more. Please be assured that your child's teachers will do everything possible to make this a smooth and pleasant experience for your child.

Transition from one classroom to the next depends on space available. Therefore, a child's birthday will not be the only determining factor for a child's transition to another room. The transition of your child from one classroom to the next does not necessarily affect the rate category you are billed. Class sizes mandated by Iowa HHS are established by the age of children in the room. For this reason, the billing category your child falls into is based entirely on his/her age.

The progression your child follows from one classroom to the next will continue through preschool. Once your child is enrolled in a 3-year-old classroom (Sequoia or Sassafras) he/she will not make a transition into a 4-year-old classroom until space allows.

Admission into the Before and After School Program (BASP) at Sprout Kids Academy and/or the Summer Program DOES NOT automatically follow the completion of the preschool program and is not guaranteed. **Parents must register their child for the Before and After School Program and the Summer**

Program at Sprout separately. While we would love to provide every family leaving our preschool program, we are unfortunately limited by the size of our facility. If you know your child will need before and after school care or summer care, please contact the Director and place him/her on a waitlist as soon as possible.

Family Support

Sprout Kids Academy partners with various agencies throughout Johnson County, the State of Iowa and nationally to offer support services for families in need. A listing of services and the available providers is located in the lobby area near the kiosk stations.

Ethics and Confidentiality

The staff at Sprout Kids Academy follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labelling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

Program Activities

Sprout Kids Academy will provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum for the children enrolled in our program. We use evidence-based curriculum such as *Creative Curriculum, Appelbaum curriculum, Read-It-Again, Jolly Phonics, Handwriting Without Tears, Second Step and Leap.* This curriculum includes activities geared toward promoting self-esteem, positive self-image, social interaction, self-expression and communication skills, creative expression, and problem-solving skills. We will provide a balance of active and quiet activities, individual and group activities, indoor and outdoor activities, and staff-initiated and child-initiated activities. This curriculum also promotes gross and fine motor development. Staff will take into consideration the cultural, ethnic and special needs of the children enrolled in our program when creating lesson plans.

Teachers directly supervise infants, toddlers, preschool and school aged children by sight and hearing, even when the children are in sleeping areas. Teachers will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another, to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

Developing secure relationships helps children learn to trust their world. Infant and Toddler room Staff will hold and cuddle these children. They will respond to the child's sounds and will offer encouragement and praise as the child explores and discovers new things. The child's day will be structured to his or her needs. Teachers are expected to work closely with parents to ensure the children's routines are similar to those at home.

As children grow older and develop, they become more independent and inquisitive. Teachers will provide an enriching and safe environment in which children can explore and discover their world and gain self-confidence. The child's day will be filled with stimulating hands-on learning experiences and play activities. At this age (preschool), children will develop and test social and problem-solving skills in an accepting and secure environment. Staff will be responsible for submitting lesson plans to the Director on a weekly basis. These lesson plans are also posted outside each classroom.

Daily Classroom Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for a wide variety of activities every day.

Lesson plans for each week are posted outside the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Teachers will be using multiple resources to develop lesson plans that create an environment where all children's development is supported through daily planning and learning experiences.

Child Assessment (Preschool)

It is the belief of Sprout Kids Academy that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. A variety of assessment methods will be used throughout the year including assessments linked to Creative Curriculum and Appelbaum. They provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for children and guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program.

Ongoing communication will enable family and staff to continually assess students' progress. Families will have ongoing opportunities to share the results of observations from home to contribute to the assessment process.

Assessment results will be used to:

- Provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones
- Arrange for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated
- Identify children's interests and needs
- Describe the developmental progress and learning of children
- Improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment
- Communicate with families confidentially in English or other languages spoken by families

The preschool teacher will assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Staff Development Activities

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the Area Education Agency (AEA). Staff is also encouraged to approach the Director if there are any topics, areas of development or learning opportunities for a particular age group they would like to attend training for. Staff is expected to attend all required training and monthly staff meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan

All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to aid in their continuous professional development.

Sprout Kids Academy encourages its employees to go above and beyond every day. If you see an employee that you feel has gone "above and beyond" please let the Director know. We frequently present employees with incentives or rewards for a job well done.

GENERAL INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of Sprout Kids Academy to ensure all families and children feel welcome and safe within our facility. It is vital that each and every member of the Sprout Family respect and follow the “Golden Rule”: Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Special Accommodations

Sprout Kids Academy will do everything possible to accommodate children with special needs. Please let the Director know of your child’s special needs in advance to ensure that we are fully prepared to accommodate your child. After being notified, you, the Director, your child’s teacher, and Health Care providers will develop a care plan and make sure that modified curriculum is in place before your child’s first day.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in Iowa Code, section 232.68, as one or more of the following six categories:

- Physical Abuse
- Denial of Critical Care
- Sexual Abuse
- Mental Injury
- Child Prostitution
- Presence of Illegal Drugs

Abuse, either physical or sexual, is defined under Iowa law as:

> *“…any injury that is either non-accidental or inconsistent with the explanation given for the injury with results either from actions or omissions of the person responsible for the care of the child.”*

Denial of Critical Care or Neglect is considered:

> *“...failure on the part of the caregiver to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or other care necessary for a child’s health and welfare.”*

The law requires childcare providers to report signs of child abuse, neglect or endangerment to Child Protective Services. Our staff is required to take Iowa's Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Training Program which educates childcare providers to recognize and report abuse, neglect and endangerment.

If abuse or neglect is suspected, an employee of Sprout Kids Academy should report their suspicion to the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS). Employees who suspect child abuse must report promptly (within 24 hours) in accordance with Iowa mandatory-reporter requirements; notifying a supervisor does not replace an individual reporting duty. The Director may assist with the process, and employees must not delay a report while awaiting internal approval. It is not the Center’s responsibility to determine if the suspected abuse/neglect has

occurred. Trained Iowa HHS investigators will decide whether abuse/neglect has occurred and take necessary steps to correct it if it is found to be true. The staff of Sprout Kids Academy is committed to supporting the child and family in correcting and alleviating any issues.

To report suspected abuse to Iowa HHS call 1-800-362-2178.

A “mandatory reporter” participating in good faith when making a report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be imposed. However, if a report is founded, staff that have direct contact may be required to appear as witnesses.

If an employee is reported to have abused a child at Sprout, the Director will promptly document concerns, ensure required reports are made, call the child abuse hotline, cooperate with authorities, notify our Iowa HHS Licensing Agent and take appropriate protective measures. If the allegation is found to be false, the employee may continue to work, however, may be reassigned to another position.

Please be aware that if you leave a child unattended in a vehicle, staff members of Sprout Kids Academy are required to make a report to the Iowa HHS.

Smoke/Vape/Tobacco Free Environment

No smoking, vaping or use of nicotine patches or tobacco shall be allowed anywhere in the building or on the premises/grounds. This includes but is not limited to the parking lot, driveway, playground etc. Please be considerate and do not use our parking lot, grass, driveway or landscaping to dispose of these items. If you are seen disposing of these items on our grounds, you will be issued a warning. If the behavior continues, it may result in further action, up to and including termination of your child’s enrollment.

Grievance

Open and honest communication between families and Sprout Kids Academy is an essential component of a high-quality early-childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we encourage you to first address your concern to your child’s teacher. If you have a concern regarding any aspect of the program or Sprout policies, or if additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the center Director. If after talking to both your child’s teacher and the center Director you are still not comfortable with the resolution, we encourage you to contact an owner of Sprout Kids Academy to discuss the matter further. Contact information for owners of Sprout Kids Academy can be found in the back of this handbook.

Drop-In Service

Sprout Kids Academy will allow drop-in service when available. Iowa HHS has very strict policies dealing with staff-to-child ratio, we will not bend these rules, however, when we can accommodate these needs, we will do so. All enrollment paperwork must be completed in entirety prior to any child being accepted for drop-in service.

For current drop-in rates, please see our rate sheet located in the “Parent Info” tab of the Sprout Kids Academy website at www.sproutkidsacademy.com.

Building Access, Classroom Locations and Parent Parking

All families should enter and exit the building using the main doors on the north side of the building (parking lot side). Once inside the vestibule you will use your key card to gain entrance into the building. This entrance has direct access to the kiosks that MUST be used when dropping off and picking up your child. If a parent loses his/her key card, please notify the Center immediately. A replacement key card can be purchased for $15.

For the safety of children and staff, each authorized individual must use their own assigned access card to enter the building. Please do not admit anyone using your access. Visitors without authorized access should contact the office for assistance.

All infant and toddler classrooms are located on the main level of the building. There are 2 and 3-year-old classrooms on both the main level and second floor. All 4 and 5-year-old classrooms are located on the second floor of the building.

The parking lot for Sprout Kids Academy is located on the north side of the building and has two driveways. During peak hours (7:00 am–8:30 am and 3:00 pm–6:00 pm) these driveways are ONE-WAY only. During peak hours the north driveway closest to Highway 6 should be used only to drive IN to the parking lot and the driveway on the west side of the parking lot (closest to building) should only be used to drive OUT of the parking lot.

When entering or leaving the parking lot PLEASE drive slowly and use extra caution. We all know how quick children are and how distracted we can be when loading items into our vehicle. Remember… it could be your child.

Entering and exiting the classrooms and parking lot also provides opportunities to model good behavior for your child. Opening doors for others, waiting patiently, allowing someone to pull out in front of you, and using please and thank-you when the recipient of one of those behaviors are all ways to let your child learn by example.

Birthdays and Holidays

When a child has a special event (for example a birthday party) in which they would like to invite their classmates to attend, it is Sprout Kids Academy policy that those invitations be left in the office for distribution. Alternatively, you may request contact info from the office for distribution via US Mail. Young children have a very narrow view of the world and when they do not get invited to a social gathering, it can have a deep negative impact. Please do not bring invitations to your child's classroom unless ALL children within that classroom are invited. Due to confidentiality, we cannot provide addresses of other families, however, we would be more than happy to mail out stamped invites to those children.

Unfortunately, due to the increasing number of food allergies at our Center, we do not allow parents to bring outside food items such as a birthday cake or cupcakes to the Center.

The following holidays will be observed by Sprout Kids Academy, and the Center will be closed.

- New Year's Day (observed Friday if on Saturday; Monday if on Sunday)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (observed Friday if on Saturday; Monday if on Sunday)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (observed **ONLY** if falls on a weekday)
- Christmas Day (observed Monday if on Sunday)

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of Sprout Kids Academy.

Infant Rooms (Aspen & Birch) ~ SHOES OFF

Infants spend a majority of their waking hours on the floor at Sprout Kids Academy. For this reason, we ask that you remove your shoes if you are entering the classroom further than the doorway. Furthermore, siblings or other children accompanying you should not enter the room. Anyone entering the classroom must remove or cover shoes they have worn outside the classroom. Strict adherence to this rule ensures infants are not exposed to contaminants from the bottom of shoes. Please be respectful of this policy and do not make Center staff enforce compliance.

Pets Visiting Center

At various times throughout the year a child may have interactions with a pet brought to Sprout Kids Academy. Parents will be notified in advance of any animal visits. Any pet or animal present at the facility, indoors or outdoors, must be pre-approved by the Director, shall be in good health, show no evidence of carrying any disease, be fully immunized, and be maintained on a flea, tick, and worm control program. A current Pet Health Examination - Veterinary Health Certificate from a veterinarian shall be on file in the facility, stating that the specific pet meets these conditions. All contact between animals and children shall be supervised by a teacher who is close enough to remove the child if the child shows signs of treating the animal inappropriately or if the animal shows signs of aggression. The teacher shall instruct children on safe procedures to follow when in close proximity to these animals (for example, not to provoke or startle animals or touch them when they are near their food). Potentially aggressive animals will not be allowed on the premises or in the same physical space as the children.

Children's Personal Items

Sprout Kids Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Staff will do everything within reason to ensure children's items are accounted for. A Lost and Found is located in the lobby to help assist the return of misplaced items. It is the responsibility of the parent to **mark each personal item with the child's name** and to keep an inventory of items brought to and taken from the center.

Do not bring items of value to the Center. Acceptable items for children to have at Sprout Kids Academy are the following: two (2) extra sets of clothing, a jacket/sweatshirt, blanket, cot sheet, shoes for outdoor play, and one (1) comfort item. These items are to be stored in the child's cubby/assigned hook. To ensure only your child's items are placed in their assigned area, please take care when placing items in your child's assigned area. Inform staff of items you find that do not belong in your child's assigned area.

Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of Sprout Kids Academy not to discriminate in its education programs or educational activities on the basis of sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability. Students are educated in programs which foster a knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the Center's Director. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available upon request from the curriculum director's office.

DAY TO DAY PROCEDURES

Arrival and Departure

Providing a safe and secure environment is extremely important to us. Every time your child arrives at Sprout Kids Academy he/she must be checked in using one of the two available kiosk stations in the lobby and be taken directly to his/her classroom. This process aids in the safe arrival of your child as well as ensures we are meeting the requirements of Iowa HHS and of Iowa State Law. When a child is picked up, please be certain a staff member is aware of their departure and check them out at one of the two available kiosk stations in the lobby. In the event that the kiosk stations are not working we will replace the kiosk check in/out procedure with a paper system. Children arriving for the After School Program will be checked in by the staff member who brings them to the Center. Attendance records are required by State licensing regulations and they provide up–to-minute attendance lists for staff.

To ensure your child's safety, the Director and teaching staff maintain a current list of individuals authorized to pick up your child, including their contact information. This information must be updated annually, or sooner if any changes occur. Each authorized individual will be assigned a unique user ID for use at the kiosk stations. **Do not share your user ID with anyone.** If another individual will regularly pick up your child, please contact the office so we can assign them their own ID and confirm they are listed as an authorized pick-up person in your child's General Information Packet.

In the event of an emergency, if you or another authorized individual is unable to pick up your child, you must provide written consent via email or fax authorizing a specific individual to do so. Upon arrival, that individual will be required to present valid photo identification (such as a driver's license) before your child will be released. Children will only be released to a parent or to individuals who have been designated in writing on the "Pick-Up Permission" section of the General Information and Contacts form.

If you know in advance that someone else will be picking up your child, please notify the Director.

Children's Hand Washing

Parents shall assist their child with hand washing upon entering their classroom to begin their day. Staff will assist children with hand washing in order to maintain good personal hygiene and to prevent or minimize the spread of illness or disease throughout the day. Water bottles will be filled each morning after handwashing.

Playground and Indoor Gymnasium

Sprout Kids Academy meets the physical needs of children by providing an outdoor play area containing a variety of age-appropriate outdoor play equipment and a substantial green space to run in addition to an indoor gymnasium. The “Big Kids” outdoor play equipment was designed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector and has unique play zones that target all of the major motor activities. These play areas are educational environments where your child will learn about his or her physical capabilities and the social skills involved in both organized and informal play. These areas are viewed as supplemental classrooms with many opportunities for learning. Children will be given both a morning and an afternoon opportunity to be outside (weather permitting). The indoor gymnasium will be utilized for large-group activities during the day and will replace the outdoor play area during inclement weather. Like our classrooms, we have rules that must be followed in our outdoor and indoor play areas.

Please read and discuss the following rules with your child:

- Children must have closed toe shoes on at all times.
- Children may not go beyond the fence (outside)
- There will be no climbing on the fence (outside)
- Children must use play equipment appropriately and with care.
- Children must respect the environment and should not intentionally damage or destroy shrubs, flowers, etc.
- Children will conduct themselves appropriately when they are transitioning from classroom to play area ~ walking, hands to self, listening, no yelling/screaming.

Director will complete the National Program for Playground Safety’s Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a yearly basis.

Rest/Nap Time

Iowa HHS regulations state, children 2-5 years of age need a minimum 20 minutes of rest, and children 0-2 years may sleep as needed. Conditions conducive for sleep and rest for young children include a consistent caregiver, a routine quiet place, and a regular time for rest. Most preschool children in all-day programs benefit from scheduled periods of rest. This rest may take the form of actual napping, a quiet time, or change of pace between activities. Rest periods will have music playing, lights dimmed as well as shades drawn to a close. Children not falling asleep during this time will be asked to remain quiet by reading, working with puzzles, or playing in an area with other awake children in order to maintain a calm environment for the other children that have fallen asleep.

Infant Safe Sleep

Children from six weeks to two years of age will nap as needed. Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm, flat, approved sleep surface, consistent with applicable Iowa safe-sleep requirements. Any medically necessary exception requires an appropriate individualized written order and licensing review. Soft surfaces and gas-trapping objects such as pillows, quilts, sheepskins, or soft bumpers will NOT be placed under or with an infant for sleeping. When infants can easily turn from the supine position to the prone (front) position, they will be put down for sleep on their back but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep. Once infants develop the skills to move from their back to their side or their stomach it is safe to put them to sleep on their backs and allow them to adapt to whatever position makes them comfortable. Repositioning sleeping infants to their backs is not recommended once the child has learned to turn over easily from the supine to prone positions.

If an infant has an illness or a disability that predisposes the child to airway obstruction in the supine position, parents are required to provide a signed physician's note specifying the need for prone sleeping position and any other special arrangements required for the infant.

Swaddling is not used for sleep at the center unless an individualized exception is specifically permitted under applicable Iowa child-care requirements and approved in writing by appropriate professionals and management. If a parent wishes their child to be swaddled for naps, please pick up a "Permission to Swaddle" form from the office. This form must be signed by both a parent/guardian and the child's physician and returned to the office before your child can be swaddled.

No child under 12 months of age shall sleep with a blanket or other items in crib.

Infant Tummy Time

All infants will receive various amounts of "tummy time" throughout their day. These infants shall be awake and supervised during these periods. This activity will help in the strengthening of their muscles and normal development.

Daily Food Services

Sprout Kids Academy is an **EGG AND PEANUT/NUT FREE FACILITY**

Sprout Kids Academy uses the guidelines provided by the Department of Education's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Standards are followed for meals and snacks to help meet a child's daily nutritional requirements and our licensing guidelines. Clean drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards all food with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

Exceptions to these standards are allowed for allergies, medical conditions and cultural preferences, if verified in writing by a physician and accompanied by a completed Diet Modification Form.

Sprout will provide children with lunch daily as well as two nutritious snacks during the day. Lunch and snacks will be provided only if children are in attendance at the time the item is served. The menus will be posted on the Bulletin Board at the main entrance of the building. All meals will be served family style. Every effort shall be made to serve children promptly. Staff will incorporate table manners into their lesson plans and provide children with examples and guidance during this time. Staff members are encouraged to eat with children at the same table and model appropriate table manners. Staff should also help children learn healthy eating habits while ensuring the safety of the children sitting with them. Child-size (small) portions are served with additional portions available rather than large servings. Meals and snacks are not withheld as a form of discipline. We will encourage children to taste all foods, placing food to the lips is considered a taste, but no child will be forced to eat something they do not like. At no time are teachers to leave children unattended (proper ratio compliance) while eating.

We ask parents not to bring food from home into Sprout except for infant feeding, baby food and children with special diets due to religious or medical dietary needs. These special dietary needs must be directed by a physician and on file in writing at the center. Any food, bottles or breast milk brought into the Center MUST have your child's first and last name clearly marked on each item. If your child has food allergies, religious or special dietary needs, please discuss this with the Director prior to your child's first day. If your child has a medical exception to a food item on our menu, please provide the Director with a list of foods that your child should not eat, why these foods present a problem and also include any foods that may be a substitute. **These exceptions must be verified in writing from a physician with a form provided by Sprout Kids Academy.**

For families with children that eat baby food, formula or breast milk:

All families with young children that do not eat the meals provided on our posted menu must provide baby food, formula or breast milk to Sprout Kids Academy. Sprout Kids Academy does NOT provide formula or baby food for families. Infant parents will provide a day's supply of bottles containing breast milk or infant formula. Only cleaned and sanitized bottles (or their equivalent) and nipples shall be used. Each bottle or food container needs to be clearly identified with a label that won't come off in water or handling, with the child's first & last name, date and time the bottle was prepared. Labeled containers of breast milk shall be kept frozen or refrigerated, and formula shall be refrigerated until immediately before feeding. Any contents remaining after feeding will be discarded, unless otherwise requested in writing by a parent.

Prepared bottles of formula from powder or concentrate or ready-to-feed formula shall be kept refrigerated and shall be discarded after 24 hours if not used.

Unused expressed human milk shall be discarded after 24 hours if refrigerated, or by 3 months if frozen, and stored in deep freezer at 0 degrees F. Unused frozen human milk which has been thawed in the refrigerator shall be used within 24 hours. A bottle that has been fed over a period that exceeds an hour from the beginning of the feeding or has been unrefrigerated an hour or more shall not be served to an infant. Bottles will be rinsed out and ready for you to take home each evening for cleaning. If desired, an area will be available for nursing mothers or parents who wish to bottle-feed or nurse their baby throughout the day.

Food Allergies

If your child has food allergies or special dietary needs, we encourage you to schedule a meeting with the Director prior to your first day to learn about our food allergy policies, procedures and protocol and to set up an action plan in case of an emergency. Our menus change throughout year therefore it is important that parents watch for new menus and identify any concerns they have about a menu item with the Director.

Some of the procedures in place to protect children with food allergies include:

- Action Plan form completed by physician.
- Diet Modification form completed by parents and doctor.
- Alert on door into child's classroom indicating there is an allergy in the room.
- Photo of child with specific allergy located on food cart.
- Photo of child with specific allergy located in food prep area in classroom.
- Action Plan located in food prep area in classroom.
- Uniquely colored plate and cup (red) used for all children with an allergy.

Field Trip and Transportation Policy

Field trips may be scheduled throughout the year. Examples of field trips include libraries, picnics, splash pads, ice skating, museums, movies, and other establishments that provide fun and educational tours. Transportation to field trips will be provided (at no extra charge) by Sprout Kids Academy. Transportation of students will be done with our facility's vehicles. Iowa Law requires car safety restraints (seat belts) for all children in the vehicle. Children will use age-, size-, and manufacturer-appropriate child restraints that comply with Iowa law. Children younger than six must use an appropriate child restraint system, and children younger than one year and weighing less than 20 pounds must be rear facing. Older children will use an appropriate booster or seat belt as required by law and proper fit. Parents may request that children over 5 use a booster seat. Our transportation vehicles are equipped with restraint systems, however in rare instances parents may be asked to leave their child's car seat if needed. No child will ride in the front seat of a vehicle. Every driver will have a current driver's license, be over the age of 21 and be listed as an insured driver under the facility's

auto insurance policy. Staff will carry with them all emergency contact information for each child attending in a secure container (back-pack) that is immediately accessible. When groups are off-site there must be one adult over the standard Iowa HHS mandated adult to child ratio

Children, both as passengers and pedestrians, will be instructed in safe transportation behavior with terms and concepts developmentally appropriate for their age. Teaching passenger safety to children reduces injury from motor vehicle crashes to young children. Young children need to develop skills that will aid them in assuming responsibility for their own health and safety. The following rules apply to children using Sprout Kids Academy vehicles for transportation:

- Children should stay off the roadway at all times when waiting for a transportation vehicle to arrive.
- When loading/unloading, children must wait for a signal from the driver that it is safe to do so.
- Children shall not walk in front of or behind the vehicle without an adult.
- Children are to line up while loading/unloading the vehicle in an orderly fashion.
- Children should immediately find a seat and put on their seat belt or ask for help with the belt if needed.
- Failure of a child to keep their seat belt on while the vehicle is moving will result in the vehicle stopping until the child is safely secured.
- A staff member must examine each child’s seatbelt for proper latching.
- Children must keep their hands, arms, and heads in the vehicle at all times.
- Children must refrain from throwing items out of the vehicle windows.
- Children are not allowed to open the vehicle windows on their own; they need to ask an adult for assistance.
- Children must conduct themselves in an acceptable manner at all times. Fighting, yelling, using vulgar language, acting rudely or abusively, damaging the transportation vehicle or any other abusive behaviors will not be tolerated.
- Children are to wait until the vehicle comes to a complete stop before removing their seat belts.
- If a child is behaving in such a way that is an immediate threat to others or themselves while transporting, the child will be suspended from our transportation service, and parents will be required to coordinate alternate transportation to/from the activity.

Transportation vehicles will be serviced regularly and will be in good working conditions. Vehicles are licensed and insured as regulated by Iowa HHS.

Academic Time

In order to help you discuss the day's activities with your child, teachers will prepare a daily summary describing activities your child participated in. This summary will be included in the “daily report” you receive via email at the end of the day. Your child’s classroom may also have a “Monthly Note” posted on the parent board outside the classroom. We ask that you take the time to discuss these things with your child.

WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD BRING TO THE CENTER

Clothing

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled/closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can’t guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. All families are asked to provide two (2) extra sets of seasonally appropriate clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. Please place the clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child’s name. In addition, please clearly label the clothing with your child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

If your child has an accident that requires a change of clothes and he/she does not have items available, you will be called and asked to bring clothing for your child. Clothing belonging to other children will not be loaned out.

Please dress your child comfortably and in clothes that are appropriate for outdoor play. We suggest that you choose clothing that can be put on and removed easily by your child or staff. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the time of the year. Hat, mittens, snowsuits/pants, and boots will be needed during the cold winter months. We ask you to bring tennis shoes for play. **All items should have your child’s first and last name written on them.**

Linens

Cribs and crib sheets are provided by Sprout Kids Academy for children under 12 months of age. Parents of children 12 months and older need to provide a fitted crib sheet and a blanket for a child to utilize on their cot during nap time. Each child must cover their cot with one item and cover themselves with the other item. All blankets and sheets will be laundered once per week. We ask that your child only brings one comfort item with them for sleep time. More than one item will be

sent home. Any items parents bring to the Center should be labeled with your child's first and last name.

Personal Belongings

We do not allow children to bring in personal items to school from home with the exception of sharing days. Toys and other items are easily lost, broken, and fought over. Sprout Kids Academy cannot be held responsible for any personal items that are brought to the Center. For these reasons, please help us by making sure your child leaves all personal belongings at home.

PAYMENT/FEE/TUITION PROCEDURES

Like all businesses, Sprout Kids Academy operates within a budget. Timely tuition payments are essential to ensure smooth daily operations, maintain supplies, and provide staff salaries. To support this, we have established the following tuition payment policy.

Enrollment Contract and Enrollment Fee

As part of the enrollment process, families will receive an Enrollment Contract outlining the monthly tuition rate, as well as the days and times their child will attend. This contract must be signed and returned prior to your child's first day at Sprout Kids Academy.

A non-refundable enrollment fee of $50.00 **per child** for childcare, BASP, drop-in care and Summer Program services is paid each year. In the initial year of enrollment this fee may be prorated. This is an annual fee and will be charged to each child's account every year. In subsequent years of enrollment, the $50.00 per child enrollment fee will be billed with September tuition and paid via automatic debit (ACH) on September 5th.

Tuition rates may be reviewed and adjusted periodically to reflect operating costs. Families will receive at least 30 days' written notice before a rate increase takes effect. The current rate sheet and any applicable contract terms will govern.

Tuition Payment Policy

Payment Schedule & Method

- Tuition payments are due on the **5th of each month** and will be processed via **automatic withdrawal (ACH Debit).**
- Alternative payment methods (e.g., personal check, cash, cashier's check) are only permitted with prior written approval from the Director.
- If approved for an alternative payment method, tuition is due on the 1st of each month.

Late Payments

- Payments not received by the **5th of the month** will incur a **$50 late fee**.
- If tuition and any applicable late fees remain unpaid by the 15th of the month, your child may be dismissed from the Center.

Ongoing Payment Expectations

- Full tuition is due each month regardless of illness, holidays, vacations, quarantines, or unexpected closures.
- Families approved for alternative payment methods who submit late payments (after the 5th) more than twice during enrollment may be required to seek alternative childcare arrangements.

Financial Hardship
If your family is experiencing financial difficulty, please contact the Director as early as possible. We will make every effort to accommodate special circumstances. However, children may not attend the Center until outstanding balances are resolved.

Accounts with unpaid balances exceeding **30 days** may be subject to collections or legal action.

Tuition Rate Changes
Tuition rates are subject to change. Families will receive at least 30 days' written notice prior to any increase. Current rates are available on the Sprout Kids Academy Rate Sheet, which can be obtained from the Director or viewed on our website.

Payment Handling
All tuition payments must be made directly to the Director or Assistant Director. Payments should never be given to classroom teachers or other staff members.

New Enrollments
Families enrolling at the beginning of the month may be required to pay the first month's tuition by check, with automatic withdrawal beginning thereafter.

Non-Sufficient Funds and Returned Check Fee

A fee of $45.00 will be charged for a payment returned for insufficient funds. In addition, a late payment fee of $50.00 will be charged if tuition is not paid in full by the 5th day of the month. Services may be terminated if two non-sufficient funds of automatic withdrawal or checks returned due to insufficient funds occur on the same account in the same calendar year. Individuals carrying a tuition balance over more than 30 days may be subject to collections or legal action.

Rate Changes Following a Birthday

The transition of your child from one classroom to the next does not necessarily affect the rate category you are billed. Class sizes mandated by Iowa HHS are established by the age of children in the room. For this reason, the billing category your child falls into is based entirely on his/her age.

The rate you are billed for your child will change to the next age category (if applicable) in the first FULL month following your child's birthday. At that time, your child's rate will change, even if his/her classroom does not.

Child Care Assistance (CCA)

Sprout Kids Academy may accept families who receive child care assistance through the State of Iowa, including programs such as Child Care Assistance (CCA), PROMISE JOBS, and other approved funding sources.

Enrollment is limited to families who have been approved by the State of Iowa for a **full-time schedule**.

The State of Iowa allows up to four absences per month for children receiving assistance. Please note that half-day absences count as a full absence. If absences exceed the amount reimbursed by Iowa CCA, the full daily rate for the additional absences will be calculated and added to family charges.

Families receiving assistance are also responsible for:

- Any difference between the center's standard tuition rate and the amount paid by Iowa CCA
- Any required parent co-payment
- Enrollment fees

These amounts will be billed monthly.

If a co-payment is required, it is due by the **5th of each month** and must be paid through automatic withdrawal (ACH).

Families receiving child care assistance are expected to follow all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, just as private-pay families do.

Hours Exceeding the Contracted Schedule

Sprout Kids Academy bills for childcare using one of three full-time rate categories. Parents select the rate category that best fits their needs on their child's Enrollment Contract. If a child in the "31-39 hours per week" or "30 hours or less per week" rate category receives care beyond their contracted hours in a given week, a fee of $15.00 per hour for all hours over the contracted amount will be assessed on the next month's invoice and deducted with normal tuition via automatic debit (ACH) on the 5th of the month.

If you know that your child will be over their contracted weekly hours in any given month and you let the Director know **BEFORE the end of the month in which you are over**, your rate category for that month can be adjusted and you will be

billed the difference between your initial rate category and the necessary rate category. If, however, you are over your contracted weekly hours and it is after the last day of the month you are over, you will automatically be billed the $15.00 per hour overage fee.

Hold Fee/Short-Term Withdrawal

As a courtesy to parents, Sprout Kids Academy will allow short-term withdrawals once in a 12-month period. Following a short-term withdrawal, a child's spot may be held for a minimum period of one (1) month and a maximum period of two (2) months. Reasons for holding a child's spot may include (but are not limited to) things such as maternity leave, summer break for parents who are teachers, extended vacations, or a child who is not yet ready to fill an opening when one becomes available.

The fee for holding a spot for a child is 60% of the cost of normal full-time tuition for that child. The hold fee is non-refundable and will not be applied towards any future tuition. Payment of the hold fee will guarantee a child's spot upon their return. If at the end of the two-month holding period a child is not yet ready to begin care, full tuition will be due, or the spot will be released.

Infant Specific Hold Policy

With the high demand for infant care, we have an infant-specific hold policy for newly enrolled infants to help our Center properly staff our classrooms and help parents rest at ease knowing that their child has a spot when they are ready to join us. A detailed infant hold policy, including examples, can be obtained by contacting the Director. Some of the broad details of the policy are as follows:

- Parents are allowed to hold their infant's spot free-of-charge for a maximum of two months prior to their child's scheduled start date.
- If parents would like their child's spot held/guaranteed for a period longer than two months, the additional time beyond two months will be billed at 60% of the normal rate as a "hold fee".
- A spot is guaranteed when completed paperwork is received by Sprout along with a deposit in the amount of a child's normal (full) monthly tuition plus enrollment fee. This deposit will be used for the first month's tuition.
- If a parent changes his/her mind and decides that their child will not be attending Sprout, the deposit is non-refundable.

Before and After School Care Fee on a "No-School" Day

For those children receiving Before and/or After School Care the tuition you pay covers care only on days the Clear Creek Amana School District is in session. On Clear Creek Amana's scheduled no-school days, all-day care may be offered for an additional fee as listed on the rate sheet. Emergency late starts and early dismissals are addressed separately under Inclement Weather Policies. On a scheduled no-school day a SignUpGenius will be utilized to sign your child up for care. If you are unable to locate a sign-up-genius, please call the office to

determine availability as soon as possible. Available spots will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Sprout Kids Academy closes at 6:00 pm, no exception. We request that you make every effort to pick up your child on time. When you are late, we face staffing and licensing issues. We ask for other people on your pick-up list to pick up your child in the event you are running late.

Late pick-up fees will start to accrue at 6:01 pm and are billed at a rate of $2.00 per minute. The time used to determine when your child is picked up is based on the time he/she leaves the building. Late pickup fees will be assessed on your next month's invoice and must be paid with that month's tuition, or your family will be asked to seek childcare services elsewhere. Late pick-up fees apply in all cases unless otherwise approved by the Director.

If your child is not picked up by 6:00 pm and you cannot be contacted, the authorized people listed on the Parental Release Form will be contacted to pick up your child. If staff cannot locate you or anyone on your pick-up list, we are required to call Iowa HHS. No child shall ever be taken from Sprout Kids Academy by a staff member without written permission from a parent.

In the event a parent is late picking up a child (after 6:00 pm), four times in a calendar year, Sprout Kids Academy reserves the right to terminate the Enrollment Contract and discharge the child from the Center with a maximum 7-day notice.

Enrichment Fees

Fee payment for enrichment activities you elect your child to participate in are typically paid directly to the vendor hosting the activity. Payments for enrichment fees are bound by the same guidelines and policies as monthly tuition fees.

TAX INFORMATION

End of Year IRS Statements

In early/mid-January Sprout Kids Academy will email all current families a statement showing all tuition charges and payments in the previous year. It is the responsibility of parents to make sure their contact information is updated with the Director to allow for these statements to be received. Sprout Kids Academy **IS NOT** responsible for clients not receiving these statements because of incorrect contact information.

Flex-Spending/Child Care Tuition Reimbursement

Sprout Kids Academy will email monthly "paid" statements on approximately the 9th of each month. If you would like the Center to provide these statements, parents must notify the Director that a statement is needed, and your name will be added to our list. Please plan ahead if these statements are needed for childcare reimbursement.

Our Federal Tax ID is 81-0965140

ABSENCE/WITHDRAWAL/DISCHARGE PROCEDURES

Child's Absence from Center

Parents are asked to notify Sprout Kids Academy by **9:00 am** whenever a child is not in attendance. Absences can be communicated either by phone, email or via the Tadpoles software system. Our phone number is (319) 545-5437. An answering machine will record your message if we are unavailable or out of the office. When communicating about your child's absence please also communicate the reason for the absence. It is important to track illness in the Center and in your child's classroom. If your child misses preschool or childcare, payment is still required for the days missed.

Discharge Policy

Discharge refers to the termination of a child's enrollment in the Sprout Kids Academy program. Discharge can occur when a child is dangerous to him/herself or others, is destructive to Center property, impairs the education of other children, or prohibits their classroom from providing a stimulating, safe, and healthy learning environment. The goal of Sprout Kids Academy is to allow every child a fair opportunity to be a part of the program and to resolve any ongoing issues to the best of our program's ability. It is only after repeated failed attempts to modify a situation that discharging a child is brought into consideration.

Discharge may also occur when the relationship between one or more of a child's parents/guardians and a staff member(s) at Sprout Kids Academy has deteriorated to the point where communication is difficult. Sprout Kids Academy values our employees and will make every effort to provide employees with a safe and positive working environment. Aggressive behavior, whether verbal or physical, by a parent or guardian towards any staff member of Sprout Kids Academy will NOT be tolerated.

Sprout Kids Academy strives to provide a safe, supportive environment. When concerns arise, we will work with families to identify reasonable solutions and appropriate accommodations. Enrollment may be terminated for serious safety concerns, persistent violations, nonpayment, or other circumstances affecting our ability to provide care, consistent with applicable law and the enrollment agreement.

Withdrawal Policy

Please notify the Director of any plans you may have to withdraw your child from any program at Sprout Kids Academy. For children in our **infant through preschool programs** notice must be received, in writing, **30 days** prior to your child's last day of attendance. For children in the **Before and After School Program (BASP),** notice must be received, in writing**, 90 days** prior to your child's last day of attendance**.** If written notice is not received in the required time frame, you will be responsible for your child's tuition during this period.

If your child has difficulty adjusting to our program, a conference between you, your child's teacher and the Director will be arranged. Together we will work to develop a plan to address concerns and seek solutions. If a plan cannot be agreed upon, we will ask you to withdraw your child from Sprout Kids Academy. We will do our best to provide you with a referral to other programs that may be more suitable for your child and you.

We may ask that you withdraw your child from Sprout Kids Academy in the unlikely event and if any of the following situations arise:

- Failure to pay tuition and other fees.
- Failure to follow Sprout Kids Academy policies.
- Continual arrival or departure beyond regular hours of operation.
- Any situation described in the "Discharge Policy" section above.
- KNOWINGLY bringing an ill child. Ill child is defined as a child with fever, other illness symptoms, or having been medicated within the last 24 hours.

VISITATION and VOLUNTEERING

We strive to meet the needs of the parents as well as the children and encourage your active participation in our program. We do ask, however, that you limit visits during your child's first month, allowing your child and their teacher time to get acquainted with one another. We invite you to visit the Center at any time to observe your child or speak with teachers, unless parental contact is prohibited by

court order. If parental contact is prohibited by court order, a copy of the applicable portion of the court order must be provided by the parent or guardian and made part of the child's file. Families may also participate in their child's care by volunteering and assisting Teachers. This is especially encouraged on party days and during field trips.

Volunteer Policy

Sprout Kids Academy welcomes parents as volunteers. A good program calls for many people to work together sharing their talents, knowledge, and energy so everyone receives the greatest benefit. Individuals of many ages, both men and women, are needed to provide quality care to the children. All volunteers will be required to undergo a criminal history background check, including fingerprints, to ensure the safety of the children and to meet the Iowa HHS licensure requirements. Volunteers need to sign a statement of non-convictions form and acknowledgement of child abuse responsibility, in addition to a declaration of health and free from communicable disease. Volunteers strengthen our programs in the following ways:

Benefits to Children:

- Children receive more individual attention.
- Children learn to relate to a variety of adult personalities and perspectives.
- Children can learn about different parts of their world from adults who have experienced them.

Staff Benefit:

- Staff can offer a more complete program to the children.
- Staff time can be used more efficiently.
- Staff experience positive team feeling when working cooperatively with volunteers.

Benefit to Volunteer:

- Volunteers learn and practice child development ideas.
- Volunteers experience positive feelings because their role is important in preschool.
- Volunteers develop professional skills and references.

DISCIPLINE and GUIDANCE POLICY

The goal of discipline and guidance is not only to eliminate inappropriate behavior, but to encourage appropriate behavior by using positive guidance, redirection, and setting clear-cut limits. Guidance practices should be a logical consequence to the action of the child. These practices should be consistent and appropriate to the age and circumstances of the child. Teachers will encourage empathy so that children realize the consequences of their actions, practice problem solving techniques, emphasize cooperation versus competition, develop classroom rules that are brief, clear and consistently enforced, and arrange the environment to minimize the use of the word “no”. At Sprout Kids Academy, our teachers will create a loving and stimulating environment with developmentally appropriate activities in order to prevent many unacceptable behaviors from occurring. Teaching staff will encourage children to show respect to other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

Challenging Behavior

Our teaching staff is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. One way to reduce the need for guidance is to establish healthy routines so children do not become too hungry, tired, or uncomfortable. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote pro-social behavior by:

- Interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- Modeling turn-taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors.
- Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationships with peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work

as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Permissible Methods of Discipline

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
- Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
- Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten or subject a child to neglect.
- Withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

A serious behavioral concern occurs when a child significantly disrupts daily classroom activities by:

- Requiring constant one-on-one attention that prevents the staff from caring for other children.
- Inflicting physical or emotional harm on themselves or others.
- Being disrespectful to the staff.
- Failing repeatedly to conform to the rules of the program.

If any of the above becomes an issue with the child, the child's parents/guardians will be notified and a meeting will be scheduled to talk to the Director and your child's teacher, in order to try to find a solution.

Good communication between Sprout Kids Academy and the child's family is vital. If problems do arise, every effort will be made to resolve them. However, we

cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior or behavior that inflicts physical or emotional harm on self, other children or staff. Sprout Kids Academy reserves the right to ask parents to find alternative care for their child.

Biting Policy

Biting is a natural developmental characteristic of some young children. Biting other children or their caregivers is a response exhibited by young children who are unable to effectively communicate, whether that is verbally or physically, with those other children or caregivers. Young children in the teething process may bite to soothe the pain; it is natural reaction for a young child to feel the urge to grind their gums together for comfort. It is important to think positively of children who bite. Biting is a form of communication, as biting is almost always a response to the child's needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor. In most biting instances caregivers can identify which child has exhibited this behavior and redirect that child when frustration begins. Biting in older children is not as natural and understandably will not be tolerated.

Appropriate supervision, redirection and a trusted relationship between caregivers and child can help alleviate biting, however, biting is a form of physical aggression that poses a physical hazard, as well as a health hazard, which must be dealt with accordingly. The following steps will be taken when a biting incident occurs:

- Caregivers will not express frustration or anger to the child
- Caregiver will ensure all children are safe.
- Caregivers should (in a firm, calm voice) address the child that bit in a short, simple and clear way.
- Caregivers should shift their attention to the child who was bitten and show concern and support for that child.
- Caregiver will go back and talk with the child who bit (if child is verbal and able to talk about the experience) and explain the different strategies he/she can use next time, instead of biting.
- Caregiver will help the children move on and not force them to play with one another, unless they want to

Sprout Kids Academy will maintain an emphasis on proactive purposeful planning of environments and opportunities to develop healthy relationships within the care environment through director support, staff teamwork, and professional development including both training and consultation. Staff is encouraged to seek consultation support from the Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Infant Toddler Specialists, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Coaches, or other appropriate consultants available in their local community.

Whenever a child or caregiver is bitten, an Incident/Accident Report will be filled out for both the biter and the bitten. Appropriate First Aid care for injuries from human bites will be administered. Incidents will be documented to assist the staff with identifying patterns and preventing future incidents through changing the

environment and intentional teaching strategies (e.g., socio-emotional support). A confidential copy of the incident report will be maintained in child's file, and a confidential behavior chart will be used if the biting is not an isolated incident. Parents may request a copy of the incident report. Further analysis of the environment is even more important if multiple children are exhibiting challenging behaviors.

The child with the challenging behavior should be taught in a caring and firm way that the behavior is not acceptable as well as instructed on alternative behaviors. Sprout Kids Academy will also examine the needs of the child, including potential changes to the environment and routines, to prevent future incidents.

In order to prevent children and caregivers from being unnecessarily harmed, parents will be called to come pick up their child if the child bites more than *four* times in one day. The child will not be allowed at Sprout Kids Academy for the remainder of the day.

If a child bites or attempts to bite another child or their caregiver five or more times within 10 working days, Sprout Kids Academy considers this a recurring issue. If this situation arises, in order to protect other children at the Center, Sprout Kids Academy will meet with the family to develop and document an individualized support plan, including a review of reasonable accommodations and whether additional staffing or other supports are necessary. Costs and service arrangements will be considered in accordance with applicable law and written agreements. Therefore, if this situation becomes necessary, additional support strategies may be required, which may include modified care arrangements.

In rare situations where these steps fail to resolve the problem and the child continues to bite; the child will be discharged from the Center. Sprout Kids Academy reserves the right to terminate care with no less than a 48-hour notice.

SAFETY and HEALTH PROCEDURES

Accident/Incident Report

Accident/Incident Reports are prepared for each accident/incident involving your child and must be signed by the parent or person authorized to pick up the child within 24 hours of receiving the incident report. A copy of the report will be made and placed in the child's file. Parents may request a copy of the incident report, however, the names of the other party involved (if any) will NOT be provided. Minor injuries will be handled by the staff member who has received emergency first aid training. If a serious injury occurs, paramedics will be called and the child will be transported to the nearest hospital. Under no circumstances will staff vehicles be used to transport children to the hospital. The Director or any other staff member not counted in ratio will accompany the child to emergency services until a parent or guardian arrives.

Fire Safety

Fire extinguishers are located in five areas throughout the building. Each fire extinguisher is labeled with a tag indicating its annual service date. In addition, the entire building is equipped with a sprinkler/fire suppression system. All systems are serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Exposure Control Plan

Sprout Kids Academy is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for our entire staff. In pursuit of this endeavor, the following exposure control plan (ECP) is provided to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens in accordance with OSHA standards, thereby protecting our employees.

This ECP includes:

- Determination of employee exposure
- Implementation of various methods of exposure control, including:
    - Universal Precautions
    - Engineering and work practice controls
    - Personal protective equipment
    - Housekeeping
- Post-exposure evaluation and follow-up
- Communication of hazards to employees and training
- Recordkeeping
- Procedures for evaluating circumstances.

Weapons

No student, staff member or parent shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another individual any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any Sprout Kids Academy premises, in any center vehicle or any vehicle used by the center or for center purposes, in any Sprout Kids Academy building or other buildings or premises used for center functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Look-alike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. A zero-tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect, i.e., guns, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items, knives, etc. A violation may result in appropriate safety and disciplinary measures, subject to applicable law and individualized assessment.

Water Activities

Children may have a water table in the classroom for them to stand and play with their hands in the water. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores or open cuts on their hands are not allowed to participate with others at the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play may include sprinklers, small pools (less than 18" deep), slip-n-slides, inflatable water slides (with basin less than 18" deep) or splash pads. Staff supervise all children by sight in all areas with access to water.

Outdoor Play

Children will play outdoors when weather conditions do not pose a significant health risk. Outdoor play for infants may include riding in a stroller; however, infants will be offered opportunities for gross motor play outdoors as well. Weather that poses a significant health risk includes wind chill at or below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, heat index at or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and poor air quality as identified by the National Weather Service. In warm weather, children having sun exposure should wear sunscreen, use shade structures and clothing to protect skin against sun exposure. In cold weather, children's extremities will be checked every 15 minutes for maintenance of normal color and warmth. In cold weather, children's clothing shall be layered and dry.

Sunblock

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. When necessary, sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to your child's exposed skin. Your permission to use sunblock on your child will be obtained upon enrollment on the General Information form. If you require a specific sunblock to be used on your child, you must notify the Director in writing and provide that product (labeled with your child's name) to the Center.

Accidents of Bodily Functions

Occasionally children will have a bodily fluid accident**. It is imperative that your child have two (2) extra sets of clothing** at the Center for these circumstances. When potty-training, your teacher may require additional sets of clothing and/or an extra set of shoes. If your child has an accident that requires a change of clothing and he/she does not have items available, you will be called and asked to bring clothing for your child or pick up your child. Clothing belonging to other children will not be loaned out.

Universal Precautions/Exposure to Blood or Bodily Fluids

Staff will receive training in Universal Precautions annually during staff workshops, as well as annually through an Iowa HHS approved agency. Gloves shall be worn by staff when contact with blood or other bodily fluid is possible and when cleaning contaminated surfaces. Spills of breast milk, urine, feces, vomit, or blood shall be cleaned from the surfaces with soap and water. Surfaces shall be disinfected with Purell disinfectant. Any contaminated material used in clean-up shall be disposed of in a double layer plastic bag with a secure tie. Soiled diapers are discarded in their own hands-free lid container which has been lined with a plastic bag and is not used for any other waste placement. Each plastic bag containing soiled diapers is removed from waste cans daily and securely discarded outside the facility daily.

Toilet Learning/Training

Toilet learning is an important stage in a child's development. At Sprout Kids Academy, all classrooms designated for children ages 2 and older are equipped with restrooms to support and encourage the toilet-training process. Please note that a child turning two years old does not necessarily mean they will immediately transition into a 2-year-old classroom.

For children who are not yet consistently using the toilet, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area. Food handling is not permitted in this diapering area.
- Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7 including:
    - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag or wet bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
    - Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
    - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
    - At all times, caregivers will have a hand on the child when being changed on an elevated surface.
    - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, including objects involved with food or feeding.

- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children.
- Diapering and gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program Director to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

- Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
- All families are asked to provide two extra sets of seasonally appropriate clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. (Potentially more when potty-training.) Please clearly label the clothing with your child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

Environment, toys, and equipment are cleaned/sanitized daily, with the exception of immediate health or safety risk. During cold/flu season and/or known illness outbreaks, toys and surfaces will be sanitized after each use. Disinfectants will be used for sanitizing and disinfecting.

Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion shall be set aside where children cannot access them. They must be set aside until they are washed with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized, and air-dried.

First Aid

Staff will receive training in first-aid every two years through an Iowa HHS approved agency. A first-aid backpack will be located in each classroom of the center and will be taken on all field trips. The first-aid kit will contain all items indicated on the First Aid Kit Checklist composed by the Iowa Department of Public Health as well as any emergency medication or supplies prescribed for each child with special health needs.

Supplies in the Center’s first-aid kits are checked and restocked monthly as required by Iowa HHS regulations. Documentation stating such may be obtained by contacting the Director. For all incidents involving blood or bodily fluid, disposable gloves will be used. `

Medication Policy

Sprout Kids Academy will administer medication to children for whom a plan has been established and approved by the Director. If liquid oral medication is to be administered at the Center, the parent must provide an appropriate measuring device that has clearly marked measurements (medicine cup, dropper, syringe, or medicine sip-vial). Parents must complete and sign a form authorizing staff to

administer medication to their child. Forms are provided by the Center. The signed form with specific dosing instructions along with the medication must be given directly to the Director/or designated staff member. The Director/staff member will be the only person authorized to administer medication to a child. All medications must be stored in their original containers with accompanying physician or pharmacist's directions and with the label intact. All medications will be stored so they are not accessible to children and non-Center personnel. Medications that require refrigeration will be stored in a sealed container in an area not accessible to children and non-Center personnel.

Non-prescription medications/ointments provided by a parent for a child must also have a written notice from a physician for administration.

As long as an authorization to administer medication is in effect, a notation will be made on the child's medication administration chart in Tadpoles indicating the name of the medicine, date, time, and dosage given or applied. Medications will only be administered throughout the duration of the prescription.

Staff will make a notation if:

- No dose was given because a child is absent from the center on a day the medication is to be administered.
- No dose is given because a parent picks up a child early and the medication cannot be administered.
- A parent forgets to bring the medications; therefore, no medication can be administered.
- The child experiences side effects or negative reactions to medicine.

Medication will not be administered without a current authorization signed by the parent AND physician.

Death of a Child or Teacher

In the event of a death of a child or staff member within our Sprout Kids Academy family, assistance with contacts to social services will be made available for families and staff.

Policies for Preventing the Spread of Communicable

Diseases

Staff Hand Washing

Staff will wash hands in order to maintain good personal hygiene and to prevent or minimize the spread of illness or disease. Staff will wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- Immediately before eating or participating in food service activities
- Immediately before feeding infants
- Before leaving the restroom, either with a child or by themselves
- Before and after diapering
- Before and after administering medication
- Before and after administering non-emergency first-aid to a child
- Before and after water play
- After handling animals
- After nose blowing
- After coming in from outside
- After removing gloves
- After sandbox play
- After cleaning
- After handling garbage

Method of Hand Washing

- Wash your hands as soon as possible.
- Apply soap.
- Wash hands under running water, between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, and the back of hands.
- As you soap up, sing the "Happy Birthday Song" (either quietly or out loud). Wash time should be at least 30 seconds in length.
- Rinse well under running water.
- Dry hands using a new disposable towel each time.
- Use the towel to turn off the faucet and discard towel.
- When soap and water are not available, use an antibacterial sanitizer from the first aid kit.

Children's Hand Washing

Staff will assist children with hand washing to encourage good personal hygiene and to prevent or minimize the spread of illness or disease. Children's hands will be washed at the following times:

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- Before eating
- After eating
- After using the restroom & diapering
- After nose blowing
- After handling animals
- After playing outside
- After sandbox play
- Before and after water play

ILLNESS POLICIES

Mildly Ill Children

Mildly ill children who can participate normally in activities may remain at Sprout Kids Academy. This may include children with colds, mild ear infections, sinus infections, allergy-related illnesses or children who are teething.

Exclusion from the Center Due to Illness

At Sprout Kids Academy, we are committed to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff. To support this, all families are expected to follow our illness policy.

As a general guideline, a child will be excluded from care when:

- There is a noticeable change in the child's normal behavior or condition.
- The child requires a level of care that cannot be provided without compromising the health and safety of other children, as determined by the teacher or Director.
- The child has a fever, diarrhea or vomiting.

For a **complete list of illnesses and return-to-care criteria**, please visit the Sprout Kids Academy website at www.sproutkidsacademy.com, select the **"Parent Info"** tab, and click on **"Illness & Exposure Information".**

Additional Information

Please notify the Director if your child is ill so staff can monitor other children for similar symptoms. Certain communicable diseases are required to be reported to local and state health departments; this reporting will be handled by the Director.

If a child becomes ill or injured while at the center, they will be cared for in a quiet, supervised area. Parents will be notified and are expected to pick up their child within a reasonable timeframe, defined as **within one hour**.

EMERGENCY POLICIES

Before a child's first day in attendance at Sprout Kids Academy, a General Information and Contacts form containing an Authorization for Emergency Medical Care must be completed and signed by the parent. This form will specify where emergency medical and dental health care should be obtained. It is the parent's responsibility to update this information annually.

Medical Emergency including Allergen Exposure

If a medical emergency arises, staff will first attempt to contact the parents or guardians, however, in some situations, i.e., non-breathing child, paramedics may need to be notified before parents. If the parents or guardians cannot be reached, staff will contact the emergency contact person listed on your child's Emergency Contacts section of the General Information and Contacts form. This form must accompany the child to the hospital. The Director, Assistant Director, or any other staff member not counted in ratio will accompany the child to emergency services until a parent or guardian arrives. Your signature on the General Information and Contacts form gives the hospital permission to care for your child. In the event a limb is severed, the limb shall be ice packed and accompany the child to the hospital.

Dental Emergency

If a dental emergency arises, staff will first attempt to contact the parents or guardians. If the parents or guardians cannot be reached, staff will contact the emergency contact person listed on your child's Emergency Contacts section of the General Information and Contacts form. This form must accompany the child to the hospital/dentist. If needed, staff will call for paramedic help and your child will be taken to the hospital. The Director, Assistant Director, or any other staff member not counted in ratio will accompany the child to emergency services until a parent or guardian arrives. Your signature on the General Information and Contacts form gives the hospital permission to care for your child. If a tooth is knocked out, it will be placed in a container of milk to preserve the tooth/teeth for future use.

Emergency Care Plans for Special Health Care Needs

Every child with special health care needs will have an emergency care plan in place upon enrollment. Every staff person will be made aware of these special health care needs and emergency care plans. Such special health care needs may include Asthma, Food Allergies, etc.

Life-Threatening Emergency

In a life-threatening emergency situation, emergency services will be notified first. Parents will then be notified. A parent's signature on the General Information and Contacts form gives the hospital permission to care for a child; **this form must accompany the child to the hospital**. Any child needing transport to emergency care facilities will be accompanied by the Director, Assistant Director, or any other staff member not included in the center's adult to child ratio.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures are communicated to staff in the Employee Handbook and reviewed with staff at the time of orientation and on an annual basis. Staff will receive training in adult, child, and infant CPR (renewed every two years), First Aid (renewed every two years), and Universal Precautions (renewed annually). Staff also receive training on mandatory reporting of child abuse, which is renewed every three years. Staff will undergo fire, tornado and intruder emergency procedure training on a monthly basis. The Director/Assistant Director will maintain records of fire and tornado drills. The Director and classroom teachers will check exits on a daily basis to ensure that all exits are unobstructed.

Sprout Kids Academy has written procedures for different emergencies (fire, tornado, etc.) that are posted and available for parents upon request. Monthly fire, tornado and intruder drills are conducted in accordance with state law, and all staff are trained to deal with these emergencies. Parents will be notified if an emergency occurs and children are moved to another site.

Emergency Plan for Fire

Fire escape routes are clearly marked and posted by each exit of the Center. Staff and children are trained through monthly drills to react quickly and efficiently to the building's fire alarm system.

Drills are conducted once a month at different times of the day to ensure that all children and staff are familiar with exit points. Infants will be placed in evacuation cribs for transport. A staff member from each room will be responsible for checking the bathrooms inside the classrooms for children and taking the classroom's iPad,

clip board and first-aid backpacks containing emergency phone lists outside. Staff will ensure that all children are accounted for. The first teacher to the door will hold the door open as the children and teachers exit the building. The children and staff will meet in the northernmost part of the parking lot or southernmost area of the playground. Staff will again ensure that all children are accounted for. The drill will not be complete until all staff and children are out of the building. The Director will check the staff and main floor public bathroom for children and then go to the meeting point. The children will wait for the Director to account for all children and staff. No one will re-enter the building until the "All-Clear" signal has been given.

In the event of a real fire, the above procedures will be followed and 911 will be called. Children will exit the building in an orderly fashion. The Director, Assistant Director, and any free staff will assist with evacuation of the infant/toddler classrooms. The children and staff will remain in their designated area until emergency vehicles arrive. Parents will be notified and children will remain on the premises in the designated area until parents arrive. If evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children and staff will walk or be transported by facility vehicles to the Clear Creek Amana High School. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternative pick-up site. Children and staff may return to Sprout Kids Academy only when fire officials have determined it safe to do so.

Emergency Plan for Tornado

Tornado drills will be conducted once a month at different times of the day to ensure that all children and staff are familiar with the emergency procedure. The signal for a tornado drill is an “all-call” on the phone system announcing a tornado. Designated staff will be responsible for checking bathrooms inside the classrooms for children and taking the classroom iPad, clip board and the first-aid backpack, and the classroom clipboard with them. The staff will lead the children into either the kitchen or the corridor between Juniper/Staff Breakroom or Sassafras/Gym where they will be instructed to sit on the floor by the wall with their heads bent and arms over their heads.

In the event of a real tornado, the above procedures will be followed. The staff and children will remain in the tornado shelter until the "All-Clear" has been sounded. If there is structural damage to the building, the Director will call 911 and then determine if it is safe to exit the building. If it is necessary to leave Sprout Kids Academy, Staff will follow evacuation guidelines as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire.

Emergency Plan for Flood

In the event of a flood, if evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children and staff will relocate to Clear Creek Amana High School. Designated staff will be responsible for taking the classroom iPad, the first-aid backpack, and the classroom clipboard with them. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternative pick-up site. Children and staff may return to Sprout Kids Academy when emergency management officials have determined it safe to do so.

Emergency Plan for Power Outage

The Director or designated person will inform the power company of the outage. The Director or designated person will check with staff to ensure that all children are accounted for. Staff will then use their classroom iPad (operating on battery) to create a written attendance list of children in their room. This written attendance list will serve as the classroom roster until power resumes. If it has been determined that the power outage will not be resolved quickly (three hours or more) parents will be contacted to pick up their children and Sprout will close. If it is necessary to evacuate the premises, the evacuation procedures as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire will be followed.

Emergency Plan for Severe Weather/Blizzard

The Director or designated person will decide at least one hour prior to opening, when possible, if the Center will be closed due to inclement weather. Parents and staff will be notified by text message and email via the Tadpoles software system. Closing information will also be posted on our Facebook page.

Should severe weather develop while the Center is open, the Director or designated person will decide what action should be taken. If weather is severe enough to close the Center, parents will be contacted by text message or email via the Tadpoles software system and asked to pick up their children as soon as possible. It is our policy to stay open as long as it is safe for staff and children to remain at the Center.

Emergency Plan for Intoxicated/Substance-Impaired Person

Staff will immediately alert the Director or designated person of the situation. If time is of the essence, staff will talk to the parents until the Director or designated person arrives. The Director/staff will talk to the parent about the danger of taking the child and operating a vehicle while intoxicated and ask the parent if there is another adult who can be contacted to pick up the child. The Director/staff will focus on the welfare of the child. If an impaired parent insists on leaving with the child, staff must prioritize immediate safety, seek prompt police assistance, and follow applicable custody and reporting laws. If the parent does leave with the child and the Director/staff has reason to believe the parent is substance-impaired, the Director/staff must act in their role as mandatory reporters and file a child abuse report to the police or Iowa HHS. The Director/staff shall escort the parent and

child to the parking lot to get the tag number, a detailed description of the vehicle and the direction of travel. The Director/staff will then call 911.

Emergency Plan for Bomb Threat

The Director or designated person will call 911 and inform the emergency personnel that a bomb threat has been received. The Director or designated person will follow any additional instructions provided by the emergency personnel at the time of the call. If it is necessary to evacuate the premises, the evacuation procedure as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire will be followed. Staff and children will return to the building once the search has ceased and the building has been declared safe.

Emergency Plan for Chemical Spills

In the event a toxic spill in or near the Center is witnessed by the Director or designated person, 911 will be called immediately. Staff and children will cooperate with official personnel. Staff and children will be brought into the building to a safe location designated by official personnel and the Director or designated person. Staff and children will remain at the designated location until the "All-Clear" signal is given by emergency management officials. If evacuation is necessary, the staff will follow the evacuation guidelines as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire.

Emergency Plan for Lost or Abducted Child

In case of a lost child, staff will alert the Director or designated person immediately. A complete search of the building and outside area will be conducted by the Director and staff (only if the Staff/Child ratio can be maintained). If immediate safety checks do not locate the child, the Director or designated person will call 911 promptly, without waiting for an arbitrary interval and provide a description of the child and what he/she was wearing. After calling 911, the Director or designated person will call the parents.

In the case of abduction, a description of the abductor, if available, and the child will be provided to the police. If the Director/staff is warned in advance that an unauthorized person is coming to take a child, the child will be accompanied by staff to a securely locked area. If an unauthorized person arrives to take the child, no information about the child will be released and the person will be asked to leave the premises. If the person refuses to leave, the Director or staff will call 911.

Emergency Plan for Intruder/Lockdown

Should an intruder gain entrance into the building staff with knowledge of the intruder should alert other staff by paging an “all-call” alert throughout the Center using the telephone system. As much information about the intruder(s) as possible should be communicated using the “all-call” system. Details such as location in the building, gender, appearance, clothing should be announced if possible. Following

the “all-call” all staff should immediately lock all access points into their classrooms using the keys hanging by the door on the interior side of the classroom, close the blinds on the windows, turn off classroom lights and move the children to the safest corner of the classroom out of view from any windows and instruct the children to be silent. Any staff members with children outside should bring the children to the closest classroom. Procedures for helping children stay quiet include gentle rocking, holding hands, making eye contact and offering pacifiers to toddlers/infants. 911 should be immediately called by any/all staff who feel it is safe to use a phone. If you aren’t sure if the intruder can hear you, call 911 and leave the phone off the hook. All staff and children should remain in lockdown until the all-clear is verified with responding law enforcement or incident command, when applicable, and communicated by the designated center leader.

Emergency Plan for Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake, staff will direct children to take cover under tables, desks, and door frames, staying away from windows. Emergency Management and the Director will assess any structural damage before allowing children and staff to remain in the Center. If evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children and staff will walk to the Clear Creek Amana High School. Designated staff will be responsible for taking iPads and first aid backpacks containing emergency phone lists with them. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternative pick-up site. Children and staff may return to Sprout Kids Academy when emergency management officials have determined it safe to do so.

Emergency Center Closing

If another unforeseen emergency creates a situation where the closing of the Center becomes necessary, parents will be contacted via text and email from the Tadpoles app. This information may also be broadcast via our Facebook page.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES

Facility Closure, Late Start or Early Dismissals Due to Inclement Weather

Weather-related changes to your child’s care schedule at Sprout Kids Academy are determined **independently** of the Clear Creek Amana School District. While the school district and Sprout Kids Academy may experience the same weather conditions, each will make its own decisions regarding closures, delays, and early dismissals. Updates for Sprout Kids Academy will be communicated through the Tadpoles alert system and posted on our Facebook site.

If the Clear Creek Amana School District announces a late start or early dismissal and Sprout Kids Academy remains open under normal operating hours, children who are **already scheduled** for the Before and After School Program (BASP) may attend for the additional time at no extra cost.

If your child is **not regularly scheduled** for BASP and you would like them to attend on one of these days, please call Sprout Kids Academy at (319) 545-5437 to check availability. If space is available, you must also notify the school district to have your child transported to the designated BASP pick-up location. Fees for unscheduled BASP attendance can be found on the rate sheet on our website.

Unscheduled delays and early dismissals are considered emergency situations by Iowa HHS, during which standard staff-to-child ratios may be adjusted. However, we make every effort to maintain appropriate supervision at all times. If the school district cancels classes after the school day has begun, Sprout Kids Academy will remain open as long as it is safe for children and staff.

The safety of our children and staff is our top priority. We will remain open whenever it is safe to do so. If weather conditions become unsafe and closure is necessary, families will be notified immediately via Tadpoles text and email alerts.

STAFF TRAINING

All members of our staff are required to receive the following training:

- Completion of fingerprinting & background check
- Certification in Adult, Child and Infant First Aid and CPR (every 2 years)
- Two hours of training for mandatory reporting of child abuse (every 3 years)
- One hour of training in universal precautions and infectious disease control (annually) “Essentials Child Care Preservice” Training

Upon employment, an employee will be given instructions on how to access an electronic copy of the Sprout Kids Academy Employee Handbook on the website. (Paper copies are available upon request.) The employee will also be advised of the availability of the Parent Handbook on the Sprout Kids Academy website. (Paper copies of the Parent Handbook are available upon request.) Staff will be asked to sign a statement indicating they have read each handbook and are familiar with the contents of both. This signed statement will be made part of the employee's file.

Staff must participate in an orientation where the Director or Assistant Director will review all policies and emergency procedures contained in the Employee Handbook before working with children. Emergency Plans for Fire, Tornado and Intruder will be reviewed and practiced on a monthly basis. Staff will be informed of any policy changes. Staff are required to review the policies set out in the Employee and Parent Handbooks annually.

General Information

Business Name:	Sprout Kids Academy
Address:	400 Elderberry Street, Tiffin, IA 52340
Phone:	(319) 545-5437 (answering machine is available)
Fax:	(319) 545-2167
E-Mail:	info@sproutkidsacademy.com
Website:	www.SproutKidsAcademy.com

Tax Identification Number: 81-0965140

Licensed Capacity 194

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 6:15 am to 6:00 pm

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Katie Rammelsberg - Assistant Director	katie@sproutkidsacademy.com

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Policies and procedures contained in this handbook may be revised at any time at the discretion of the Director or Owner, or as required by changes in Iowa Health and Human Services requirements. The most current version will be maintained online, and parents are responsible for reviewing it periodically to stay informed of any updates or revisions. This handbook is not a contract and policies may be updated at any time.