Big Future Preschool Parent Handbook



Big Future Preschool, San Marcos

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MISSION STATEMENT

At Big Future Preschool, we will provide high quality early childhood education that nurtures children's cognitive, emotional, physical and social development by adhering to an advanced academic standards in reading, language, and mathematics, and by engaging children in the arts, sciences and technology, through a balance of child-initiated, free-choice activities and intentional, teacher-directed instruction.

This parent handbook will serve as a reference throughout the year and as a guide as we work together on your child's behalf. After you have reviewed this Parent Handbook, please be sure to sign and return the Parent Acknowledgement form found on the last page.

OUR BELIEFS

Big Future Preschool is established with the following core beliefs at heart:

- 1. Children of preschool age are capable learners.
- 2. Because knowledge builds on knowledge, exploration and play are essential for higherorder learning.
- 3. Language development is a catalyst for learning.
- 4. Children's emotional and social development are closely linked to cognitive development.
- 5. The course of a child's development can be altered through effective early education.
- 6. Through Teacher Directed learning, children can become scholars.

OUR GOALS

- Ensure children are prepared for kindergarten to the best of their abilities as defined by the standards delineated in the Preschool Learning Foundations by the California Department of Education.
- Implement evidence-based, intentional, teacher-directed instruction in language development, reading, writing and mathematics that is coordinated with local schools to promote a seamless transition to the kindergarten classroom.
- Engage children in learning through providing an environment where child-initiated, free-choice activities in reading, math, science, social studies, technology and physical education abound.
- Build each child's sense of individual worth and belonging through providing opportunities for success and supporting appropriate work and play habits that build social skills and emotional regulation and understanding.
- Collaborate with parents and other stakeholders to foster children's development and welcome family involvement.
- Achieve positive, measurable academic gains.
- Ensure the health and safety of children and staff.



ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Big Future Preschool offers full-time and part-time preschool for children 18 months - 6 years old (age depends upon location). We do not accept children over the age of 36 months (3 years) if they are not fully potty-trained.

All applicants for preschool must complete the entire registration process before being offered admission. A pre-enrollment visit is required. A complete application shall include the following:

- Registration Form
- Immunization Records
- Health and Developmental History Form "Physician's Report"
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Preschool Tuition Agreement
- Permission Authorization Form
- Allergy Form

ATTENDANCE

WHEN YOU ENROLL YOUR CHILD, YOU ARE RESERVING SPACE FOR YOUR CHILD'S CARE. YOU WILL PAY YOUR CONTRACTED FEE EVEN IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT. NO CREDIT IS GIVEN FOR MISSED DAYS. PLEASE CALL TO NOTIFY YOUR SITE DIRECTOR OR OTHER STAFF OF AN ABSENCE.

VACATION

Each family shall be allowed two weeks of vacation days per year provided written notice is received two weeks in advance of expected absence. Vacation days <u>do not</u> rollover on your anniversary date. Vacation is available after one year of continuous enrollment.

SUMMER HOLDING FEE

A payment of \$200.00 a month for up to 2 months, during the months of June, July or August, will hold a space open for a child that is currently enrolled in the center and will be gone from the center for an extended length of time. Notice and payment for the holding fee must be given to the site director two weeks in advance of placing a hold on your child's space.

CENTER-CLOSURE DAYS

Big Future Preschool will be closed on the following days:

* If the holiday falls on a Saturday we will observe it on Friday, if the holiday falls on Sunday we will observe it on Monday. There will be no adjustment in your monthly tuition rate for holiday closures.

New Year's Eve	Thanksgiving Day
New Year's Day	Day After Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	

TUITION POLICY

Parents are required to establish a contracted schedule. This contracted schedule will specify what the fees will be based on the time reserved in advance for childcare.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Parents are required to establish a contracted schedule. You may not deviate from this schedule without written approval from the director. We plan our staffing and meals around contracted schedules. If you need care outside your hours of contracted care, please contact your site director.

FINANCIAL CONTRACT

Families are required to sign a tuition agreement.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

A charge of \$25.00 shall apply to any checks returned by a bank for non-sufficient funds. If we receive two returned checks, you will be required to pay by cash or money order for all future tuition payments.

PAYMENT POLICY

All payments are to be made in advance.

Monthly Payment – All monthly payments are due on the first of each month. If payment is received after the 5th of the month, you will be billed with a late fee of \$25.

Families wishing to set up a payment plan for tuition must use our automatic withdrawal option (ACH). Please ask your Site Director for a copy of the form.

Any family two weeks in arrears will be dis-enrolled. All accounts requiring disenrollment will be sent to collections.

All discounts are voided if payments are not received by the 5th of the month.

COLLECTION PROCESS FOR PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

If an account is sent to collections, additional charges will be incurred and added to the total amount due.

LEAVING THE PROGRAM

You must notify the Site Director, **in writing**, of your intentions to withdraw **two weeks** before your child's last day in order to avoid paying for the time you reserved.



PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

STAFF

All Big Future Preschool staff meet federal and state requirements under the Title 22. At a minimum, staff members have credits in early childhood education and have passed training and background clearances. Instructional lessons are taught by certified staff and teachers who are monitored by a leadership team including academic and physical education directors.

PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Big Future Preschool strives to partner with families. You are the expert when it comes to your child. We strive for excellence as educators in the area of Early Childhood. Together, we make a great team. The following are some of the ways we can work together:

Visits and Observations: All centers practice an "open-door policy" for enrolled families. Parents are always welcome to visit the center. You may arrange to visit the center to observe your child. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's/children's classroom. You are encouraged to share a special interest, skill, or go on field trips.

An opportunity to maintain personal contact with parents is welcomed and encouraged. We do ask that you be sensitive to the needs of the children and therefore do not engage a staff person in conversation for more than a few minutes during his/her work time. For a long talk, a phone call or a later meeting can be scheduled.

Parent Conferences: Parent conferences are held as requested to share progress and collaborate on each child's evolving needs. Program effectiveness on an individual and collective level is measured by analyzing student data on literacy, writing and math skills, as well as observations of physical, emotional and social behaviors.

Newsletters and Parent Bulletin Boards: We publish newsletters throughout the year and maintain parent bulletin boards in the classrooms. Please check these frequently for useful information, news, events, and reminders regarding your child's care.

ADDITIONAL PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents must provide the following for children of all ages:

- Transportation to and from the center
- Extra change of clothes, including socks, shirts, pants, and under garments to be left at the center
- A blanket, sheet and pillow or other comfort item for rest time



- Be sure these important belongings are clearly marked with your child's name.
- It is the parent's responsibility to keep all information updated such as: address change, phone number, emergency contacts, child's doctor and changes in authorization to pick up. These changes must be in writing and turned in to your Site Director only.

CENTER OPERATING PROCEDURES

CENTER ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Big Future Preschool is open from 6:45 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Please allow enough time to arrive at the school, pick up your child and their belongings and leave the school by closing time.

Children must be accompanied into the center by an adult. Do not leave your child at the sign-in counter, or send them to their room unaccompanied. Be sure a teacher acknowledges your child's presence before you leave. Arrival at the center is an important beginning for your child's day. Plan to spend a few minutes at arrival to watch or help your child take care of his/her belongings. This gives your child a chance to adjust to the center and will make parting easier for both of you.

When picking up children from care, allow time for your child to depart at his/her own pace. Help your child finish an activity, put away a toy, or admire his/her artwork. Check cubbies for artwork or projects that need to go home and be sure the teacher in charge knows you are leaving with your child. Remember to check the parent boards for posted important information and items of interest.

All children are **required** to have an adult sign them in and out of the center. This means a **full legal signature**, not just initials. **Children may leave the center with authorized adults only**. Authorized adults must be listed on Registration and Emergency Contact Form. Authorized persons other than the parent will be asked for photo identification. If your child may not be released to a parent due to a custody agreement, we must have a copy of the court order on file.

LATE PICK UP FEE – Big Future Preschool's hours of operation are from 6:45 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. If you are late in picking up your child after 6:00 pm, a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged to your account.



TYPICAL DAILY ROUTINE FOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS *

6:45am or 7 am	Center opens
7:00 - 8:30am	Free Play Learning
8:30 - 9:00am	Breakfast/Morning Snack Offered
9:00 - 11:00am	Teacher Directed Learning Time - Math and Literacy
11:00 - 11:45am	Outside Play
11:45 - 12:30pm	Lunch
12:30 - 2:30pm	Nap/Rest Time
2:30 - 3:00pm	P.M. Snack
3:00 - 4:00pm	Science or Art activity
4:00 - 4:45pm	Outside Play
4:45 - 5:15pm	Afternoon Story Time
5:15 - 6:00pm	Free Play
6:00pm	Center closes

^{*}Note: (Times are approximate only – flow of the day is based on activity offerings, not on a rigid schedule.)

CURRICULUM AND ACTIVITIES

Big Future Preschool program is based upon the standards defined by the Preschool Learning Foundations from the California Department of Education. The curriculum is coordinated with local kindergarten instruction and applies researched strategies to prepare children for the transition to the classroom. Attention to appropriate work and play habits helps children build social and emotional understanding that nurtures holistic development.

PRESCHOOL CARE

There are never more than twelve (12) children to one caregiver.

Preschoolers are busy making sense of their world by hands-on exploration of everything. Children are encouraged to freely explore the materials in their environment and to make choices about the kinds of activities they prefer. Teachers help children broaden their experiences by encouraging language development, creative play, and modeling problem-solving skills. The curriculum is designed to reflect the child's individual developmental level including motor skills, critical thinking, problem solving abilities, and social-emotional control.

Outdoor play is an important part of each day, and your child is expected to participate, when the weather permits. Opportunities to relax, to play with a friend, or cuddle with a caregiver are also important parts of each day.



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

MEALS

- A nutritious breakfast and one snack are provided daily.
- You will be required to provide a nutritious lunch for your child daily.
- Your child must be present at scheduled meal times in order to receive a meal. If your child is not present, we will assume your child is being fed outside the center.
- Special diets, allergies, and family nutritional preferences should be discussed at enrollment and every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate family needs and desires.

REST PERIODS

Supervised rest periods will be offered to the child:

- a) 5 years of age and under who are in care more than 6 hours OR
- b) Showing a need for rest

DAILY HEALTH/ILLNESS POLICY

Before leaving home, please check your child's physical condition. Watch for rashes, diarrhea, coughs, sneezes, runny nose, sore throat, upset stomach, fever, watery or crusty eyes, and ears that may have drainage. There will be daily health check done on your child when they arrive at the center. Children will not be permitted to stay at the center with any of the following:

- Fever of 100° F auxiliary or higher (under the arm)
- Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours;
- Diarrhea-two or more watery stools in a 24-hour period;
- Eye discharge or pink eye;
- Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities; and
- Lice or nits.

If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be notified and asked to pick up your child within an hour. We will call the contact persons on your Emergency Information Card if we are unable to reach you. In cases where vomiting or diarrhea and some kind of contagion are NOT factors; we will consider your child's ability to deal with the center environment, his/her general comfort, and our staffing abilities before calling you. If your child contracts a communicable disease such as measles or chicken pox, the center should be notified at once so that other parents can be informed. Children may not return to the center until they have been symptom free (without use of medication/fever reducers) for a minimum of 24 hours.

*PLEASE SEE THE HEALTH POLICY GUIDELINES FOR MORE INFORMATION.



MEDICATION

We encourage you to arrange medication schedules that do not require administration during program hours. If that is not possible, the law allows us to administer medications, prescription, and non-prescription, only on the **WRITTEN** approval of a parent **and/or** physician or other person or agency legally authorized to prescribe.

Once you fill out the form authorizing us to administer medication, we can dispense:

- Prescription medications only as specified on the **label** or as otherwise authorized, in writing, by a physician or person legally authorized to prescribe medications.
- 2. Nonprescription medications in the following classifications only with parent authorization and only at the dose, duration, and method administration specified on the manufacturer's label for the age and/or weight of the child needing the medication. Children under 2 years of age need to have written authorization from a physician for the staff to administer any medication taken by mouth.

This Includes:

- Antihistamines
- Non-aspirin antipyretics/analgesics, fever reducer/pain relievers
- Non-narcotic cough suppressants
- Anti-itching ointments or lotions
- Vitamins, herbal supplements and fluoride only as prescribed by physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medications
- Sunscreen

All medications must be received in their original container, labeled with:

- The child's first and last name
- Name of medication
- The date the prescription was filled
- The medication's expiration date
- Legible instructions for administration; i.e., manufacturer's instructions or prescription label.

All medications will be administered only by authorized staff who will record time and date of administration. Children will not be allowed to self-administer any medication, including vitamins. Staff will not accept or administer medications which do not adhere completely to this policy.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Staff trained in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR, will assess the degree of seriousness of any emergency. In emergencies, children are kept calm and given appropriate first aid. In situations which are minor:

- Simple first aid will be administered; (i.e., band-aid, ice pack).
- Plenty of "Tender Love and Care" will be given.



- An "ouch report" (description of accident/incident) will be sent home.
- In situations which are or may become serious:
 - o Attempt will be made to notify you immediately.
 - o If we cannot reach you, other persons listed as emergency contacts will be called to assume responsibility for your child.
 - o If your child needs professional observation or treatment and you or other contacts cannot be reached, your doctor will be called for direction. The doctor is contacted immediately when staff believes it is necessary.

In a life-threatening emergency:

- A staff person will immediately call 911.
- You and/or the person(s) named on your child's Emergency Information Form will be called immediately.
- A second staff person will attend to the child until Emergency Response Team arrives.
- All information essential to the necessary care of the child will be passed on to the emergency medical personnel, physician, and/or police.
- Treatment for your child will be consistent with signed authorization to provide emergency medical treatment.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

WEATHER RELATED CENTER CLOSURES

Listen to the local radio stations and news to find out if we are closed due to weather conditions.

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Our program does not include religious activities or instruction, but may include celebrations appropriate to and respectful of all cultures.

TOYS FROM HOME

We request that children **refrain** from bringing toys from home except a special blanket for naps or items appropriate for special sharing days. Play guns, war toys, or other toys of destruction and small toys such as marbles, that present a choking hazard, are not allowed. If toys make it into the center or are brought for share times, we are not responsible for lost or damaged toys.

FIELD TRIPS

We may plan fun, educational field trips throughout the year and hope that parents will join us on some, if not all, of our adventures. You will be notified in advance and a participation permission form will be sent home for your signature. Please review the program's field trip policy and procedures for more information.



BIRTHDAYS

Please notify the Director in advance if you are planning on bringing in treats for your child's birthday, so we can plan in advance. Parents must keep in mind that many students have food allergies or restrictions so please only healthy and nutritious treats. Only store bought food items in the original packaging with ingredients listed on the packaging may be brought into the school.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

We use a positive approach to guidance and discipline, aimed at avoiding behavior problems. Limits are set for the security of the children and for the preservation of materials and equipment. We find that behavior problems can often be avoided by planning an environment that is stimulating for children and conducive to the development of a positive self-image. At no time is any form of physical punishment or belittlement used.

The following are some of the techniques used to avoid and/or respond to problem behavior:

- Know the children their general characteristics at this stage, home environment, needs, and interests.
- Set reasonable limits and standards that the children can understand. Children will be included in this process whenever possible.
- Help children to understand and adjust to the established routine.
- Help children become a part of the group.
- Provide choices whenever possible.
- Use simple directions.
- Give advance notice before changing activities.
- Listen to children try to find out the cause of unacceptable behavior, help children to express their feelings verbally.
- Act as models for children, using words to express feelings.
- Redirect child to an appropriate activity.
- If necessary, remove the child from the situation for a "cooling off" time, followed by communication with a staff person about alternative behavior.
- This is not necessarily the order in which they would be used, and the "cooling off" time is generally used when other ways have not worked.

In extreme cases where behavior is continually disruptive or aggressive, the following steps will be taken:

- If our normal procedure for responding to misbehavior (see above) does not bring about a positive response, and continuous classroom disruption is occurring, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled to problem-solve together.
- Ongoing communication will be established to share progress.
- If there is no significant improvement after one month, a referral to a professional for consultation and/or assessment of special needs may be suggested. The lead teacher and Site Supervisor will assist parents in finding professional services that are appropriate.



- If after the professional consultation the child is found to have special needs, the center will work with the professional and parent(s) and child to achieved a successful preschool experience for the child.
- If the above options are not successful, then removal of the child may be necessary in the best interest of the individual child and the program as a whole. Any payment that has been made in advance would be refunded in this situation.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Staff and volunteers of Big Future Preschool must report suspected child abuse and neglect. "Child abuse or neglect" shall mean the injury, sexual abuse, or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child's health and safety is harmed thereby. Big Future Preschool practices a thorough and intense hiring process for all employees, to select qualified people and to ensure our program provides maximum safety for children.

DISMISSAL FROM CENTER

We reserve the right to dismiss a child from this center for the following reasons:

- Parent/guardian or child shows abusive conduct toward staff members, other children, or property.
- Parent/guardian or child jeopardizes the health or safety of other children.
- Parent/guardian is uncooperative with staff or operating policies.
- Parent/guardian does not honor the contract agreement, which may include becoming delinquent in payment of fees.



Helping Your Child Have a Great First Day of Preschool

So you've done all the research and picked out the perfect preschool for your child. Last night, you made sure your little one got to bed early so he'd wake up ready to go. A backpack stuffed waiting by the front door. That all-important first-day-of-school outfit is hanging in the closet, and the lunch you've made is wrapped and ready to go. The first day of preschool has arrived and it's time for your child to begin an educational journey that will last nearly two decades. How can you make this monumental first day a great one?

First, be prepared for some tears. It's a scenario played out at preschools everywhere. A child, screaming, holding on to mom or dad's legs for dear life, refusing to even look at the classroom, much less walk into it alone. Relax. It's normal. Kids this age thrive on familiarity so when they are placed into a new situation, it's common if they panic a little bit.

Saying goodbye to mom and dad, particularly if it's the first time out of the house alone, can be difficult for many preschoolers. For some it's old hat -- they've been in daycare for years or just have an incredibly easygoing, go-with-the-flow personality. The key is to make sure you are ready for your child to go to preschool. If you have any doubt or concerns, your child is going to pick up on it immediately. So on the big day, keep a bright smile on your face and stay positive. This will set a great tone for your child and make them realize that going to preschool is something they can and should look forward to.

For some children, they crying does not start until they see other kids doing it. It's almost like peer pressure -- you can almost see the thoughts forming in your little one's head. "If he's crying, then there must be something I should be upset about too."

In any case, crying children is nothing new to a preschool teacher. Chances are they have a process in place to deal with this very situation. Follow it. In most cases, they'll encourage you to leave. It will probably be the hardest thing you'll have to do, but it really does work. Nine out of ten times, the child stops crying within five minutes of the parent leaving. You'll return to the classroom a few hours later to find your child, happy and content with a pile of artwork they can't wait to show you. If the preschool teacher can't get your child to calm down, they'll be in touch. Trust in their experience and know they have your child's best interest at heart.

We're All In This Together

If your child has been in the classroom before, draw on that visit. Point out things they may remember, whether it was an orientation or a trip to meet the teacher. Say things



like, "Hey, there are those blocks you played with the last time we were here. Remember how you built that great tower? Maybe you could do that again."

The great thing about the first day of preschool is that there are a whole bunch of people in the room that are going through the same exact thing as you. If you work together as a team, it becomes that much easier and that much more fun. Point out a child that your preschooler may know from another activity or the neighborhood, or, if she doesn't know anyone, help her to make her first friend. Walk up to the child and her mom and/or dad, point to your child and say, "Hi, this is Isabelle. We really like your Princess shirt. Can we sit here with you?" With a little luck, the other parent will pick up on your idea and introduce her child.

The Leaving is the Hardest Part

There are some definite no-no's when it comes to saying goodbye that could actually make separating more difficult. Rule number one? Do not remove your child from the classroom. It makes it that much harder to bring him back in. Your child's teacher will likely be right by your side offering help and assistance.

It might be tempting, but don't sneak away if your child becomes distracted by another activity. Your child needs to learn that school is a place she goes to without mom or dad and saying goodbye is part of the process.

Don't ask if it's OK for you to leave and don't make promises like, "If you stay here at preschool, I'll buy you some ice cream when I pick you up." This can reinforce the behavior if she keeps getting what she wants.

If your child does well on the first day, be prepared, you aren't out of the woods just yet. Some children waltz right into preschool as happy as can be and everyone is content. But then, out of nowhere, a few weeks into the school year, your child may start to cry when you leave. This too is very common. Basically the novelty of school has worn off and your child realizes that she isn't with you. Keep bringing her to school and dropping her off as per the teacher's instructions, this too shall pass.

by Amanda Rock http://preschoolers.about.com/od/learningeducation/a/firstday.htm

Please don't hesitate to ask questions or bring up concerns. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

Sincerely,

Big Future Preschool



PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Student Name		
Your Name		
Address		
Phone Number		
This Parent Handbook was develope thorough understanding of the polici Preschool.	· · ·	
The information in this Parent Handboon the school grounds or any school	ook applies to all activities that occur related activity.	
Please remove this page, sign it, and added to your child's permanent file that you have received this Parent H and procedures here at Big Future Pr	. By signing this document, it means andbook and understand the policies	
I have read and understand the police Preschool Parent Handbook. My child		
Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	
Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	