

THE SEVEN HILLS SCHOOL

Pre-Kindergarten Handbook



Seven Hills Lotspeich

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The Seven Hills School Mission Statement

Seven Hills engages hearts and minds, challenging students to develop their unique capacities and preparing each for a meaningful role in a rapidly changing world.

Seven Values of The Seven Hills School

These are the values which we at Seven Hills strive to instill in our students:

- ❖ striving for excellence
- ❖ respect for others and appreciation of diversity
- ❖ kindness, caring and compassion
- ❖ honesty and integrity
- ❖ fairness and justice
- ❖ personal responsibility and accountability
- ❖ commitment to community

Nondiscriminatory Policy

The Seven Hills School recruits and admits qualified students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation to all rights, privileges, programs and activities of the school. The school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation in administration of its educational policies, scholarships, loans, tuition remission, fee waivers, educational programs, athletics, or extracurricular activities. The school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated, desegregation. The school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation in the hiring of its certified or noncertified personnel. For more information, please call (513) 728-2400.



Welcome to the Seven Hills Pre-Kindergarten Program

Welcome to the Seven Hills Pre-Kindergarten Program. Our purpose is to provide the highest quality pre-kindergarten education in a secure, nurturing, and stimulating environment. We believe that you, the child's parents, are a most important link in the educational chain and that together we can make your child's experience an excellent and enjoyable one. A sincere welcome is extended to all our parents.

Our Philosophy

We believe that when children learn in an atmosphere of acceptance and respect, they grow to trust their own talents and abilities and, ultimately, in themselves.

The Seven Hills Pre-Kindergarten Program is committed to the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of each individual child. Recognized early childhood education best practices, as well as current research, provide the theoretical framework around which our program is built. We provide a safe, supportive, creative, nurturing environment that fosters children's learning. We strive to make each child's entry into the school world a successful, stimulating and above all a positive experience. As we work toward the goal to instill a passion and positive attitude toward learning and school, we encourage the children to become divergent thinkers.

Through a carefully planned environment and curriculum, we promote active learning, social interaction, and autonomy. Materials are selected to facilitate children's construction of knowledge. Learning is also supported through naturally occurring play that encourages exploration and experimentation. Children are active participants in an environment that encourages critical thinking and involvement.

Learning centers for writing, literature, math, construction, science, sensory development, art, dramatic play, large and small motor development, and social studies provide the vehicle for exploration of the child's interest. Children participate in activities that encourage them to explore, experiment, problem-solve, and share ideas with one another.

We prepare materials and our environment to challenge each child's spirit of discovery and wonder. A balanced program of child-centered and teacher-directed activities provides children the opportunity to enjoy the freedom and responsibility of choice. Through play, they explore a loving environment and are given the gift of time to experiment, discover, and think.

The Seven Hills Pre-Kindergarten Program is dedicated to serving the needs of the whole child with an education marked by academic excellence, outstanding teachers, personal attention and participation.

Transportation and Field Trip Procedures

Transportation to and from school is not provided for pre-kindergarten children. At the parent's request and the permission of the Head of Lotspeich, pre-kindergarten children at the age of 5 may ride The Seven Hills School shuttle between campuses in the morning before school and in the afternoon after dismissal.

A Field Trip/Family Outing may be scheduled during the fall and/or spring during the regular school day for the children. Parents accompany their child and provide transportation.

Attendance

The classroom teacher records attendance each day and the data is kept in the school office. Parents are asked to call the office at 728-2360 before 9:00 AM to report an absence. If an absence is not reported by then, office personnel will call to check with the family on the child's status before 11:30 AM.

Absences

Please notify the office and they will notify the teachers if your child will not be attending school for any reason. All illnesses and communicable disease (such as lice, chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, etc.) must be reported to school immediately. Parents will be notified of a communicable disease that occurs in your child's class. A standard form will be posted or sent home with each child notifying parents that their child has been exposed to a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for. A communicable disease chart is posted in the school office and each of the pre-kindergarten classrooms. A child may return to the classroom when he/she is free of the disease. Any case of head lice must be checked by the school nurse or trained staff before re-admittance.

Arrivals and Departures

Our school day begins at 8:30 AM. Early Care for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten is available from 7:30-8:00 AM on the mornings when school is in session and takes place in the Nellie Leaman Taft Early Childhood Center. If your child arrives between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM, they should be brought to their classroom. Pre-kindergarten dismissal times are as follows: 11:30 AM, 1:00 PM, 3:15 PM. To ensure your child's safety and in order to have an organized dismissal, we ask that you inform your teacher, in writing, if there is a change in your child's usual transportation arrangements.

Children staying after 11:30 AM will eat lunch in the Nellie Leaman Taft Early Childhood Center and enjoy an afternoon designed to provide an extension of activities from the morning as well as quiet time and active play. Children staying past 3:15 PM may stay on a regular or flexible basis, as space permits, by signing-up in advance via My 7hills where After the Bell (ATB) information, including general after school care, is provided. Other ATB information about enrichment and music lessons will be sent home in the Weekly Blast.

Toileting Procedures

All pre-kindergarten* and kindergarten children are expected to be fully toilet trained. A series of frequently occurring accidents may result in asking for your child to remain at home until fully toilet trained.

*Toileting Procedures for PK-2 Children: Children in PK-2 are not required to be toilet trained when the school year begins. Please make sure to keep a sufficient supply of pull-ups and wipes in your child's classroom as long as they are needed. Please keep the teacher informed of your child's toilet training progress so we can work together to help your child make this transition successfully.

Nap Procedures

Children staying for our full-day program will participate in a rest/nap time. We recognize that each child has individual sleep and activity levels. After lunch and outdoor play, children will rest on cots in a quiet setting with dimmed lights, stories and peaceful music. Each child is expected to rest quietly on his/her cot for a short period. Children who do not fall asleep during the short rest period or children who sleep and then wake before others will participate in quiet activities as well as small group activities. Children who do fall asleep during naptime will be gradually awakened after approximately one hour of sleep*.

*Children in PK-2 may nap longer, depending on their needs.

Parent Conferences

Scheduled conference days are twice within the school year. A written progress report will be provided in November and another will be mailed home in June.

In addition, you or your child's teacher may request a conference at any time during the school year. We always encourage maintaining an open line of communication throughout the year.

Parent Involvement

We welcome families to become involved in their children's pre-kindergarten experience as much as possible. There are many ways to become involved: sharing your talents such as music, crafts, and gardening, just to name a few. With your creativity, the possibilities of involvement are endless.

Parents and Visitors

Parents are always welcome to drop in and spend time in your child's room. Parents wishing to share a special activity in the classroom may schedule an appropriate time with the teacher. Visitors are welcome in the pre-kindergarten any time after the first month of school. All visitors must sign-in at the Office and receive an identification badge to wear while in the school buildings. The badge should be returned to the Office before leaving campus.

Seven Hills Pre-Kindergarten Discipline Policy

Our goal for discipline is to empower each child to make wise choices and develop socially acceptable behavior. It is an interactive process between teacher, child and parents. We allow children choices while setting realistic limits for their safety and growth. The underlying principle is that there should be reasonable, well established rules that children can understand. Along with this principle, a supportive and caring community of teachers and parents are added. This provides a secure environment in which our children can grow toward this goal.

Children are expected to behave in an acceptable manner, and are encouraged to be kind and respectful at all times. Throughout the day, teachers give verbal acknowledgement of appropriate

behavior and use other means of positive reinforcement as a way to encourage children's positive conduct.

Teachers recognize children are just beginning to work toward the goal of self-discipline, and sometimes mistakes are made. Limits and controls vary for individual children as well as for a group. No child will be disciplined for failure to eat, sleep or for toileting accidents. Teachers handle children's discipline as a learning process and proceed to teach conflict resolution skills with patience, fairness, and understanding. The teacher's role is to be supportive and to intervene when necessary. Prevention and redirection, as well as positive reinforcement, are methods used to change undesirable behaviors. Children are encouraged to be actively involved in the problem-solving process in order for them to build the inner-monitoring systems of self-control. When a child needs assistance in solving conflicts, teachers act as facilitators. By modeling appropriate behaviors and language choices, the teachers demonstrate for the children a positive means of communicating with one another. If inappropriate behaviors continue to occur, a child may be separated from the situation so the teacher can talk to the child to help him/her resolve the conflict in a positive way.

If a child is having recurrent behavioral issues, teachers will work closely with the child, the parents, the school counselor, the Director of Early Childhood, and the Head of Lotspeich to resolve these issues in a positive, nurturing way.

The Ohio Department of Education Pre-Kindergarten Discipline Code

The Seven Hills School strictly adheres to the discipline guidelines set forth by the Ohio Childcare Licensing Code. That Code requires us to publish all the restrictions regarding discipline.

The Ohio Department of Education Pre-Kindergarten Discipline code restricts the following:

1. There shall be no cruel, harsh, CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR ANY unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, shaking, SPANKING or biting.
2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
3. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in protective hug, so the child may regain control.
4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or similar cubicle.
5. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, and derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food will not be used as a reward for behavior.
9. Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and development ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated space.

10. The Center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Biting Policy

While we constantly strive to promote positive social interactions in pre-kindergarten, we expect that biting may still occur in a two-year-old class for a variety of reasons. We recognize how upsetting this is for children who are bitten and for their families, and we will make every effort to help end this behavior as soon as it appears.

When faced with a biting incident, the teachers will take the following steps:

1. Provide immediate care and attention to the child who was bitten. If the skin is broken, we will ask the school nurse to examine the child and we will call his/her parents.
2. Redirect the child who bit to more positive behaviors and clearly explain that biting is not an acceptable choice.
3. Notify both children's parents or caregivers.

Please note that we will keep the name of the child who bit confidential when communicating with other families. If biting becomes a recurring issue, we will meet with the child's parents to try and determine reasons for the biting and to develop strategies we can implement at home and at school to eradicate the behavior.

Our goal is to make sure all students feel safe and welcome at school, and we appreciate your support in helping us achieve this goal.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays will be celebrated in the classroom without special treats. No parent provided gift bags or treats, please.

Clothing

Pre-kindergarten experiences require many hands-on activities. While these are very meaningful to the children, they may also become very messy. We ask that you please have your children wear clothes to school in which they are able to explore, play and get dirty. Also, please make these clothes easy to get into and out of for toileting purposes. You will also be asked to provide an extra set of clothes that are seasonally appropriate in case any changes need to be made during the school day. All the children's clothing should be marked with their name in permanent marker. Finally, we go outside frequently so please make sure your child is dressed for the weather. Winter clothing should include boots, snow-pants, mittens and hats. Spring weather may still require boots or mud shoes, as the playground may be muddy. Hooded raincoats are appropriate for rain; umbrellas are not permitted due to safety reasons.



Health Policy and Regulations

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

Please see the COVID-19 Protocols section in the Family Handbook.

Emergency Medical Authorization

The Emergency Medical Authorization must be signed annually by a parent and be on file in the nurse's office by the first day of school. It does not require a physician's signature. This form gives the school staff the parent(s) work number(s) as well as emergency contacts in the event of an injury or illness. If the student is receiving routine medications it is important that they be noted on this form. In the event of an emergency, it will accompany the student to the hospital for treatment. In emergency situations, if the parents cannot be reached, the school nurse or other school personnel will call the student's physician and/or have the student transported to an emergency room if necessary.

Physicals

Each student must have a medical record on file in the nurse's office by the first day of school. All new students must have their immunization record on file within two weeks after the start of school and their medical record completed by a physician within 60 days prior to the first day of school. This medical record must be annually updated by a physician for students in pre-kindergarten. Every student must have a current list of immunizations, meeting state requirements, on file in the nurse's office.

Tuberculosis Screening Protocol for Students:

The following protocol is based on the recommendations from the Hamilton County Public Health TB Control Clinic and the CDC.

The Seven Hills School requires a current negative TB test on file if students and employees meet the following criteria:

- Born in any country other than the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and those in Northern Europe or Western Europe
- Traveled outside the USA and stayed for more than 30 days in a country with high TB rate - Any country other than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and those in Northern Europe or Western Europe.
- A compromised immune system such as from the following conditions: HIV/AIDS, organ transplant, immunosuppressive medications (e.g. prednisone, infliximab or etanercept), leukemia or lymphoma
- Volunteered, worked, or resided in high-risk congregate settings (e.g. correctional facilities or homeless shelters)
- Close contact with or exposed to someone who has had TB disease

** Any individual who meets the above criteria will need to contact the school nurse for further discussion.

Students/employees who meet the above criteria are required to be evaluated/assessed by a licensed medical provider. Documentation of the evaluation, assessment, and all TB tests performed by a licensed medical provider must be submitted to the school in order for the student/employee to attend.

During the school year, any student/employee who has traveled outside the USA and stayed for more than 30 days in a country with high TB rate, any country other than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and those in Northern Europe or Western Europe, will need a negative TB test 8-10 weeks after their return to the United States. At the discretion of the school nurse, a student may be asked to seek an evaluation for TB by a licensed medical provider, regardless of TB test results.

High Burden TB Countries are as defined by the World Health Organization.

Illness

In the interest of other students and staff, parents should keep students home if they have any of the following: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, a rash of undetermined origin, or symptoms of a cold such as frequent coughing or nasal drainage that the student is unable to take care of him/herself. A student should be free from fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea, without the assistance of medication, for 24 hours before returning to school. Notify the school immediately if your child develops a communicable disease. If any restriction of activity is necessary upon returning to school after an illness, please send a note to the school office with the specific details. A student will be excused from physical activities upon receipt of a written note from home. Permanent or long term gym and/or recess excuses will require a physician's statement along with any pertinent information for monitoring the student's activities.

Insect and Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Guidelines

Please see the Insect and Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Guidelines section in the Family Handbook.



Emergency, Safety, and Security Procedures

Fire and Tornado Drills

Monthly fire drills will be held during each school year. There will be directions posted in each area prior to school opening.

Tornado drills will also be held during the spring of each school year. Teachers shall escort their classes to the area specified for each building. During a tornado warning period, parents may pick up their children if they choose. However, no teacher may leave a group to help locate a specific child. Other than the parents, only adults designated on a students' emergency form may sign out a student to be picked up early.

Lockdown drills will be held during the spring and fall of each school year.

Crisis Plan

TSHS has emergency procedures in place, reviews the plans yearly with the faculty, and provides the appropriate information and training. For reasons of security, the plan is not published.

Student/Parent Responsibilities

1. The student should at all times show respect for the property of others.
2. Toys (including electronic games, iPads, or any other battery operated toys, trading cards, etc.) should not be brought to school. All toys stay at home.
3. Violent toys such as knives and guns are not permitted in the school.
4. Skateboards and scooters are not permitted at school.
5. Threats are taken seriously at Seven Hills. At the lower school level they are hurtful and often frightening. The school will consider them as such and act accordingly. At the middle and upper school level, when we determine that a serious threat has been made and can identify who made it, we will remove the student and the student's possessions from the class and will notify his/her parents. Based on the school's assessment, the student may be required to have an evaluation by educational, medical, and/or law enforcement professionals. Suspension or expulsion may result.
6. Please do not allow your child to bring large sums of money or items of great value.
7. Students and parents are not permitted to sell items for outside organizations to other students, (i.e. Girl Scout cookies, candy bars, raffle tickets, etc.)
8. Dogs are not permitted on campus.

Licensing

Our preschool is licensed by The Ohio Department of Education, Early Childhood Division. A copy of the Rules for Preschool Programs is available in the office. Should any person suspect a violation of the Administrative code by the school, please phone the Ohio Department of Education at 614-466-0224.

Notes