**Parent Handbook *Updated 7/24/24***

**Statement of policies and procedures**

*In the same way, let your* ***light******shine*** *before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

*Matthew 5:16 (ESV)*

Our Mission: To provide a safe environment that provides age-appropriate learning experiences for preschoolers, in order that they may have an understanding of Salvation through Jesus Christ and be academically and behaviorally prepared for Elementary school.

Philosophy: We believe in balancing academic learning with stimulating and fun activities.  Children are a blessing from God, and it is our responsibility to provide a loving, structured, and stimulating environment for them to grow in.  We want each child to have an understanding of God's love for them.  Preschool-age children display varying levels of academic abilities, and should be taught at their own level.  We focus on teaching proper classroom behavior and basic academic skills in a way that is fun and motivating.

**Admission**

Our preschool program accepts students who are 3-6 years old by their first day of class, and have not yet attended kindergarten. Students must be potty-trained (in underwear during class). Exceptions to potty-training requirements are made if a child has a physical or developmental disability that delays their ability to potty-train, and is documented by a doctor.

* Students must be at least **three years old by their first day of preschool**. Our school year runs from late August through mid-May. To enroll in preschool, students should be 3 by September 1st. If room allows, students who turn 3 after September 1st may start on or after their birthday. If they turn 3 after September 1st, they may not turn in their enrollment form until two weeks prior to their third birthday.
* Students should be at least 4 years old by October 1st to enroll in Universal Pre-K.

We welcome all families. We do not require that families attend our church or any church, or adhere to a certain lifestyle or religion. We welcome any family who is willing to allow their child to attend a Christian school where they will be receiving a non-denominational Christian education. (Non-denominational = not restricted to a particular Christian denomination, i.e. Catholic, Methodist, Pentecostal.)

Children of staff members who are school-age (kindergarten and above, up through 11 years old) and are enrolled in and attend a different school may attend occasionally if their parent is teaching on days that their school is closed.

**Registration**

Open enrollment for the fall begins February 1st. Priority registration begins January 22nd for existing students and their siblings. The initial registration requirement is the completed enrollment form and registration fee, and reserves the student’s space in a class. Parents need to meet with the director prior to enrollment to determine whether our services will meet the needs of the student and their family. Each student must have an Immunization Record on file at our school in order to attend. There is a new system in Colorado to record personal exemptions to immunizations. A General Health Appraisal Form signed by a medical professional who has seen the child in the last 12 months is required within 30 days after the child’s first day of school. These forms are available at [www.greeleysonshine.com](http://www.greeleysonshine.com), and at the school.

**Students with special needs**

We will make reasonable accommodations for students with special needs, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the parent’s responsibility to disclose any such needs before admission. We strive to individualize instruction, and to integrate children with special needs with the rest of their class as much as possible. We provide routines, transition songs, and simple signs that can be helpful for all children. Our classroom is wheelchair accessible. The parent of a child with special health care needs must provide an individualized health care plan for the child signed by the child’s health care provider. The plan shall include the following as needed for the child: *Medication Schedule, Nutrition and feeding instructions, Medical equipment and adaptive services with instructions, medical emergency instructions, and Toileting and personal hygiene instructions.* The plan must be completed by the 30th day of enrollment and updated yearly or as changes occur.

**Hours of operation**

SonShine Preschool is open Monday through Friday, 8am-11am and 12pm-3pm. Please see the school calendar, available at greeleysonshine.com. For the convenience of parents, we will usually unlock the doors and allow drop-offs 10 minutes prior to the beginning of class. Our doors are normally locked during classes for extra security. Parents are always allowed access to their child and their classroom, and can be let in if they ring our door bell. Parents can go through the pickup line or walk up to the door to pick their child up. The carpool line will start at 11am and 3pm.

Students must be picked up on time when their class is over. Staff members need to prepare for the next class and possibly pick up their own children from school. Please notify us of any problem or emergency that may make you late. If a student is picked up later than 11 minutes after their class ends, a staff member will remain with the child either in the classroom, office, or playground. The parents must pay a late fee of 3 dollars per minute late, starting the 11th minute after class ends, payable directly to the staff member that stayed with their child. If a child is 11 minutes late being picked up, all parent, authorized pick-ups, and emergency contact numbers in the child’s file will be called. If we are unable to contact anyone to pick up the child, we may contact Social Services, who may collect your child.

\*This applies to all students including UPK.

**Weather**

When our school closes for inclement weather/snow days, families will be notified through Brightwheel by 7am. We try to follow District 6, but will make our own decision of any closures.

We have daily outdoor recess. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather, providing jackets, hats, and gloves as needed. If precipitation or extremely high winds make it uncomfortable, or it is below 20 degrees or above 99 degrees, we will have active play in the chapel at recess time.

**Tuition & Payments**

A **$125 annual registration fee** to cover supplies, curriculum, and general operating costs is due with the enrollment form to reserve a spot in your child’s class.

 It is separate from tuition. Registration fees are only refundable if the class was already full or becomes unavailabe.

Tuition must be paid in full on the 1st of the month, August- May. Payments are paid through Brightwheel and a processing fee will be included. A $25 late charge will be added to your account if your payment is paid after the 7th of the month. If your child’s tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, your child will not be able to attend school until a payment is made.

**Notification:**

Please give us 2 weeks advanced notice if you plan to withdraw your child. We will also give two weeks advance notice in the highly unlikely event that we would withdraw services. In the event that the actions of a student or parent endanger the welfare of the other students or staff members, there may be immediate suspension.

**Supervision**

A computer with the Brightwheel QR code will be available at the entrance to the classroom to check your child in and out. The person dropping off or collecting each student is required to check that child in and out each time. Teachers will frequently count and ensure that all children’s whereabouts are known at all times, using the sign in and out Brightwheel app as necessary. Students will not be permitted to be in a room (except restrooms) or playground without staff supervision. Staff members are responsible for ensuring that all children are safe, supervised, and accounted for at all times.

Before leaving for the day, the last teacher on duty will ensure that all children have been signed out and that the classrooms and adjoining restrooms are empty. If any child has not been signed out, and the teacher cannot specifically remember that child leaving, they will call the contact numbers for that child until they reach someone that can reassure them that the child has been picked up.

**Discipline**

SonShine preschool teachers love children. In loving them, we will show them that we care by setting firm boundaries and high expectations for behavior. We emphasize manners and respect for adults, children, and our school. We do not allow bad language or hurtful behavior. Discipline techniques we use will be focused on redirecting the students, and if we continue to have issues we will communicate with the parents.

We do not use physical punishment such as spanking with our students. We will work with our students to learn how to communicate with their peers, and learn how to problem solve. Our main preventative forms of behavior management include providing a consistent schedule and routine, and using positive reinforcement and redirection. Some positive reinforcement may include praise, stamps, stickers, or rewards. We use positive guidance strategies in directing the child to learn ways to self-regulate and make good decisions, such as redirecting and role modeling.

Major disciplinary issues will be discussed with parents. A text message will be sent to parents at the time that a child receives a time-out. If we are unable to control behavior in a child that is frequently dangerous or unacceptably disruptive, even after having a conference and a behavior plan, we may have to suspend or withdraw a child for the safety and well-being of the other children in our care.

**Injuries and Illnesses**

Please message the teachers through Brightwheel if your child will miss school, and let us know why so that we may pray for them if they are ill.

For the health and well-being of all our students, please do not send a child to school if they are ill. Here is a list of symptoms:

**Diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, earache, discharge from ear, suspicious skin rash, eye infection and/or temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.**

If any of these symptoms are present, do not send your child to school. If your child comes to school with any of these symptoms, he/she will be sent home. If your child becomes ill at school, the child will be separated from the group and asked to rest. Parents will be notified and required to pick their child up immediately. If your child has had a fever, diarrhea or vomiting, please allow at least 24 hours after symptoms abate before they return to school.

If your child is on antibiotics for a contagious disease, they must be on them for 24 hours before returning to school.

The common cold, runny nose, and lingering coughs are not illnesses requiring a stay home unless they are severe enough to make the child too uncomfortable to participate normally in preschool activities, or your parent intuition tells you that they should stay home. Please communicate any health concerns to us so that we can work as a team to care for your child. **Please teach your child to cover their coughs and sneezes with the inside of their elbow, so they don’t “spray germs on their friends or get germs on their hands.”**

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness such **as hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia or shigella,** please keep them out of school and notify SonShine Preschool staff immediately. We are required to report the illness to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and will post a note by the sign in computer. The child’s confidentiality will be maintained.

If your child is seriously injured, we will provide emergency first aid, get emergency medical treatment for your child if necessary, and notify you as soon as possible. If we need you to pick up your child, we will separate them and have them rest until you arrive.

If your child has a minor injury that does not require emergency medical attention, we will provide first aid and notify the person who picks up the child, in writing on Brightwheel.

**Emergency procedures/ Severe Weather**

Parents and/ or authorities will be contacted in case of injury or severe disaster. Emergency transportation will be provided by ambulance if appropriate.

* **Lost Child**: If a child goes missing, we will immediately begin a thorough search, recruiting any available adults, while still supervising remaining students. If the child is not found quickly, authorities and parents will be notified.
* **Tornado Warning**: We will go to the windowless ladies’ restroom in the basement until the warning is lifted.
* **Lock Down:** We have a lock down plan in place that is known by teachers and staff.
* **Flood**: We will move to higher ground.
* **Fire/ evacuation**: We will evacuate out the door nearest to the classrooms (the north-west doors), or the west doors. We will gather by the fence at the back (south) of the property, by the red evacuation sign, and notify authorities.
* **Off-Site evacuation**: If for some reason we are required to evacuate off the property, we will walk to the Centennial Nursing Home. We will bring any necessary equipment, medications, and special diet foods. If phone service works, we would contact parents via Brightwheel message. In such an emergency, parents would reunite with children there. The address is 1637 29th Avenue Pl, Greeley, CO 80634.
* **Long Distance evacuation**: If local disaster personnel required us to evacuate children out-of-town, we would use church vehicles and make every effort to contact parents. If we are unable to contact parents, parents would need to inquire with local emergency personnel regarding our whereabouts.

**Signing In and Out**

All students must be signed in on Brightwheel by the person who brings them, and signed out by a person authorized (in writing through a message or on your Brightwheel account) by the parents or guardians to pick up the child. They may not leave alone.

Students will only be released to persons authorized by the parents or guardians to pick them up. If the person is a stranger to staff, they must show a valid picture ID to prove that are one of the people authorized to pick up the child. If an unauthorized person attempts to collect a child, staff will not release the child to them, and will contact the parents. If the unauthorized person persists or acts in a way that causes suspicion or alarm to staff, staff will lock down the school and call the police immediately.

**Visitors and Volunteers**

Visitors and volunteers must sign a visitor’s log with the time, date, and purpose of the visit. Other visitors and volunteers must be approved by the director and the teacher of the classroom they wish to enter. Part of elementary school readiness is learning to be comfortable at school for a little while without one’s parents. Volunteers and Visitors will be supervised and under the direction of the director and the classroom teacher.

**Excursions/ Transportation**

SonShine Preschool does not provide regular transportation of students. However, special excursions may occur during the school year. Transportation for any field trips will be provided by the child’s guardian.

For field trips:

* All students will travel to the field trip with the parent or guardian, and they will remain with that parent or guardian for the entire field trip.

**Media Use**

We love music at SonShine Preschool! We will listen to many types of appropriate music that is free from profane language or content, with no time limit.

We won’t be watching any regular television, but may watch an *occasional* age-appropriate (rated G) video for educational purposes, to go along with a theme, to illustrate a Bible topic, or for a special treat. This would only be for 2 hours per month maximum, if at all. We may have an occasional pajama day when students wear their pajamas and we may watch a short video towards the end of class. We will let the parents know ahead of time.

**\*Medication at School\***

Since our class times are short, it is highly unlikely that you will need us to give your child medicine, as you should be able to administer it before or after school.

To give your child necessary prescription or non-prescription medication, **including Tylenol/ ibuprofen**, at preschool, we must have the following (we have forms available):

1. **Medication** in its original container labeled with child’s first and last name. Prescriptions must have the pharmacy label attached that list: Child’s name, prescriber’s name, pharmacy name & telephone number, date prescription was filled, expiration date of medication, name of medication, dosage, how often to give the medication, and length of time the medication is to be given.
2. **Note signed by parent/ guardian** with permission to give medication
3. **Note from doctor/ prescriber** with specific medication, dose, time, reason, possible side effects, duration to be given, and signature.

\*Please use the Medication Administration Authorization form provided on our website at greeleysonshine.com\*

IF ALL 3 OF THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MET, WE CANNOT ADMINISTER THE MEDICATION.

CHILD CARE MEDICATION POLICY IS A COLORADO CHILD CARE RULE. Our license depends on complying with these rules.

Be sure to hand us the medicine to lock in our medicine cabinet**. Never leave medication in your child’s possession or in their bag**. Unused medication will be sent home or destroyed according to medication administration guidelines. Only staff members who are delegated by our nurse consultant and director, and who have completed a medication administration course may administer medications. Medication administration will be logged.

**If your child has a severe allergy or severe asthma, we will need a health plan on file.**

**Personal Belongings**

Please label all belongings. Please have your child bring a regular-sized back pack each day, labeled with their name. It should contain one zip-lock bag with a complete change of clothing: short-sleeved shirt, long pants, underwear, and socks. Each child will have a hook on which to hang their bag.

**In cold weather**: Please send a jacket with a hood or a hat. Please send snow boots, snow gloves, and snow pants on snowy days if you have them. We have a class supply of soft, non-waterproof gloves for chilly days.

**Drinks:** Please send a labeled water bottle with only water with your child daily. Please do not send any other beverages in water bottles. Please do not send sippy cups. We provide access to drinking water at all times from disposable cups (we have a disposable cup dispenser by the sink in our classroom).

**Comfort objects**: Such as blankets or stuffed animals are better left at home. If your child has trouble adjusting to new situations without them, please speak with us and we can allow one temporarily.

**Toys/ other items from home**: Each day, we will rotate to allow a different child to bring the show-and-tell for the day. They are called “The SonShine Kid.” You will be notified in advance. A student may only bring a toy/show-and-tell on their show & tell day. They will be encouraged to show it to the class, tell something about it, and pass it around briefly (if practical). Bringing a toy is risking losing or breaking a toy. We cannot be held responsible for any belongings that come with your child. Please, no toy weapons or electronics (tablets/Nintendos). If your child has a questionable idea for a show-and tell, please feel free to call us beforehand.

**Money**: We cannot be responsible for your child’s money. If you are sending money for a field trip or special event, please place it in a labeled envelope or baggie and hand it directly to your child’s teacher.

**Food:**

We have lots of fun and burn lots of energy at preschool! Please ensure that your child gets plenty of rest and a good meal before they come to school. Please do not send individual personal snacks unless your child has a food allergy or special need. We wash our hands and pray before our snacks, and encourage healthy eating habits. ***For the safety of children with nut allergies, we do not serve nuts. Please do not send in any products containing nuts. We do not claim to be a nut-free facility, but we try our best to avoid having nuts in the classroom.***

**Regular day snacks**: The Colorado Department of Health is fairly picky about what parent-provided foods we are allowed to serve to the class. They need to be in store-bought, unopened packages. We can’t accept things that could spoil before they arrive, like refrigerated dairy products. The only fresh fruit/veggies we can accept are: packaged carrots, packaged apple slices, bananas in peel, Cuties /oranges in peel. On your child’s show & tell day, please send in store-bought snacks for the entire class. For variety, snack should consist of food from 2 different food groups. Snacks that are reasonably healthy (not too sugary) are preferred for regular days. Juice and fruit snacks are very sugary, and should not be sent for regular day snacks.

**Birthdays**: We welcome special store-bought treats (like pudding cups or donut holes for birthdays). We do not serve frosted cupcakes. We will send home a note to notify you of when we would like to celebrate your child’s birthday in class, so you can send treats that day. Your child will receive a personalized birthday crown and choose a small gift from the Birthday Box. We will place a candle in your child’s birthday treat, sing to them at snack time, and will send you a picture through Brightwheel.

**Class Parties**: For class parties, a sign-up genius for treats and other needs will be send through Brightwheel.

**Please notify us of any special dietary needs or allergies your child may have.** If your child is allergic to components that are likely to be in most snacks (gluten, dairy, etc.), please keep a supply of safe snacks at the school for them to have if our regular snack contains their allergen.

**Potty-Training**

Our policy is that students must be potty-trained (in underwear- NOT pull-ups- during class time) unless there is a documented special need that delays training. Of course, preschool-age children are prone to accidents, which is why we ask that you always have a change of clothes in their bags. We have a great bathroom adjoining our classrooms with a small child-sized toilet. We encourage independent use of the toilet. Please send your child in clothing that they can easily pull down and up with minimal help, to promote independent use of the bathroom. “Onesies” are not allowed because they are not conducive to independent toilet use. We will ask students if they need to go to the bathroom if they are “doing the dance.” We believe that preschool-age children should be allowed to use the bathroom whenever they want to, to avoid accidents.

At the beginning of each school year, we will teach all the children the proper way to use the bathroom and how to wash their hands after each time.

If a child has an accident, we will have them change into their clean clothes and send the dirty items home in the zip-lock bag in their backpack. We have wet wipes on hand to clean them up if needed. We will not embarrass or discipline children for having accidents. Sometimes children start having accidents in a new situation, and then when they become accustomed to where the bathroom is and how to take the initiative to go, they get much better. Please communicate any needs your child may have, such as needing to be reminded to go more often.

We encourage preschoolers to learn to wipe themselves, but will assist with wiping if asked and if we feel it is necessary.

If a child is using the toilet, we encourage them to close the door for privacy, and try to make sure that there are no other children in the same room when the child is using the toilet.

**Parent - Teacher Conferences**

Parents are encouraged to stay in frequent contact with their child’s teachers, and communicate about their child’s behavior, progress, and social and physical needs. If you have a concern, you may set up a time to meet with your child’s teacher. Formal conferences are normally scheduled twice a year, one in the fall and spring.

**Immunizations**

The law requires that we have a current immunization record completed for each child before their first day.

* We strongly encourage you to immunize your child according to your doctor’s schedule, to prevent serious or deadly diseases, and also to protect other children who are too young or medically unable to be immunized.
* Some parents do legally exempt their children from some or all immunizations, so there is a chance that some of the students in our school will not be immunized.
* If you opt out of your child’s immunizations, your child may be excluded during outbreaks of certain diseases. There is also a special online procedure to follow if you are opting out of immunizations.

**Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited during business hours in all areas where child care is provided. As much as possible, children will be protected from second hand smoke on excursions. Please protect your child and their belongings from second-hand smoke.

**Licensing:**

* A recent state licensing inspection report is available upon request
* **Reporting complaints**: We are licensed by the state of Colorado. If you have licensing questions you can contact them by:

**Colorado Department of Human Services**

**Division of Child Care**

**1575 Sherman St.**

**Denver, CO 80203**

**(303) 866-5958**

* For the official Rules Regulating Child Care Centers, please consult the Code of Colorado Regulations (12 CCR 2509-8) or contact Lexis-Nexis at 1-800-227-9597 or the Secretary of State, Information Center at 303-894-2200, x6418. The secretary of state’s website is [www.sos.**state**.co.us](http://www.sos.state.co.us).
* Colorado law requires child care providers to report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. To report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, contact:

**Weld County Dept. of Human Services**

**(970) 352-1551 ext. 6211**

* United Way notifies us by e-mail of recalled toys and other recalled items. Recalled items will be removed from our facility.