

**Health Care Policy at Southborough Village Preschool**

Reg. 7.11(7), 7.08, 7.11(9-10)

Southborough Village Preschool works hard to create the healthiest learning environment possible for our students, our faculty and our families. As part of our ongoing Healthy Habits curriculum, we teach, model and encourage healthy choices including hand-washing, good food choices, exercise, active play and overall healthy habits. We go to great lengths to ensure the physical, emotional and developmental health and safety of our students. Our staff is certified in CPR as well as First Aid. We follow teeth brushing guidelines for our full day students and are exceptionally careful in the management and supervision of our students who have allergies. SVP has an emergency evacuation plan in place and we practice fire drills regularly.

As careful as we are to support and encourage a healthy environment at SVP, the transmission of illness is always possible in an environment such as a preschool, where children and teachers are working so closely together. With this in mind, we are vigilant about keeping a sanitary environment to minimize the risk of spreading infection. We closely follow the recommended guidelines for controlling infection in a group childcare setting, set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. We follow these strict guidelines and procedures for sanitizing table tops, diaper areas, toys and school materials. In addition, we require the use of disposable non-latex gloves for changing diapers and handling bodily fluids. We employ a professional cleaning company to clean the preschool nightly, including bathrooms and sink areas, furniture, fixtures and trash receptacles. To minimize air-borne bacteria and improve the quality of the air, the duct systems and air vents are cleaned on a yearly basis. We also have HEPA filters in each classroom.

All students, staff and visitors wash their hands upon entering our school. Additionally, we encourage all families to wash their children's hands before delivering their children to us and after returning to their homes. All students and staff wash their hands several times throughout the day, for at least 20 seconds, especially before and after snack and lunchtime.

As part of our licensing, we operate within the strict requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Health, and per their directives, we ask that all children who are ill remain at home. We recognize that this can put pressure on working families, however, it is the only way we can ensure the health and safety of all the children and teachers in our care. Please see our specific policy and guidelines on "illness" below.

1. At Southborough Village Preschool, we are fortunate to have a registered nurse who acts as our **Health Care Consultant**. The Health Care Consultant will be available to the preschool as needed for consultation. Her responsibilities include reviewing the children's medical forms, filling out the required state immunization records, approving the preschool's Health Care Plan, providing first aid training and training in medicine administration. Reg. 7.11 (1-2)(11)

2. Southborough Village Preschool **requires that all children are immunized according to the recommended immunization schedule** put forth by the Academy of Pediatrics and the Massachusetts Board of Health.
3. **If, while at school, a student encounters an illness, injury or emergency that requires immediate medical attention, the staff will follow the following procedures.**
  - A call will be made to 911.
  - The parent, or the emergency contact as listed in the child's records, will be contacted.
4. **The following is a list of severe symptoms that require notification of parents but not a 911 emergency call. Please keep your child home if he/she has the following symptoms.**
  - Fever
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Undiagnosed rash
  - Cold/cough/sore throat with a fever
  - Conjunctivitis
  - Head lice
5. **The following is a list of mild symptoms with which ill children may remain at school.**
  - Mild cold without a fever, sore throat, headache or cough.
  - Mild non-contagious illness/with documented consent to attend school from their doctor.
6. **Please use the following guidelines if you are unsure as to whether or not to send your child to school.** In general, in order to keep everyone healthy and ready to learn, it is important that you keep your child home if they are not feeling well!

## **Not Sure If You Should Send Your Child To School?**

- **A temperature greater than 100 F** is considered a fever. Your child should be fever free, without the use of fever reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Vomiting and Diarrhea:** Your child should be symptom free, without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours and should have eaten at least two regular meals before returning to school.
- **Rash:** A rash is usually a sign of a viral illness. It may also be a reaction to a medication or chemical (plant, detergent). If your child has an unusual rash or it is associated with a fever, contact your doctor. Keep your child home until you have discussed the rash with your doctor.
- **Cold, sore throat, cough:** Children average six to eight colds per year. Your child may attend school if there is no fever and he or she feels well enough to attend with good stamina. If cold and cough symptoms are associated with a fever or they do not readily improve, call your doctor.
- **Influenza or Norovirus:** Your child must remain home until fever free without the use of medication, free from vomiting and diarrhea for at least 24 hours, and improving with manageable symptoms (free from excessive cough, etc.) and good energy.

- **Strep throat:** A sore throat in conjunction with a fever, headache or stomachache may indicate strep throat. Your child must complete 24 hours of medication and be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication before returning to school.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** The signs and symptoms of conjunctivitis are when the white part of the eye is red, eyes are itchy and produce a yellow or green crusty discharge. If suspected, contact your physician before coming to school. Your child may attend school 24 hours after treatment starts.
- **Chicken Pox:** Please contact your doctor (and school) if your child has chicken pox.
- **Head Lice:** Your child must stay home until treatment is finished and head is rechecked. We ask that you notify us if your child has contracted head lice, as this is the best way to help prevent its spread at school. We thank you for your help with this matter.

## **COVID Illness and Close Contact Situations**

For our COVID policies, we follow the most current policies put into place by the **Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough**. Please see the full policy and details at the end of this document. If your child or a household member tests positive for COVID, or if your child is determined to be a close contact of a COVID positive person, please notify us immediately so we can take the necessary steps to prevent the spread of COVID at school. Please let us know if you have any questions at all.

**Please let us know!** If your child has contracted a highly contagious illness such as COVID, Influenza, Strep Throat, Norovirus, Conjunctivitis, etc., **we ask that you notify the Directors so that we can inform parents of serious illnesses that may be in their child's classroom.** It's important to remember that while an illness might be mild for your own child, it could be dangerous for another child or a family member. As such, we appreciate your support with this and will always maintain your confidentiality as we work to keep the school as healthy as possible.

**In general, in order to keep all students, staff and families healthy and ready to learn, it is important to keep your child home if they are ill or not feeling well. We thank you for your support.**

7. Sometimes a child will become **ill while at school**. The following is our plan for caring for mildly ill children who remain in our care and are waiting to be picked up.
  - Mildly ill children who are allowed to be in school will be watched carefully and reminded to wash hands regularly and dispose of used tissues appropriately.
  - If your child becomes ill at school and is waiting to be picked up, he/she will be kept quiet, calm and comfortable and away from the other students until you arrive.
8. The Directors of Southborough Village Preschool are trained according to the DEEC regulations for **Medication Administration Procedures**. In the case that a student requires non-topical, non-prescription medication, parents must provide written authorization by a licensed health care practitioner, and fill out the appropriate SVP paperwork.
9. **Allergies:** We at Southborough Village Preschool take our student's individual health needs very seriously. Information on students with allergies will be posted in a clear visible spot for all staff to see. All staff will be made aware of which students have allergies and will take proper steps to ensure that those students are not exposed to the allergens at any point

during their time at school. This may include taking measures to notify other parents in the classroom of serious allergies, within the classroom.

10. Please be sure that we have an **Individualized Health Care Plan and Medication Consent** Form from your physician if your child has allergies or a chronic health problem (ie: asthma, allergies, etc.). **If your child has a prescription for an EPI-pen or inhaler**, we are required to have the medication, with the original pharmacy labels attached, in the classroom, before the first day of school, along with the necessary paperwork. **Please see a Director if your child will be requiring an IHCP, before beginning school.**
11. **Children's medical records** are very important to us at Southborough Village Preschool and are required by the DEEC. **NO CHILD CAN BEGIN SCHOOL WITHOUT PROOF OF A CURRENT PHYSICAL AND IMMUNIZATIONS.** This is a Department of Early Education and Care regulation. Physical forms are good for one year from the date and must be signed by a physician. Please note that your child's physical may expire during the school year (usually at or around a birthday). At this point, please remember to bring us an updated physical report. Current physicals are required, and must be updated annually for our records. Please be sure to keep us updated on any changes regarding your child's health.
12. **Southborough Village Preschool is a NUT-FREE school.** All snacks that are served are nut-free and we require that all lunches and other foods that are brought into school be nut-free as well. When you consider options to send in for lunch (or parties or birthday treats), please keep in mind that, while a food may not be made with nuts, it may be manufactured in a facility that makes other products that contain nuts, and therefore cannot be served at school. Please read ingredient labels carefully, when making choices, so that we can ensure the safety of all students in our care.  
  
\*Please note that there may be other food restrictions in a particular class (besides nuts), depending upon any allergies that a child may have that year.
13. **Lunch:** If your child is staying for lunch, we ask that you provide your child with a nutritional nut-free lunch.
14. **Snack:** Southborough Village Preschool provides a small, nutritious, nut-free snack during each class. The snack will usually consist of some type of cracker/pretzel/whole grain snack and water. We respect each family's dietary preferences and are happy to work with your family in order to accommodate the needs of your child during snack time.
15. We will work closely with parents and health care providers to meet all requirements of a **child's specific health/dietary needs or disabilities.** Please feel free to contact us at any point if you have concerns about your child's health while he/she is in our care at SVP.
16. **Sunscreen/bug spray** should be applied by parents before school. If you would like for us to reapply sunscreen later in the day, please put this request in writing and bring us a bottle of your preferred sunscreen/bug spray.
17. **Dental Hygiene:** Children who remain in our care for longer than a half-day will be provided with the opportunity to brush their teeth.
18. The DEEC requires us to remind parents to **place infants to sleep on their backs only.**

Reg. 7.08(6)(j)

19. Southborough Village Preschool is committed to protecting children from neglect and abuse while they are in our care. We would like to remind parents that teachers are **mandated reporters of child abuse** and must, by law, report all suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families. Reg. 7.08 (6)(l)
20. **Rest, sleep and quiet activities:** Children who remain in our care for longer than a half day will be provided with the opportunity to rest, sleep or have quiet activities. Reg. 7.11 (13)

### **Southborough Village Preschool Wellbeing of the Child Policy:**

At Southborough Village Preschool, the wellbeing, care and safety of our students is of the utmost importance, at all times. Please note the following in regards to our Wellbeing of the Child Policy.

- Southborough Village Preschool is committed to protecting children from neglect and abuse while they are in our care. We would like to remind parents/caregivers that teachers are **mandated reporters of child abuse** and must, by law, report all suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families.
- **We always reserve the right to refuse to release a child to the care of a parent/guardian/caregiver, who we suspect is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, substances, or otherwise impaired.** Should this situation occur, we will ensure that the child is transported home in a safe manner, by a parent/guardian/caregiver on the child's Emergency Contact List. In all instances, the wellbeing and safety of the child will always be our priority at Southborough Village Preschool.

### **Southborough Village Preschool Emergency Contacts for Health Care**

- Southborough Village Preschool, 14 & 16 East Main St., Southborough, MA 01772  
Telephone (508) 485-3109
- Directors: Laura Eppen (cell: 774 245-2770) and Gretchen Hartnett (cell: 508 989-5652)
- Health Care Consultant: Sarah Drepanos (508) 460-9199,  
29 East Main St., Southborough, MA
- For all police, fire and ambulance emergencies, we will call 911
- Southborough Police Department non-emergency line (508) 485-2147
- Southborough Fire Department non-emergency line (508) 485-3235
- Southborough Board of Health (508)481-3013
- Emergency Health Care Facilities: Marlborough Hospital (508) 481-5000 or
- Metrowest Medical Center in Framingham (508) 383-1000
- Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (508)424-0100
- Southborough Youth and Family Services (508) 481-5676
- DCF Child-at-Risk Hotline (800) 792-5200
- Poison Control Center (800) 222-1222