


# TurtleRock

Preschool • Kindergarten • Academy

A close-up photograph of a young boy with dark, curly hair, smiling and looking at a butterfly perched on his index finger. The butterfly has orange and black wings with white spots. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The boy is wearing a light blue polo shirt.

P A R E N T   H A N D B O O K

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## **Handbook Revision**

Turtle Rock Preschool reserves the right to revise, remove or supplement any provisions of this handbook when it deems such changes appropriate. Policy changes will be posted in the office for 30 days.

Revision Date: 01/31/2017

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# Turtle Rock Preschool

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## A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND OWNER

Turtle Rock Preschool is over thirty-seven years old, and we are proud of the legacy upon which we build. We are committed to providing the highest quality early childhood education and care for your children. Each day we intend for you to experience the loving environment that exists and the sense of family we work to foster. We know the trust you place in us to provide a safe, joyful, and enriching environment for your children.

Everything we do at Turtle Rock is guided by our mission:

*The mission of Turtle Rock Preschool is to help ensure children reach their full potential. We provide dynamic programs in which children from diverse backgrounds can develop early learning skills in a supportive and nurturing environment.*

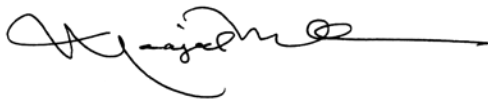
Along with our mission, we promote twelve core values for our young learners. These values are woven throughout the school, taught, and practiced on a developmentally appropriate continuum:

*Friendship, Cooperation, Thankfulness, Compassion, Respect, Kindness, Generosity, Truthfulness, Responsibility, Acceptance, Patience, Perseverance*

We believe that each child's success depends upon strong partnerships between parents and teachers. Together we will work with you to prepare and guide your child, both academically and socially, to transition smoothly and excel into his or her next level of learning. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to lead a remarkable group of caring, creative and gifted teachers and staff. Each of us at Turtle Rock Preschool is here because we are passionate about having a positive impact on young lives. We look forward to being a part of your child's growth and development.

Please read this handbook and save it to consult throughout the year, as it will answer many of your questions about our philosophy, policies, practices and procedures. Intended for current and prospective parents, the handbook provides detailed information about all aspects of our school.

Welcome to Turtle Rock Preschool. I look forward to meeting you!



Maajed M. Abahusayn  
President and Owner

## **INTRODUCTION TO TURTLE ROCK PRESCHOOL**

Turtle Rock Preschool, Kindergarten and Academy is a private developmental school that follows a strong academic curriculum for children as young as 8 weeks old through kindergarten, with after-school care available through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Locally owned and family operated – we have provided year-round early childhood education of the highest quality since 1979.

We structure our early childhood education curriculum around key elements of development to ensure the growth of the whole child. We focus not only on cognitive development, but social, emotional and physical development as well.

Areas of academic importance include: early learning skills in literacy, math, art and science. We focus on providing each child with the necessary foundation for school readiness. In addition to academics – social and emotional well-being also plays a significant role in a child's development. Our curriculum, various activities, and daily experiences provide children with opportunities for fun, enriching, and joyful early learning while they build meaningful relationships with their peers and teachers.

We appreciate the diversity of our families and celebrate each child's unique qualities. As we work with families to benefit children, we intend that our devotion, respect and understanding be evident in the school in all of our interactions. Our teachers are committed to working collaboratively with parents to achieve the best possible results for their children.

We create a positive environment that encourages children to explore their surroundings on a daily basis. Upon completion of our program, we believe that the children's well-rounded experiences at Turtle Rock will provide them the necessary strengths for emotional, social and academic success in their future schooling.

### **Our Goals and Objectives:**

- To provide a warm, supportive environment for children where they receive the nurturing and positive reinforcement they need to develop to their full potential.
- To provide opportunities for being with other children in a setting conducive to the development of wholesome social relationships.
- To provide appropriate and meaningful play experiences that contribute to the developmental needs, interests and abilities of the child.
- To build important foundations for future reading skills and other academic pursuits such as science, math, technology and languages, recognizing that each child comes to learning at their own unique pace and with distinct interests and abilities.

## Programs Offered:

In each of our programs, we provide a strong curriculum and dedicated teaching staff who are trained and skilled to meet the specific needs of the age group.

### Year-Round Programs:

**Infant:** Ages 8 weeks – 12 months

**Toddler:** Ages 12 – 24 months

**Preschool:** Age 2 by September 1<sup>st</sup>

**Junior Pre-Kindergarten:** Age 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup>, and fully toilet-trained

### Traditional School-Year Programs:

**Pre-Kindergarten:** Age 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup>

**Kindergarten:** Age 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup>

**After School Academy:** 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

### Summer Programs:

**KinderCamp:** Students who have completed Pre-Kindergarten

**Summer Camp:** Students who have completed Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

## Hours and Days:

The school is open year-round from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Your child's hours may be limited by his or her enrolled program:

| <b>Program</b>   | <b>Attendance Options</b>                             | <b>Hours</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Nursery:</b><br>Infant and Toddler  | 5-day   | Flexible hours from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM   |
| <b>Early Childhood:</b><br>Preschool,<br>Junior Pre-Kindergarten<br>and Pre-Kindergarten | Choice of 5-day,<br>3-day (M/W/F) or<br>2-day (Tu/Th) | Core school day hours are from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Extended hours from 7 AM to 6 PM are included at no additional charge.      |
| <b>Kindergarten</b>  | 5-day   | Core school day hours are from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM. Extended-day hours from 7 AM to 6 PM are available at an additional charge. |
| <b>After-School Academy</b>  | Choice of 5-day,<br>3-day (M/W/F) or<br>2-day (Tu/Th) | From elementary school dismissal time until 6:00 PM.   |
| <b>KinderCamp and<br/>Summer Camp</b>  | One to two-week<br>long sessions                      | Core schedule of 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Extended-day hours from 7 AM to 6 PM are available at an additional charge.               |

**NAEYC Accreditation:**

Turtle Rock Preschool was the first school in Irvine to attain accreditation and one of the first schools nationally to accomplish this recognition. We were recently re-accredited in 2012, meeting all 10 of the early childhood program standards – with over 400 individual criteria.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) offers an intensive and thorough accreditation program in which early childhood programs voluntarily undergo a comprehensive process of internal self-study improvement. NAEYC's main focus is to support and encourage programs in providing high quality, safe and nurturing environments while promoting the individual development of each child.

**Curriculum:**

The school's dedicated Curriculum Director actively works with teachers to promote age-appropriate educational activities throughout our programs. Extensive resources and materials are provided to help teachers create a stimulating learning environment. Our custom curriculum is designed to give children the opportunity to explore a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities within a warm and supportive setting. Teachers work to provide a good balance of child and teacher initiated activities. All children are provided with a variety of open-ended activities and materials that promote creativity through:

- Language Development
- Creative Art
- Math, Science and Sensory Experiences
- Music and Movement
- Learning Centers and Manipulative Exploration
- Fine and Gross Motor Development
- Natural Outdoor Experiences

A wide selection of developmentally appropriate materials are available for children throughout our programs. Teachers provide alternating activities using different materials on a daily basis. Time is scheduled for children to interact with one another and with the materials provided. Children also have opportunities to interact in large and small groups throughout the school day. To further enhance the curriculum and to promote weekly themes, outside presenters are invited to school, such as firefighters, theatrical performances and musical groups.

The curriculum provides meaningful hands-on experiences that engage children in a wide variety of concepts to promote self-confidence, a healthy sense of self-worth, respect for themselves and others, independence, curiosity, and critical thinking. We teach to the whole child and support their development in all domains. This includes a focus on character building and citizenship.

Every month, our Curriculum Director develops a curriculum calendar which is available online and posted on each classroom's outside bulletin board. Curriculum is broken down by weekly themes within each month. Each classroom posts detailed weekly curriculum calendars on their outside bulletin boards.



**Our Faculty and Staff:**

We take great pride in the special qualities, experience and talents of our faculty and staff. They are selected not only for their educational background and work experience in the field of early childhood education, but also for their personal qualities of warmth, empathy and the ability to relate positively to others. Each of our teachers exceed NAEYC and licensing standards for early childhood education.

All prospective teachers go through an interview process with both the Director of School and Administrator, as well as undergo a working interview by demonstrating teaching skills in a classroom. We check references, perform thorough background checks, and require staff to maintain CPR and First Aid certifications.

Our Administrative Leadership Team consists of an involved Owner, Administrator, Director of School, Assistant Director of School, and Curriculum Director. Other administrative office staff include our Business Manager and Event Coordinator.

## **FAMILIES AND COMMUNICATION**

### **Parent Involvement:**

Parent involvement is a hallmark of Turtle Rock Preschool. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in supporting their child's early education.

Families are encouraged to participate in school activities and provide input on a regular basis. Parents can help their child by discussing and expanding on each day's learning at home. Parents can involve themselves in a variety of ways, such as volunteering in a classroom, sharing their talents or hobbies, accompanying children on nature walks, collecting materials for children's projects, donating books or toys, and assisting with classroom projects. Parents are encouraged to attend classroom and all-school events throughout the year.

### **Communication:**

It is essential for the healthy development and growth of your child that parents and teachers communicate frequently, directly and effectively. We strive to be a team and encourage you to come directly to us with your questions and concerns. While teachers are not able to have extensive conversations during drop off or pick up, we are happy to arrange a time to give you our full attention. It is through working together that we can best meet your needs and those of your child. If you would like to have more than a few moments to talk, we encourage you to set up a phone conference or a face-to-face conference with your child's classroom teachers. Early intervention by parents and the school provides the best opportunity for the resolution of difficult issues.

The connection between home and school is essential. We ask that you share information with us; including any changes at home that may affect your child at school. These changes could include a death in the family, moving to a new residence, loss of a parent's job, a parent away for business, someone from the immediate family moving out of the home, or a new sibling. Information you share about your family is kept confidential. Changes that may seem routine or ordinary to an adult may be regarded as unusual by a young child who has not had as many years of experience in dealing with changes. These changes and others often lead to different behavior in the classroom. We can teach and work better with your child if we are aware of any changes at home.

Parents have a variety of options when it comes to learning about their child's day at school. Some avenues used daily include: verbally speaking with a teacher, reading posted information on the parent board, "Remind" messages, emails, phone calls, and Daily Child News forms. Teachers dedicate time to ensure that these avenues are updated, both for the classroom as a whole, as well as individual children.

Since communication is very important to us, no question is ever too small. Teachers work hard to relate with warmth to families and convey their care and concern for your child. Please feel free to call to discuss any questions or concerns you have. You are also welcome to stop by the office at any time to talk, or you may schedule an appointment with a member of the Administration.

**Daily Child News:**

All classrooms (except our Infant and Kindergarten programs) send “Daily Child News” forms home daily. The forms are intended to communicate to parents a brief snapshot of your child’s experiences on that particular day. Teachers work diligently every day to create a thoughtful and detailed note regarding your child. Some families take and read them consistently, while others do not. Therefore, if you prefer not to receive a Daily Child News for your child, you may indicate so on the Child Preferences page of the Parent Portal.

**“This Week at Turtle Rock”:**

A weekly “This Week at Turtle Rock” email bulletin is sent to parents, which includes important announcements and details about upcoming events and activities at school. This dispatch is emailed to families each Sunday evening and we highly encourage you to read it carefully. Additional information related to your child’s classroom or program may be provided by your teacher.

**“Remind” App:**

“Remind” (*remind.com*) is a free, safe, easy-to-use communication tool that helps teachers connect instantly with parents. We strongly encourage you to subscribe to your child’s classroom via this app so that you may receive regular updates, photos, and reminders.

**Online Parent Portal:**

An online portal is available for parents, and is accessible via our school website. The portal includes: downloads and links related to your child’s classroom, bios and contact information for your child’s classroom teacher(s), parent resources, administrative forms, a school directory with family contact information, the ability to set preferences for your family, as well as view financial activity on your account.

As a school community, we encourage all our families to share their contact information with fellow parents. We don’t want any child to be excluded from outside get-togethers. However, each family is given the option to hide the email address, home address, home phone and cell phone for both the primary and secondary parent contact from the Parent Directory. If you wish to have any of these items hidden – you may do so by logging into the portal and setting your own privacy preferences.

**Back-to-School Night:**

Back-to-School Night is held for parents during the first month of school in the fall. This evening provides an opportunity to meet your child’s teachers and learn about the curriculum in each of our programs. We strongly encourage parents to attend.

**Open-Door Policy:**

We have an open-door policy for parent classroom visitation. Parents are welcome to observe their child at any time, but we ask that they remain unobtrusive and unobserved by the children so that the class is not disrupted. Observation steps are available for parents to be able to look into classrooms from the atrium windows.

### **Dropping Your Child Off At School:**

An adult must accompany children into the classroom (or out onto the playground) where a teacher will greet them each day. The person who drops-off the child must sign the child in every day with a complete (full legal) signature and time of arrival in the classroom sign-in/out binder. The child's hands should also be washed upon entering a classroom, and information on any changes in the child's daily routine shared with teachers. Our staff will communicate any policies, procedures or concerns regarding the child to the person dropping off at this time. Never leave your child unattended. It is imperative that your child's teacher acknowledges your child's arrival.

It is important to remember, in order to benefit from the learning program children are expected to arrive by 9 a.m. in our Early Childhood programs and by 8:30 AM in Kindergarten. When children are late, it disrupts the learning process not only for that child, but for their classmates as well. If we find a child is frequently arriving to school late, we will require a parent conference to address the issue.

### **Access of Records:**

The school values privacy and wants to be sure that it protects information concerning families. School staff may access your child's records and health information for school purposes. The California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division has the right to interview children and review children's files without the permission of the parents under California regulation (section 101200).

### **Picking-Up Your Child from School:**

Parents must pick up their children by entering the building through the office using their own Personal Identification Number (PIN) code and sign their child out in the classroom Sign-In/Out Binder.

Your child must be picked up promptly according to your program's hours. Children will only be released to adults (18 and older) previously authorized, and picture identification is required for anyone not recognized by our staff. Your complete (full legal) signature and time of departure is required to sign your child out each day. You must make sure that your child's teacher acknowledges that you are taking your child from the class or playground.

It is unlawful for a person under the age of 18 (other than a parent), to sign in or out, regardless of their relationship to the child. Therefore, children will not be released to siblings, relatives or friends under the age of 18.

We take the safety of all children on campus seriously. While children are in the care of our staff, we supervise them carefully and enforce rules that pertain to safety. It is important for parents to follow and enforce the same safety rules when picking up their children and moving outside the classrooms, since the children are no longer in the presence of our staff. While you are welcome to stay at school and socialize with other children and parents, we would like to request that you pay particular attention to your children when they are in your care in order to ensure their safety.

There is a stop sign in the atrium where children must stop and wait for their parents before reaching the office. Unaccompanied children are not permitted in the office. Children must be

in the company of their parent when exiting the building. They may not run ahead of their parents when leaving, and must have their hand held while in the parking lot. It is not permissible to play in the area of the trash bins, climb on the fences, or wander in and out of gates or doors. Please make sure that your children are properly supervised, so as not to endanger themselves.

### **Updating of Emergency Contacts:**

It is important that the school maintain current and accurate records for each child so that parents can be contacted in the event of an emergency. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the school has current contact information. If there are any changes to this information, the office must be notified promptly so that they can update their records. You may also verify we have up-to-date Emergency Contact information on the Parent Portal.

### **Parent and Child Identification:**

Upon enrollment, verification of identity is required from at least one parent and the child.

For identity of parent or court-appointed legal guardian, one of the following items is required:

- a. Driver's License (or government ID card)
- b. Current Passport or Permanent Resident Card

For identity of the child and to confirm parentage, we require an Official or Certified Copy of the child's Birth Certificate (*a hospital "Record of Birth" is not acceptable*). Any document containing foreign language shall be accompanied by a full English language translation which the translator has certified as complete and accurate, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.

A child may not start without verification of identification from at least one parent. If none of the child's documents are available by the start date, the child may start and enrollment will be considered provisional for a period of 90 days. If after 90 days we have not received verification of the child's identity, the child will be immediately withdrawn.

### **Release of Child:**

We maintain a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. Enrollment forms require a parent to specify individuals to whom the child may be released.

Advance authorization is required for a child to be released to an individual other than those already listed. It is recommended that parents name everyone who might pick up their child when enrolling, and update this information regularly. Only in cases of necessity or emergency should a change be made over the telephone. When notified by telephone, we may request that certain family information be confirmed for verification. The person picking-up the child will be required to present identification when arriving at school.

Should a person other than the child's parent(s) or those indicated arrive to pick up the child, a parent and/or the first available person on the emergency contact form will be notified and the child will not be released until proper authorization is received. Should an unauthorized person become confrontational or uncooperative with our staff, we will immediately notify the police.

We will not release a child to any parent, relative or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol. In the event this situation occurs, a telephone call will be made to an alternate emergency contact person or the police.

**Parent Code of Conduct:**

We expect parents to observe a certain standard of conduct as a part of our school community. The following items are not acceptable while on our campus:

- Physical or verbal punishment of their own children or any other children
- Threatening, harassing or otherwise disrespecting staff, other parents or children
- Swearing, cursing or foul language
- Threatening or obscene gestures
- Quarreling with other parents or staff
- Making disparaging comments regarding the school to staff, parents or anyone other than Administration (including outside of school)
- Using contact information of Turtle Rock families for commercial or any other improper purpose
- Not following policies designated to protect the safety and security of everyone at the school

Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate withdrawal of the family.

**Grievance Procedure:**

If you have any concerns regarding school policies or the care your child is receiving, you are encouraged to speak to the appropriate person. If the concern is regarding a teacher, the classroom, or your child, you should first initiate a conversation with the teacher. Many times this approach will result in a satisfactory outcome not requiring any further discussion.

If you feel that the issue merits the attention of the Administration you should ask for a meeting with the Director of School or Administrator. Any concern with financial issues may be discussed with the Business Manager. If at any time you feel that your concern has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director of School, Administrator, or both. Please do not hesitate to express any concern at any time. It is our goal to make sure your child's experience at Turtle Rock is exceptional. We pride ourselves on having families who are happy and genuinely love being part of our school.

### **Custody, Court Orders and Changes of Family Status:**

Turtle Rock Preschool encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's care and education. In providing care for a child, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents is required. Therefore, the school will not prohibit parents from accessing records, attending activities or participating in conferences pertaining to their child unless otherwise required by court order or law.

The school denies a parent access to their child only if there is a legal document which addresses that denial. In these circumstances, we require (1) a certified copy of the current court order which states the rights or restraints ordered, (2) a letter from the custodial parent stating that the non-custodial parent is not allowed to pick up the child and (3) a photo of the non-custodial parent to help us with identification. We cannot accept information regarding the validity of orders over the phone; only legitimate written instruction will be accepted.

Visitation schedules and parenting plans are agreements made between parents and are not binding to the school. The school will release a child to either parent in accordance with school policy, unless otherwise directed by a valid court order. Visitation with the non-custodial parent may not take place at school.

The school discourages parents from involving school staff in disputes over custody, visitation schedules, child support and other related issues. Staff members must stay focused on providing children the highest level of care. To do so, they must maintain good relationships with both parents and should not be asked to support one parent over another. Staff will not testify or otherwise participate in a custody dispute in their capacities as school employees unless served with a subpoena. Often, child records can provide the same information as the testimony of a staff member, and parents have access to child records by law. Parents are encouraged to use these records rather than staff testimony in resolving these types of disputes.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Licensing and Health Rules:**

We are licensed by the State of California, and must abide by all rules and regulations outlined by the state. If you have a question regarding these guidelines, please see a member of the Administration.

### **Health Assessments:**

Each child is required to have a current health form on file. The health form must be completed by a physician and must have been conducted within one year prior to the date of enrollment. The form must include a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's physician. The form must be completed and returned before the child's first day of school. Thereafter, whenever immunization renewal information is needed, parents must update immunizations by bringing in the documentation filled out by the physician. Parents will be given 15 days to update current records. Failure to do so may result in the child being withdrawn from school.

### **Nut-Free Environment:**

To reduce the risk of severe allergic reactions, our school strives to be "nut-free". We do not serve peanuts or any nut products. Please do not bring any item into school that contains nuts. Although we make every effort to be "nut-free" we can never guarantee that outside food brought into the school does not contain nut products.

If we find that your child's lunch contains nuts, we will contact you. Your child will be served a school lunch instead, and your account will be billed.

### **Allergies or Special Dietary Needs:**

If your child has severe allergies that require monitoring and intervention in case of an allergic reaction, please be sure to outline all allergies and the required treatment onto a Food Allergy Action Plan form, and discuss it with both your child's teachers and office staff. The allergy information will be attached to all required medication(s) and copies made for your child's teachers and file. If there are additional items your child is allergic to, we will work with you in trying to prevent your child from coming into contact with the item(s). Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that other parents or children will be as conscientious as we are and, therefore, cannot guarantee your child will not come into contact with an item that may affect him or her. If the allergy is extreme, you will be asked to sign a Release of Liability form.

### **Smoke, Vapor & Tobacco-Free Environment:**

Cigarettes, E-cigarettes, vapor devices and chewing tobacco are not permitted and may not be used on our campus, including the parking lot.



### **Incidental Medical Services & Administration of Medicine:**

We will provide Incidental Medical Services (IMS) to children for the following:

- Blood-Glucose Monitoring
- Administering inhaled medications
- EpiPen Jr. and EpiPen
- Prescribed and over-the-counter medications

All medications (i.e. prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, lotions/ointments, lip balm, cough drops, etc.) must have the child's name clearly marked on it and will be stored in a medication cabinet or medication refrigerator in the school office. Parents must complete an IMS Instruction Form prior to the administration of the first service or dose. All medications must be administered in accordance with the pharmacy or manufacturer's label. Staff administering approved IMS will be trained either by the child's parent or a medical professional prior to administering any IMS. Safety precautions will be taken (i.e. using gloves, a sharps container, etc.). All necessary disposal equipment will be provided by the child's parent. Final disposal of biologic materials will be the responsibility of the child's parent. An IMS log will be used to record any services given to a student and will include the date, time, dosage, and administering staff's signature.

All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be in original packaging. No homeopathic ointments are allowed. Medication forms must have a beginning and ending date and can only be kept for a short period of time, except for approved long-term medications held for emergencies.

A parent must personally instruct a specific teacher or staff member on how to administer the medication to their child according to the attached physician's orders, following all generally accepted safety precautions. The child's parent must communicate any new physician's orders (i.e. dosage changes, etc.) and track expiration dates and replace medicine and/or equipment/supplies as needed.

### **Child Immunization Requirements:**

Children in California are required by law to receive certain immunizations in order to attend public and private elementary and secondary schools, child care centers, family day care homes, nursery schools, day nurseries, and developmental centers. Turtle Rock is required to enforce these immunization requirements, maintain immunization records of all children enrolled, and submit reports. Please visit [www.shotsforschool.org](http://www.shotsforschool.org) in order to find out about immunization requirements.

### **Sunscreen:**

Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen to their child prior to arrival at school, and should provide sunscreen for their child while at school. The parent must label the sunscreen bottle with the child's name, complete a Sunscreen Application Authorization Form and rubberband the form to the bottle. All sunscreen bottles will remain in our staff's care and stored in the classroom. Staff will assist children with reapplying sunscreen later in the day at the parent's request. Please talk with your child about the importance of applying sunscreen. Additionally, parents may also encourage their child to wear a hat when playing outdoors.

**Developmental Needs and Special Services:**

We do our best to work with any families who have a child with special needs. Please consult with a member of the Administration prior to enrollment if your child has physical, mental and/or emotional special needs. We will make every attempt to integrate any child with special needs into our program. Despite all efforts, however, there may be times when participation in our programs will not be in the best interest of your child.

Our staff has expertise in child development and occasionally identifies behavioral or developmental needs in young children that parents may or may not recognize. Every effort will be made to involve parents in the process of identifying the need and working toward possible solutions. In these instances, our staff may recommend additional professional help or services for the child or family.

We recognize some children may require special one-on-one assistance during the day. If you wish to have an occupational, physical or speech therapist and/or behavior coach work with your child, at your own expense, we will work with you to formulate a plan that is in the best interest of your child. We make decisions on whether or not to allow these arrangements on a case-by-case basis. A limited number of these individuals are allowed on our campus at any one time. They will be required to complete a TB test each year, and must undergo a "Live Scan" background check as required by California law.

These situations take up a significant amount of administrative time to assist with coordination, scheduling, and paperwork. In addition, the required individual attention can affect the entire classroom. We are dedicated to helping children achieve their full potential. If you need extra assistance with community resources, please contact the Director of School. Unfortunately, if we determine a situation is beyond our capacity to assist, or is detrimental to the classroom, we will have to require the parents to make other arrangements and withdraw the child from school.

**Basic First Aid:**

In the course of normal supervised play, children occasionally get injured. In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. Any cuts will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water; ice will be applied to any bruises, bites or other injuries. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented onto a Child Incident Report and provided to parents when the child is picked-up at the end of the day.

We may call and ask parents' permission to apply Bacitracin ointment (a topical antibiotic) as necessary to treat or prevent infection in minor skin wounds.

**Emergency Medical Care:**

In case of a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), we will call 9-1-1. Our staff has been trained in Pediatric and Adult First Aid and CPR, and will administer it as appropriate. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

In case of an injury or accident in which an ambulance is not needed, but immediate professional care is required, we will contact the child's parents. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency contacts will be notified. Our staff cannot transport children to a hospital or doctor's office. Injured children shall be transported for medical aid by parents or by calling 9-1-1 for an ambulance.

**Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:**

All personnel working in a licensed childcare facility must report suspected child abuse or neglect. There is a criminal penalty for violation of this reporting law.

**Emergency Procedures:**

We have emergency procedures in-place and practice regular fire, earthquake and lockdown drills with staff and children.

In case of a fire, there is a central fire alarm that may be activated in the atrium. Exit routes are posted with procedures by classroom exit doors. Two fire extinguishers are located in the atrium and one in the kitchen, which are inspected regularly. Classrooms are equipped with both smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

In case of an emergency, our staff will be acting in the best interests of the children. Children's safety is always our first priority. If our campus is unsafe, our temporary relocation and gathering place, if available, will be University High School (located at 4771 Campus Drive) in Irvine. In the event of such an emergency, you will be contacted at the first opportunity and given information and instructions.

**Illnesses and Accidents:**

Parents must make other arrangements for the care of their children when they show symptoms of any deviation from normal health. Children should not be sent to school if they are vomiting, have a fever, diarrhea, eye discharge or pink eye, excessive coughing, oozing sores, head lice, an undiagnosed rash or are obviously not well.

When a child becomes ill or injured at school, the staff's first priority is to meet the child's physical health needs. In case of illness, we will take the child's temperature, as well as perform an overall visual health assessment. A phone call to parents will be made when the school deems it necessary. If parents are requested by the school to pick up their sick child, they must do so within one hour and the child may not return to school for 24 hours following the time sent home and until the symptoms subside.

Children will not be permitted at our school with any of the following conditions:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher.
2. Any communicable disease or contagious infection.

3. Vomiting within the past 24 hours.
4. Diarrhea – three or more loose bowel movements in a 24-hour period.
5. Undiagnosed rash.
6. Eye discharge or Pink Eye; children can be readmitted after medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial or viral infection, or after 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.
7. Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.
8. Open sores and scabs, unless properly covered and 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.
9. Head Lice – until treatment is effective and a follow-up evaluation has been made by our staff.
10. Any one or more of the following: earache, signs of irritability or confusion, sore throat.

Parents are advised to make alternate plans for care in the event that the child becomes ill and is not able to attend school. If a sick child is not picked up within one hour of being called, we may call your alternate contact to request pick up. Failure to pick up a sick child in a timely manner, or disregard of this policy by parents, may result in the removal of your child from school.

While a physician's note may be helpful, it does not guarantee that a child may return to school. Final decisions on allowing a child to return are made by an Administrator.

### **Discipline:**

We follow the guidelines for developmentally-appropriate practices set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These guidelines recognize that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style and family background. While some behaviors are typical for a specific "age and stage", we recognize that children learn appropriate social behaviors at different rates. With that in mind, we observe and make individual behavior plans when necessary.

We believe in "positive discipline", which focuses on positive behavior, rather than negative. We may need to redirect children and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove a child from the rest of the group. If a behavior persists, we will arrange a conference with the child's parents.

The following techniques are used according to age-appropriateness and the individual needs of each child:

- Distraction and redirection: Suggest appropriate behavior (we never use time-outs).
- A quiet, private talk: Showing respect for children's feelings, getting down on the child's level, looking at the child directly in the eye and giving him or her our undivided attention.
- Praise: Catch the child making "good choices"; praising the child who is behaving appropriately.
- Indirect praise: Praise the child who is next to the child who may be having trouble.
- By using examples: When asking children to use calm voices, use a whisper voice.

- Arrange contingencies (if/ then statements): For example, we might say, “If you finish putting the blocks away, then we can...”
- Redirection to another area: Redirection is done in a positive manner. Teachers give a forewarning of behavior that needs to be corrected. When the child is not following direction and is demonstrating inappropriate behavior, teachers follow through with redirection to another area in the classroom or yard. If the child persists with inappropriate behavior, the teacher will shadow the child until the child is ready to resume play in an appropriate manner. Once the child is ready to resume play, the teacher will explain to the child why he or she was removed from the area and redirected to another area. The teacher will discuss with the child how to make better choices.
- Staff guide children in learning and expressing socially appropriate behavior that is individual to that child.
- Children are given a 5-minute warning when transitioning from one activity to another.
- Questioning vs. Telling: Teachers may ask the child a question such as, “What kind of voice should we use inside?” or “How do we treat our classmates?”

### **Biting:**

Biting can be a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and still developing their language skills. It is usually a temporary behavior that is most common between 13 and 24 months of age.

We take biting seriously. Children bite for a variety of reasons, including: simple sensory exploration, panic, seeking to be noticed, inability to express themselves verbally, special discomfort, teething or an intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results (the desired toy, excitement, attention, etc). Knowing that the effect of their biting will hurt another person is not a part of a very young child’s mindset, so the “cause/effect” relationship is not yet internalized. We work with parents in discussing how they can assist in altering the behavior. Our teachers plan activities and supervise children carefully in order for biting incidents not to occur. Despite our best efforts, it is sometimes only a matter of seconds for a child to grab a toy and the offended child lash out in frustration. This can occur before an adult can intervene, despite it occurring right next to a supervising teacher. If this behavior develops into a repeated pattern that endangers other children, we must take actions to protect the other children in our care.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is as follows:

- The biter is immediately removed from the group with firm verbal redirection. The bitten child is consoled and the bitten area washed with soap and water (the bite may be minor, with no apparent mark). If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is spoken with in an age-appropriate manner, and then redirected and shadowed.
- A written Child Incident Report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked-up that day. We will not share with parents the name of the other child involved.
- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.

- We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families.

After multiple biting incidents have been documented or observed, we will require a parent conference to discuss the concern. It is our goal to work together with parents to help the child break the biting habit. Unfortunately, if biting incidents continue to occur, we must require either the temporary or permanent withdrawal of the child.

### **Aggressive Behavior in Children:**

We are committed to making our environment as safe as possible for your child. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others and non-aggressive problem-solving between children. Behaviors such as biting, tantrums, sharing conflicts, or physical aggression may occasionally occur in young children. We closely supervise children in our care at all times. Undesirable behavior can sometimes occur before an adult can intervene, despite our best efforts and it occurring right next to a supervising teacher. We take aggressive behavior seriously. This behavior includes, but is not limited to: biting, hitting, pushing, tantrums, sharing conflicts, other physical aggression or in any way provoking an altercation. In older children this may include verbal abuse or inappropriate language.

We will be working with you to teach your child to participate, cooperate and be a responsible member of the group. In the event that a child's behavior places the child or other children in danger or interferes with the focus of the classroom, our policy includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove the child from the rest of the group.
- If a child is brought to the front office because of behavioral problems and cannot return to the classroom for the safety of the other children or the child's own welfare, the child must be picked-up within one hour of the phone call notifying the parent of the need to pick up their child.
- We may ask you to pick up your child and keep him or her home for a period of one day to one week.
- Staff will document a record of behavior.
- Staff will inform and discuss with parents any child's behavior which is persistently disruptive and is not alleviated by individualized guidance techniques.
- If the behavior persists, a member of the Administration will notify the parent that the teacher has requested intervention.
- The Director of School or Administrator will speak with the parents, discuss possible courses of action, then a plan will be designed and agreed upon by the school and parents.

We want your child to be a successful and responsible individual and we look forward to working with you should any problem arise. If parents are unable to provide support, or even with the parent's support the plan fails to improve the behavior, we reserve the right to withdraw the child.

If at any time we feel the behavior is a danger to other children or that the child needs more dedicated supervision, we will require the immediate withdrawal of the child until he or she is able to manage the aggressive behavior.

In the event that one child consistently harasses another, either verbally or physically, we will contact the parents of both children. It is our policy in any written or verbal report about an incident involving more than one child that we will not share the name of the other child involved with parents.

## **ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT**

### **Initial Registration and Annual Re-Registration:**

An Initial Enrollment Fee is due for each child upon acceptance into the program. Each following year, continuing children must pay an Annual Re-Enrollment Fee with their completed Re-Enrollment Commitment Form in February, in order to guarantee a place on the class list for the coming school year beginning in the fall. These fees are listed on the current Tuition Schedule and are non-refundable.

Expectation for re-enrollment each year is neither stated nor implied, and may be withheld at the discretion of the school. If a Re-Enrollment Commitment Form is not completed and returned by the specified deadline, the child cannot be guaranteed a space for the following school year.

### **Financial Agreement:**

Monthly tuition is due, in advance, on or before the first of each month. Please refer to the current Tuition Schedule for your child's tuition amount.

Tuition rates change each year in the fall, or at any time with a minimum 30-day notice. A Final Balance Deposit equal to one month's tuition is due once a start date is confirmed. If the start date is changed, tuition will be charged from the original agreed start date and will not be refunded. If the child does not attend, all monies already paid will be forfeited in full.

Our automatic electronic bank or credit card payment program (RapidTuition) is used to deduct monies owed for monthly tuition and any other fees and charges. Participation in RapidTuition is required for all families. If a family is not enrolled in RapidTuition, or their bank or credit card information is not up-to-date, there will be a late charge of \$35 for any tuition not received by the close of school on the third day of the month. If the third day of the month falls on a weekend, payment must be received before then. Any family account delinquent by more than one week will result in the child's immediate withdrawal. Re-enrollment is subject to availability after both the outstanding balance and an Initial Enrollment Fee are paid.

Kindergarten tuition is set as a fixed annual amount for the school year, regardless of the program start and end dates, and may be paid in ten equal monthly installments. A Final Balance Deposit equal to two month's tuition is required. This amount will be applied as the final May and June payments of the school year.

### **Absentee Policy:**

Full payment of tuition is required every month, whether or not the child attends school the full month. There is no absentee credit when school is missed because of holidays, vacations, illness or for any other reason. Scheduled days may not be switched to non-scheduled days, due to the school's staffing ratios and schedules. Days may be added for an additional fee, subject to availability. When a child is absent for one week and the month's tuition has not been paid, the child will automatically be withdrawn from the school. Re-enrollment is subject to availability after the outstanding balance and an Initial Family Registration Fee are paid.



**Withdrawal Policy:**

You must give a minimum one month's written notice if you intend to withdraw your child from school. A Child Withdrawal Notice form is available online and in the office. Tuition will continue to be due for this notice period, and you will be responsible for the full month's tuition for any partial months of attendance. Your Final Balance Deposit will be applied to any outstanding balance once notice of withdrawal is given. Any remaining final balance is due and will be deducted automatically within three days of submitting the withdrawal notice.

**Schedule Change Policy:**

We encourage parents to carefully select their child's schedule at enrollment or re-enrollment each year. Schedule changes mid-year are unlikely, not guaranteed, and subject to availability. If you wish to change your child's schedule, you must give a written notice to the office. A Child Schedule Change Request form is available online and in the office. Schedule changes may result in a reassessment of your Final Balance Deposit, based on the tuition of the new schedule.

**School-Initiated Withdrawal Policy:**

The school reserves the right to have any child removed from the school at any time without previous notice or a corrective program being required. Any tuition or deposit refund is at the sole discretion of the school.

**Picking Your Child Up Late:**

If you expect to be late picking up your child, call the school immediately. We understand circumstances can sometimes occur that will cause a parent to be late picking up a child. However, if a parent is frequently late, a meeting will be held with the parents and an Administrator to determine a plan of action. If there is no resolution, dismissal from school may be necessary.

When arriving late, a Late Fee will be billed to your account. Exact time is determined by the clock on the touchscreen terminal in the office.

**Core Programs:** Kindergarten Core Program hours are 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM. If your child remains at school past 2:30 PM, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 2:31 PM.

**Summer Programs:** Core Hours are 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. If your child remains at school past 4:00 PM, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 4:01 PM.

**All Other Programs:** The school closes promptly at 6:00 PM. If your child remains at school past 6:00 PM, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 6:01 PM.

If your child is left at school longer than 30 minutes past the school's scheduled closing time without contact to the school and the school has exhausted all emergency options from your emergency card, then the Irvine Police Department will be contacted. At that time, your child will be the responsibility of the Irvine Police Department. You will still be responsible for any Late Fees incurred.

**Returned Payment Policy:**

A \$25 fee will be charged for any returned check or electronic bank debit payment. Any time there is a returned payment, a money order or cashier's check will be required as a replacement.

**Sibling Discount:**

There is a 10% sibling discount for all additional older children, when all children are enrolled in full 5-day programs. This discount does not apply to Summer Programs or the After-School Academy.

**After-School Academy:**

On days when public schools are closed and we remain open, tuition includes regular academy hours from 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM. A full-day option (7:00 AM – 6:00 PM) may be available upon request on these days with specially planned activities (for an additional fee per day). We are unable to offer a full-day option at the start of the school year in the fall, when our Kindergarten is in session and the school district is still on summer break.

We provide transportation from Turtle Rock Elementary and Bonita Canyon School to Turtle Rock Preschool, including early dismissal days, at no additional charge.

**School Closures:**

The school will observe holidays, in-service, and other days during which the school will be closed, as listed on the current school calendar.

These days include, but are not limited to:

- The following Federal Holidays (or the day on which they are observed):  
New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday).
- A Winter Recess at the end of December into the start of January.
- Staff Development Days as specified on the school calendar.
- A Spring Break in March or April.
- Parent Conference Days in our Kindergarten program.

On occasion the school may close earlier than 6:00 PM for special all-school events. Families will be notified of these dates in advance.

The school reserves the right to close with or without notice in extreme weather or any other circumstances when necessary. Every attempt will be made to notify parents by email and social media as soon as possible when an unexpected closure is required. That school may determine, at its sole discretion and at any time, to close earlier than usual for safety reasons. A parent will be contacted and the parent and/or emergency contact should make every effort to pick up the child as soon as possible.

Please see our website and online calendar for the most current closure information. Full tuition is due for your child for all months, including those with closures. There is no tuition credit for any program on days when the school is closed.

## **GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **Security:**

We take security concerns very seriously. We regularly monitor situations that would affect the safety and security of our children and make plans accordingly. We will keep parents up-to-date when specific situations arise. We have evacuation and emergency response plans in place to best protect our children and staff. We conduct regular fire, earthquake and lockdown drills.

Our main front entry door is locked to prevent unauthorized access onto the premises. Each authorized individual has a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) code that may be entered into a keypad to gain entry. PIN codes are not to be shared, and must not be used by anyone other than the designated person.

For security reasons we ask that you not hold the door open for other individuals. Visitors must use an intercom, and wait to be admitted by a staff member.

Video and audio recording devices are located throughout the school for observation and security. If you have questions about these and other security systems in place, please talk to a member of the Administration.

### **Instructions for Use of Secured Front Entry Door and Electronic Sign-In / Sign-Out:**

To gain entry when dropping-off or picking-up your child and electronically sign-in / sign-out your child:

1. At the outdoor touchscreen, touch the <CHILD IN/OUT> button and enter your 4-digit PIN when prompted.
2. The system will then prompt you to select which child to sign-in / sign-out. Touch <OK> to sign-in / sign-out your child (or all children if you have multiple children enrolled). If you prefer to sign-in / sign-out only one child and not the other, simply touch the designated number corresponding to that child, then <OK>.
3. A green light will appear next to the door, you will receive confirmation with "DOOR IS OPEN" displayed on the screen and the door will unlock for several seconds to allow you to enter.

In the event you enter without using the outdoor touchscreen, please use the touchscreen in the office to sign-in / sign-out. This allows us to keep an accurate electronic record of all children currently on the premises.

Due to licensing requirements by the California Department of Social Services, you must also sign-in / sign-out your child in writing in the classroom with a complete (full legal) signature.

Please see a staff member in the office if you have any questions or require assistance.

**Playground Activities and Safety:**

Children learn through active use of their senses and many great opportunities for learning occur outdoors. The playground is an educational environment and an extension of the classroom. Outdoor play allows children to learn about their physical capabilities and the world around them. Social skills are also developed by organized and informal play.

Children will be reminded to use equipment as it is intended to be used, and will never be allowed to engage in hazardous play of any kind. Redirection, distraction, praise and other techniques of positive discipline will be used when necessary to discourage negative behavior.

**Natural Playgrounds:**

Turtle Rock Preschool is committed to providing children with a natural playground that is integrated with traditional playground features.

Our Natural Playgrounds provides children with infinite ways to play and discover their world using natural and safe elements such as flowers, gardens, trees, rocks of all sizes, water features, hills and valleys. This interactive environment encourages more creativity, sensory play and socialization when compared to traditional playgrounds with metal and plastic play structures. In addition, the use of all-natural/local materials and plants indigenous to California minimizes our carbon footprint and puts Turtle Rock Preschool in the forefront of moving forward with a green environment.

A growing body of research suggests a direct link between exposure to nature and the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children – including reducing Attention Deficient Disorder. Natural play helps children score higher on tests for concentration and self-discipline, experience more diverse play, exhibit less aggressive behavior and lead healthier lives. Turtle Rock Preschool’s outdoor space was custom designed and built by the Natural Playgrounds Company, the leading national experts in the field. Turtle Rock Preschool is among the first schools in the area to incorporate a natural playground.

**Nature Walks:**

Your child will participate in nature walks as an integral part of each classroom’s weekly schedule. Nature walks provide an opportunity for children to learn about the natural world around them. These outdoor experiences often directly relate to and expand the studied curriculum.

**Enrichment Classes:**

An array of challenging and fun enrichment classes are available to currently enrolled children. These classes are a great opportunity to extend your child’s preschool learning or offer your child more opportunities to explore a particular interest.

All classes are run by either our own teaching staff or experienced instructors from the community. Sign-up forms are available on the school’s website for ongoing enrichment classes. Special six-week enrichment sessions with additional classes are typically offered quarterly, and are communicated via our “This Week at Turtle Rock” email bulletin.

**All-School Sing Alongs:**

Our entire school community gathers once a month to sing songs, celebrate important events, and watch special student performances. These gatherings also periodically welcome guest speakers who read stories or introduce topics related to upcoming activities. Past guests have included a visit from Santa during the holidays or Choco Bear, the beloved mascot for Children's Hospital of Orange County, prior to our charity Move-A-Thon. Parents are always welcome to attend.

**Formal Child Assessments:**

Formal Child Assessments are conducted biannually. These assessments help parents to understand where their child is in his or her development, and what areas can be strengthened. We incorporate both informal and standardized assessments during the year, as well as noting the individuality of each child relative to his or her own progress. Teachers' observations of a child reflect the child's growth and needs, both as an individual and as part of a group. These assessments guide us, as educators, in developing our curriculum so that it matches the needs of the children in each age-group.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held biannually, immediately following the completion of assessments. These conferences are mandatory for the Kindergarten program, and highly encouraged for all other age groups. If we have a concern about your child's development, a conference is required regardless of age. Conferences may also be requested at other times by either parents or teachers as the need arises.

**Transition to a New Program or Classroom:**

As we follow a typical school year schedule, children normally transition to their next program at the start of the new school year in the fall. Occasionally children may transition during summer or at other times, when they are developmentally prepared and space is available. If transitioning mid-year, children will move up from one classroom to the next by being gradually introduced to the new teachers and the new classroom. They will make a few visits to the new classroom before their final transition. Parents will be given a move-up letter with helpful transition information. Parents are encouraged to meet the new teachers prior to the transition and ask any questions they may have regarding the new program.

**Classroom Placement:**

The placement of children into classrooms for the following school year is a process that is taken seriously by teachers and administrators. We want all children to be matched with teachers and classmates who will bring out the very best in them. All placements are determined by the administration and decisions are final. Class rosters will be published in August.

**Toilet-Training:**

Our Preschool program works with parents to assist in toilet-training. When parents feel their child is ready for toilet-training, we ask that parents begin this process at home. We will follow through and encourage the child while in our care (the child must be showing signs of readiness). Teachers will remain in communication with parents throughout the process to ensure consistency from home to school. The child must be kept in underwear throughout the school day unless the child needs to wear a diaper during naptime. Switching back-and-forth

between diapers and underwear can be confusing and may delay the process; therefore, we do not permit Pull-Ups®.

Parents need to ensure that we have extra underwear, multiple changes of clothing, and a spare pair of shoes each day during toilet-training. We ask that the child be dressed in "child friendly" clothing. The best items for children to wear are shorts and pants with elastic waistbands. Please avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, "onesies" and overalls, as these are difficult for children to remove quickly.

Our Junior Pre-Kindergarten classrooms do not offer a diaper-changing area and therefore, children in this age group and up may not wear diapers at school. A child must be fully toilet-trained to enroll or transition into Junior Pre-Kindergarten. Children in this program must be able to use the toilet independently and should be able to manage most personal hygiene needs themselves. Only occasional assistance will be provided by a teacher when needed. If we find that after admission into the Junior Pre-Kindergarten (or older) program the child has frequent accidents, and is therefore not fully toilet-trained, the child cannot attend school until they demonstrate an ability to use the toilet independently. Tuition will continue to be due in these circumstances.

### **Part-Time Schedules:**

We recognize parents may, for any number of reasons, prefer a part-time school schedule for their children. Two-day (Tuesday and Thursday) and three-day (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) schedule options are offered in our Preschool, Junior Pre-Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten programs. We believe every child will benefit from their experience at Turtle Rock. However, it is not reasonable to expect children attending with a part-time schedule to glean the same social, developmental and academic benefits as children attending full-time.

Teachers plan each program's weekly curriculum with these part-time schedules in mind. Despite our best efforts, part-time children will miss some classroom projects and activities. For certain special classroom events and celebrations, parents of children who are not scheduled to attend on the day of the event are encouraged to bring their children to school. When doing so, parents must stay at school with their child.

### **Fundraisers:**

Although the school has a generous annual improvement schedule, fundraisers may be held during the year that are directed toward the purchase of something on the "wish list" of staff and children or for a specific improvement or addition. Occasional fundraisers are held to benefit charitable causes. Participation in fundraisers is encouraged, but entirely optional.

**Dress:**

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and sneakers. Daily activities include active and messy play and the children should enjoy themselves without worry about their clothes. Please remember to send sweaters, jackets or raincoats when necessary. Rubber-soled shoes such as tennis shoes are the safest for running and climbing as they provide the most traction.

In spring and summer months parents may be asked to provide clothing appropriate for water play, such as a bathing suit, water shoes, and a towel.

The child's name should be placed on all clothes either with a permanent marker or label. In addition, an extra set of clothes must be kept in each child's cubby should a change be necessary. When used, the clothing will be placed into a bag in the Soiled Clothing Bin to be taken home and washed, and a Soiled Clothing Reminder notice will be left for parents.

**Religious Holidays and Events:**

Turtle Rock is a secular school and does not incorporate religion into our curriculum. Certain religious events and holidays which are culturally significant may be celebrated during the year with a non-religious focus. For example, in December we celebrate the holiday seasons with Santa, trees, snowmen and non-religious music such as "Frosty the Snowman". We have a diverse community that encompasses many religions and cultures and we endeavor to be sensitive to every family's beliefs.

**Kids' Night Out:**

On a select Friday of each month, we offer a "Kids' Night Out" for children ages 2 and older. For a nominal fee, children are provided dinner and various activities from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM. Non-enrolled siblings and alumni are welcome to attend. If a child attending is not currently enrolled, or has not recently been enrolled, a Kids' Night Out registration packet must be completed. Space is limited, and a sign-up form must be completed for each Kids' Night Out.

School closes promptly at 10:00 PM on these evenings. If your child remains at school past 10:00 PM, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 10:01 PM.

**Anti-Bias/Multicultural Policy:**

Our programs teach children to challenge discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes while increasing respect and understanding for others. We incorporate a culturally diverse/anti-bias philosophy in our curriculum and classroom materials. Our diverse families are one of our best resources. Additionally, we encourage our children to participate in culturally relevant activities. We train staff to be culturally sensitive when interacting with children and families within our program. Because we are a nonsectarian institution, children will be referred to their parents if they ask a question that involves opinions on personal or religious beliefs.

## **Meals and Snacks:**

We have a full service kitchen, with a dedicated on-site chef committed to preparing fresh food on a daily basis. We have regular deliveries of fresh fruit, vegetables and dairy products. All of our food meets or exceeds the NAEYC guidelines for nutrition.

We create a homogeneous atmosphere by serving meals family-style, having teachers sit with children during lunch, encouraging conversation and positive mealtime etiquette. Our food service ensures that all children are served nutritional foods in appropriate amounts for their age and dietary needs.

We use the following guidelines:

- Meals are as fresh and homemade as possible, and are prepared just before serving. We make our own sandwiches, pizza, soups and baked items.
- Milk is served at lunch to each child, regardless if lunch is purchased from school or not. Children ages 2 and up receive 1% milk. Infants and Toddlers receive 2% or whole milk.
- Children are served a variety of rice (both white and brown) and breads.
- Fresh fruit is served often for both lunch and snack.
- Fresh-cut vegetables are served both separately and mixed into foods to enhance the nutritional value.
- We serve turkey, chicken, fish and occasionally beef products; we do not serve pork.
- Meals are multi-cultural, individually planned, and changed regularly to give a variety of choices.
- Snacks are balanced from a variety of food groups.
- Juices served are 100% juice. No sugars, fructose or corn syrup are added.
- We always take notice of any child who is vegetarian, has specific food allergies, and / or special dietary needs.

Our program provides a nutritious morning and afternoon snack. Lunch is included in tuition for children ages 8 weeks to 2 years, once they are able to eat table foods. All other programs have the option to bring a lunch box from home or purchase a hot lunch. If you choose to buy a hot lunch, menus are available in the office and online. Children will be encouraged, but never forced, to try each food item. Please label all food items or lunch boxes/bags sent with your child's name and date. If sending food or snack items, no candy or nut-based foods are allowed. Please reference the "Nut-Free Environment" section in this handbook for further details.

A lunch credit will be given only if the office is notified before 10 AM to cancel a purchased lunch for that day.



**Naptime:**

Individual cribs are provided for children ages 8 weeks – 12 months. It is a licensing requirement that children under the age of 5 attending full-day programs be provided with an opportunity to nap or rest without disturbance from other activities. Nap mats are provided for every child during naptime.

**Infant Program (8 weeks to 12 months):** Parents are required to bring in two portable fitted crib sheets and a blanket. The staff will wash sleep items weekly and as needed. Children are on individual sleep schedules. For safety and regulatory compliance, we cannot allow any items in cribs for infants under 8 months of age. Infants over 8 months may use a single blanket in their crib.

**Toddler Program (12 to 24 months):** Parents are required to bring in a regular fitted crib sheet and a blanket. Children will nap on a mat from approximately 12:45 to 3:00 PM. The staff will wash sleep items weekly and as needed.

**Preschool, Junior Pre-K, and Pre-Kindergarten Programs:** Parents are required to provide a regular fitted crib sheet (blankets are not acceptable for the bottom sheet) and a blanket for the top (if needed) to fit the mat provided by the school. Pillows are optional and must be small; all nap items must fit in the child's nap bin. Children must be able to pack and unpack these items on their own. It is the parent's responsibility to bring nap items in at the beginning of the child's week and take them home to be washed at the week's end. Nap time is from 1:00 to 2:30 PM for Pre-K, and until 3:00 PM for Preschool and Junior Pre-K.

\*Please make sure all items sent from home are labeled with the child's name.

**Electronic Communication:**

Our website, [turtlerockpreschool.com](http://turtlerockpreschool.com), offers many useful resources. You may download forms and current monthly items such as our curriculum, lunch menu and snack menu. It also offers the ability to check your balance, browse our photo studio and view upcoming events. Our summer programs have a dedicated website, [turtlerocksummer.com](http://turtlerocksummer.com), with many of the same features customized for that program.

Parents are required to provide their email addresses so that we may send regular news, updates and important messages in the event of an emergency. We also encourage you to follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/turtlerockpreschool](https://www.facebook.com/turtlerockpreschool)) and Twitter (@[TRPreschool](https://twitter.com/TRPreschool)).

**Cell Phones:**

Please do not use your cell phone while inside the school. Staff and children need your full attention as you arrive at school and when you pick up your child. Children are not permitted to bring a cell phone to school.

**Parking and Speed Limit:**

Parents may park in any available space in our lot or on Concordia. Please observe any posted parking restrictions on Concordia. During special school events, we apply for an exemption of these parking rules so that you may also park along the school side of Turtle Rock Drive.

Please follow these important rules:

- The parking lot has one entrance and one exit. Enter and exit the parking lot in the proper direction.
- Your speed limit through the parking lot should not exceed 5 miles per hour. Drive at a slow speed, allowing you to stop quickly if necessary.
- Refrain from the use of cell phones while driving in the parking lot and while loading and unloading children.
- In the event of any accident, please notify the office immediately. The parking lot is always monitored by video cameras.
- Children must always have their hands held in the parking lot and be accompanied by the adult dropping them off or picking them up from school.
- Children may not be left unattended in the parking lot or in a car.
- Only park in designated parking spaces including within the “drop-off” zones.
- Carefully check behind and around you before backing up.
- Be cautious not to park within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- Do not block other parking spaces and please be mindful of parking accurately within the lines.

**Child Birthdays:**

All children’s birthdays are celebrated at school. We do not make food the focus of any birthday, instead choosing to promote special activities such as games, crafts or singing. We want to ensure that we adhere to our healthy food guidelines. As such, parents may not bring food items, goodie bags or decorations into the classroom or plan any special events. However, we welcome parent involvement in their child’s special day.

Recognition of the child’s special day varies by classroom, but usually includes a birthday crown and the singing of “Happy Birthday”. If you wish to donate a book to the class you may put an inscription in the front of the book and the book will be read during class time on your child’s birthday. Teachers will make sure your child feels special and celebrated on his or her day.

If you are having an outside party, to prevent hurt feelings, please do not send party invitations to school unless you are inviting the entire class. To invite only a few children, please mail the invitation directly to their home or send direct emails to parents. Our online Parent Portal provides you with a directory of home or email addresses for those families that have authorized us to share this information.

**Babysitting and Outside Child Care:**

Turtle Rock Preschool discourages, does not support and does not sanction staff members caring for, providing instruction to or engaging in social relationships outside of approved Turtle Rock Preschool activities with children (other than their own families) who are enrolled in any Turtle Rock Preschool program or activity. This policy is designed for the protection of all involved – children, staff members, parents and the school.

**Children's Belongings:**

The school cannot be responsible for the safekeeping of any personal belongings brought to school, including clothing items. Clothing and any personal possessions should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

**Photography:**

In our classrooms, photos are an essential communication tool for teachers, parents, and staff throughout the school year. We regularly hear from parents about how much they appreciate receiving these photos from the teachers. Photos help prompt parents with talking points about their children's day, which is important because many students (especially the very young) don't always articulate what they did at school or what they are learning. So to help parents understand the types of things their children are doing and learning, we share classroom photos with the Remind app, in emails, or on our password-protected online photo gallery. In order to take these photos, we need a photo waiver signed by each child's parents, which is why we include it on the Admission Agreement:

*"I hereby grant, without limitation, permission for the use of any photographs of my child in any printed or online material for the school".*

Because photos are an essential communications tool between teachers and parents, we do not offer a general option to opt out of the photo waiver. Consistency in this policy ensures that each child may fully participate in all of our educational and social activities. In the classroom, as photos are taken of children, an "opted out" child would be required to stop what he or she is doing and be removed from the area so that they would not be in any of those photos. Additionally, photos are often taken during group activities. Most parents appreciate having pictures of their children with their friends doing fun things in school and on field trips, and it gives parents a chance to see what their child experienced that day. Again, if a child were "opted out," such photos would be impossible to take during group activities without removing that child from the group and/or the activity, which is disruptive to the group and unfair to that "opted out" child.

For privacy, parents may not take photographs or videos of children other than their own at school, except when participating in large group activities together or during all-school events.