



Parent Handbook

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I. Welcome to Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center

A. Overview

At Sequoia's Treehouse, our emphasis is on the physical, cognitive and social/emotional growth of children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Children are presented with experiences allowing them to discover and explore their world through art, science, language, music, dramatic play and the natural environment.

Our Children's Center offers 7 developmentally aged classrooms, along with School-age Before/After School care, Day Camp and Summer Camp, all using emergent curriculum and Reggio Emilia as a basis for Learning Through Play. Our goal is to promote every child's individual development using an appropriate mix of academic and recreational activities.

Sequoia's Treehouse hires a staff who are committed to providing excellent experiences for children. Sequoia's Treehouse is managed by Sequoia Hartman, a childcare professional with over 19 years' experience, 10 of which are in non-profit management. Sequoia has a bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies. Sequoia has sales, marketing, board development, financial, administrative, and management experience. Sequoia's goal is to inspire and encourage the love of nature and education within children while bringing families and communities together.

B. Philosophy and Goals

Sequoia's Treehouse provides a safe and welcoming environment for children from 6 weeks through 12 years of age. Sequoia's Treehouse believes in the development of the whole child growing cognitively, socially, physically, and emotionally through play. As they play, children construct knowledge by engaging in meaningful learning experiences. Sequoia's Treehouse provides an environment that allows children to continually apply the knowledge they gain in new experiences in an inviting, supportive, enriching atmosphere. We believe parents are essential partners and we work together to help children grow in reaching their full potential.

Our goals at Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center are to help our children become:

- good friends and community members
- self-directed individuals
- independent learners
- question posers
- problem solvers
- music and art lovers

*Sequoia's Treehouse has connected with the local Nisqually tribe in the past and it is Sequoia's Farm and Forest School's intention to renew this connection and begin partnering again with their youth services programs.

C. Licensing

Sequoia's Treehouse is licensed by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, & Families. All aspects of our program including administration, facility, curriculum, health, and safety practices are periodically inspected. The results of any and all licensing visits are posted in a notebook on the counter in the lobby along with a copy of the DEL minimum Licensing Requirements. We are accountable to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) for licensed childcare facilities.

D. Non-Discrimination

Sequoia's Treehouse does not discriminate against anyone based on race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology, age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, or disability.

E. Religious, Cultural Diversity, and Holidays

In our efforts to promote and support anti-bias attitudes and education; because of our desire to minimize stress in children's lives, and in order to respect the cultural diversity represented by families of all children enrolled at Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center, we as a Center have chosen not to celebrate traditional holidays. We ask that you do not send children in costume on Halloween or with Valentines in February. Holidays are family celebrations with particular family values. It is difficult to include all children with respect to cultural diversity, and it is difficult to give holidays meaning that is developmentally appropriate for young children. We recognize holidays may be part of children's lives and we talk about the ways families are celebrating – or not. Holiday times are often stressful for children and we would rather remain as a warm, nurturing, and stress-free haven for the children to play and learn, pressure free. We do celebrate life, milestones of growth and development, personal accomplishments, individual successes, people, natural wonders, special days and the changing seasons. We hope you will join us in these celebrations.

F. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance and Special Needs

Sequoia's Treehouse does not discriminate based on learning, physical, or developmental disabilities. We comply with the ADA, and we will try to make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs. **In order for Sequoia's Treehouse to help your children, you will need to inform Sequoia's Treehouse of any special needs.**

G. Sequoia's Treehouse Does Not Tolerate Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

Sequoia's Treehouse does not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and any instances should be reported promptly to Sequoia's Treehouse Director, or to Sequoia Hartman. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means:

any intentionally written message or image—including those that are electronically transmitted—verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the program.

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/BullyingHarassment/default.aspx>; see also <http://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/washington.html>.

H. No Right to Sequoia's Treehouse Services

Sequoia's Treehouse reserves the right to refuse service for any lawful reason, including but not limited to:

- Failure by parents or children to treat Sequoia's Treehouse staff and children respectfully and appropriately;
- Failure to follow the rules set forth in this Parent Handbook or otherwise communicated by Sequoia's Treehouse; or
- Failure to pay fees due monthly in a timely manner.

Service may be refused at any time by the Director, who will notify the owner, Sequoia Hartman, of any refusal of services.

II. Full Day Program Schedule and Hours

Sequoia's Treehouse operates a Full Day Program Monday through Friday, from 7:00am-6:00pm, 12 months per year.

Children between the ages of 6 weeks to 6 years are served in 7 classrooms:

| | |
|----------|--------------------|
| Seedling | 6 weeks -12 months |
| Sprouts | 1 year – 2 years |

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Shoots | 2 years – 2.5 years |
| Shoots 2 | 2.5 years – 3 years |
| Saplings | 3 years - 4 years |
| Sequoias Pre-K | 4 years – 4.5 years |
| Sequoias K | 4.5 – 6 years |

Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center offers 2-day, 3-day or 4/5-day (full time) slots based on classroom and availability (half-day options do not apply to all classrooms). A three-day Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday schedule is not allowed, but all other options are offered. Full days are up to 10 hours per day. Half days are up to 5 hours per day.

Part-time schedules are set upon enrollment, and days are switched based on availability.

Half day (up to 5 hours) options for care are available for Sprouts, Shoots, and Saplings classrooms only. Morning session hours: 7:00am-12:30pm; Afternoon session hours: 12:30pm-6:00pm.

School-age Before/After School Care In addition to our Full Day Program, Sequoia's Treehouse offers School-aged Before/After School care, Day Camp, and Summer Camp for children 5-12 years.

Day Camp and Summer Camp are filled on a first-come, first-served basis according to the date the school has record of receiving the deposits. If programs are full, the child's name will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur.

A. School Year Hours and Holiday Closures

Sequoia's Treehouse is generally open 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday, during the school year. Sequoia's Treehouse is closed on the following holidays/In-service days:

- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving and the following day
- Christmas Day (and sometimes the preceding or following day)
- New Year's Day (and sometimes the preceding or following day)
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Friday before Summer Camp begins
- Friday before Labor Day weekend

III. Policies and Procedures

A. Absences and Schedule Changes

If your child is absent, no tuition credits or makeup days will be given; tuition remains the same whether your child attends or not.

B. Permanent Enrollment Changes

Requests for schedule changes cannot be guaranteed, but every effort will be made to accommodate children on a space available basis.

- To make a permanent schedule change during the school year, you must provide a **30-day prior written notice** for all our programs including Before/After School and Summer Camp.
- During these notification periods, previously contracted fees will be charged.

C. Arrival and Departure

Our full-day program is open from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Our School-age Before/After School care is open from 7am-8:25 & 2:55pm-6pm, our Day Camp is open from 7am-6pm, and our Summer Camp is open from 8am-4pm with an option for After-Care from 4pm-6pm.

Please remember to sign in and out EVERY DAY. Parents must sign their child in on the iPad or the attendance sheet and are required to deliver their child INTO the classroom/program. It is the responsibility of the parent to alert staff to their child's arrival. This can be as simple as a wave and a "Good morning". However, it is important that eye contact is made and that you receive acknowledgement from the Teacher that he or she is aware your child is present.

Transitioning into the classroom in the morning can be a particularly difficult time for some children emotionally. Establishing a routine for drop-off that includes placing the child's things in their cubby, greeting the teachers, kissing or hugging, or even a special handshake makes this transition from home to school less stressful for the child (and the parent!). Extended good-byes can cause undue distress for the child. We always want parents to feel welcome in their child's classroom. However, usually it is better to read a book, tour the room, or hear about a project at pick-up at the end of the day when you have rejoined your child.

At the end of the day please remember to sign your child out. Only authorized adults will be allowed to pick-up a child, even in case of an emergency. If we do not recognize the person picking your child up, we will ask for identification. It is very important that parents maintain current information on their contact list and authorized pick-up list.

Parents are asked to please monitor their children while in the building and in their care. It is very important that we work together to help our children understand the importance of respecting each other and our community. Specifically, caring for the classroom materials, cleaning up after playing in an area, and maintaining a safe environment are vital ways in which each child has an important opportunity to contribute.

We want families to feel welcome at the Center. Each family has their own interests and free time; the important thing is that you enjoy the way you choose to take part. Here are some suggestions of ways to be involved:

- Share family traditions, music or crafts
- Talk with other parents
- Come to a Family Event
- Read to children in the book area

We ask that full-day children to be picked up by 5:50pm so that each child can have time to share their accomplishments, discoveries, and artwork before they go home.

It is essential that your focus and attention be solely on your child during this time. We ask that you refrain from cell phone use when coming in the buildings at pick-up. Please also note that at the end of the day, we are usually out on the playground where the children may see cars pulling into the parking lot. It is amazing how many children can identify their friends' parent's car! After parking, it is very helpful for us if you walk directly into the school and visit with other parents *after* retrieving your child. It can be very frustrating for your child to see you, but not be able to get to you!

This is one of the most important things you can do to support the teachers and your child. Your child has been working very hard all day and is anxiously awaiting your arrival at the end of the day. It is important that your child can experience a smooth, calm, and most importantly unhurried reunion with you.

In addition, it is critical for our Teachers to be supported at this late hour as well. We build in time at the end of their day to clean up and get organized for the next day and it is extremely important that this time is used for this purpose. We value their time with us as well as their time for their own lives and are very serious in our efforts to allow them to be efficient and focused so that they can leave when their day is done.

D. Children Picked Up Late or Left at Sequoia's Treehouse after 6:30 p.m.

Sequoia's Treehouse closes at 6:00pm during the regular school year. Late fees are assessed at the rate of \$10 for the first 1-5 minutes (e.g., 6:01pm to 6:05pm), and \$2 per minute thereafter. At 6:15pm staff members will attempt to contact

parents/legal guardians or other authorized persons. After 6:30pm, staff will notify the Owner, Sequoia Hartman, if a child remains at Sequoia's Treehouse. Appropriate actions may necessitate calling law enforcement and Child Protective Services. In the case of repeated late pick-ups, Sequoia's Treehouse reserves the right to refuse further service.

E. Adult Rules of Conduct and Program Termination

Any parent, parent representative, child, or Sequoia's Treehouse staff who display any of the following behaviors may be prohibited from participating in Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center or in any Sequoia's Treehouse activity:

- No child or adult will be verbally or physically abused at Sequoia's Treehouse or at any Sequoia's Treehouse activity.
- No child or adult will be harassed. This includes unwanted physical contact, intimidation or bullying; sexist or racist comments; or comments of a sexual nature to a parent, child, or staff member at Sequoia's Treehouse.
- No alcoholic beverages, cannabis, illegal substances, or use of these will be allowed at Sequoia's Treehouse or at any Sequoia's Treehouse activity. No child will be released to anyone who appears intoxicated or under the influence alcohol or drugs.
- Smoking is prohibited at Sequoia's Treehouse or at any Sequoia's Treehouse activity.
- Possession of any type of firearm or weapon at Sequoia's Treehouse or during any Sequoia's Treehouse activity is prohibited always (with the exception of law enforcement personnel).

Anyone in the Sequoia's Treehouse community who feels harassment has taken place should promptly inform the Director or the owner, Sequoia Hartman. Sequoia's Treehouse reserves the right to immediately refuse service to anyone for any of these prohibited activities.

F. Babysitting, Hiring, and Socializing with Sequoia's Treehouse Employees

Sequoia's Treehouse employees are prohibited from performing babysitting, nanny services, or other childcare or services outside the scope of their Sequoia's Treehouse employment for anyone connected with a Sequoia's Treehouse family. Such arrangements create conflicts of interest and are not in the best interests of the children.

G. Toys, Items from Home, & Responsibility

Sequoia's Treehouse recommends that all electronic devices, toys, jewelry, money or other personal belongings either stay at home or in the child's backpack. Sequoia's Treehouse is not responsible for personal belongings or money brought to any of its programs.

H. Snow and Emergency Closure

If Olympia Public Schools or the Thurston County School District are closed unexpectedly, including due to snow or inclement weather, Sequoia's Treehouse MAY close as well. If Olympia School District or the North Thurston Public Schools are opening late, Sequoia's Treehouse will attempt to open as soon as staff can safely arrive. Parents need to call before bringing children to school. Updates will be posted on the website whenever possible. When time permits, parents will be emailed about upcoming closures.

In the event of an unscheduled early school closure, Sequoia's Treehouse will plan to be open for two hours after the closure, using available staff and volunteer parents. Parents will be notified by phone or email of closure and should make every effort to pick up their children as soon after the closure as possible. If a parent is unable to pick up the child within two hours (or earlier, if Sequoia's Treehouse determines two hours is impracticable), staff will call emergency contacts. If no one is reachable, the Director will take over responsibility for the children until an authorized person is available. If children are taken to another location, signs will be posted at Sequoia's Treehouse with complete information.

I. Parent or Guardian Permission for Photography or Videotaping of Children

Permission must be given by each child's Parent or Guardian to photograph or videotape their child/ren. Sequoia's Treehouse Enrollment Form has spaces to sign-off for these permissions.

J. Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

Washington State law requires that all childcare providers who suspect that a child in their care has been abused or neglected must make a report. The Director or staff person will make an official report on behalf of the center to Child Protective Services (C.P.S.) or law enforcement. Reports are kept confidential. Referrals are made to C.P.S. without conferring with parents.

Reporting should be regarded as a request for an investigation into a suspected incident of abuse or neglect. A report does not necessarily constitute a proven fact; rather, it raises an inquiry about the health of a child. Making a report can be the beginning of a process to help parents with their problems and to protect the children.

Current C.P.S. reporting policy requires all mandated persons must report any incidents of child sexual play (even when potentially developmentally appropriate) and any incidents of sexual harassment. It is C.P.S.'s intent to track these incidents to see if any pattern develops. It is not Sequoia's Treehouse's choice to determine whether an incident should be reported.

K. Confidentiality

While staying in tune with the children in our program, we often learn of very private family matters. We need to know about these matters because they affect the children. The ethics of our profession and the expectation of Sequoia's Treehouse is that information of a confidential nature is disclosed only to those with a need to know. Please bring all concerns (e.g., no-contact or protection orders, change in parenting plans, custody arrangements, etc.) to the attention of the Director or owner.

L. Consistent Care Policy

Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center strives to provide consistent care. Staff are assigned to work with the same group of children for much of the day and school year with a goal of building long-term, trusting relationships.

Here at Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center we understand that consistent care can have the following benefits: it deepens the Teacher's knowledge of individual children, decreases stress, creates a secure attachment, enhances a child's developmental process, strengthens family and staff bonds, and creates a family like environment that is welcoming and comfortable to all.

Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center recognizes that the childcare profession is still not considered a long-term career by many and is often used as a stepping stool to other long-term careers. However, the owner, Sequoia Hartman, works diligently with her Director's to provide staff with above standard pay, time off/sick time, staff development opportunities for individual and professional growth (including conferences), medical and dental for Leads and Directors, IRA after 1 year of employment, days off for holidays, Early Achievers to attend college for free, and encouragement and guidance to improve teaching skills and to move up within the organization. With these opportunities, Sequoia's Farm and Forest School hopes to entice Teachers to stay long-term to provide children with the care they deserve.

M. Pesticide Policy

Pesticides are not used on the premises, and should an exception occur you will be notified as soon as we are aware.

IV. Enrollment and Fees

A. Enrollment

Before a child may attend, enrollment materials must be completed, signed, and returned to Sequoia's Treehouse. This includes an application, two emergency cards, an immunization form, a parent contract, consent and authorization form, and the Parent Handbook signature page. A one-time non-refundable registration

fee, currently \$50, is required for each new child entering Sequoia's Treehouse. Registration materials are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and Sequoia's Treehouse maintains waiting lists.

Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center (Sequoia's Treehouse, LLC) strives to provide care to all children regardless of development or ability. That being said we have to be honest with families about the level of care Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center is able to provide for all children. In order to assess if Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center is a 'good fit' for your child/ren for the care we provide, Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center has a 2-week Trial Period Policy for new families enrolling their child/ren into Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center during which time Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center may un-enroll your child/ren for any reason.

During this trial period we will do our best to have daily communication and work with you and your child/ren to the best of our abilities. But if at any time during the first two weeks upon enrolling your child/ren in Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center we feel we cannot provide the care we believe your child/ren needs, we reserve the right to notify you, as soon as we deem necessary, to un-enroll your child/ren from Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center. We will try to provide you with as much information as possible about our reasons for un-enrollment, but Sequoia's Treehouse Children's Center makes no guarantees.

B. Emergency Contact Cards

Sequoia's Treehouse must have on file two completed emergency cards for each child. Emergency contacts are adults who can assist your child when you are unreachable. Please remember to inform Sequoia's Treehouse about changes in address and telephone numbers for yourself or your designated emergency contacts. Current contact information is most important during such events as a medical emergency, snow storm, earthquake, or power failure. At least one contact must live within sufficient proximity to reach the school by walking if necessary, in the case of an emergency affecting other forms of transportation.

Importance for keeping information current: It is important to keep your personal information including personal and work phone numbers, place of employment, and home addresses current along with your emergency contact's information as well. We need to be able to contact you at a moment's notice regarding your child's health and well-being, especially in case of emergency.

Your child's file is kept in our office which stays locked when we are not open. Emergency cards are kept in each classroom inside a card file box, inside a cabinet.

The only people who may legally access your child's information are those people listed on your enrollment form and emergency cards.

C. Deposits and Cancellation Notices

There is a \$200 deposit required upon enrollment. The deposit is applied toward your child's last month's tuition if proper cancellation notice has been given: 30 days written notice. In all other cases, deposits are non-refundable in the event of cancellation.

D. Current Sequoia Treehouse Full Day Program Fees

Tuition Rates – Monthly

You can find all the current Tuition Rates online at www.sequoiastreehouse.com/Tuition. The monthly fee is computed based on the average of all days of the yearly program and is divided into twelve (12) equal monthly payments. No proration is given, regardless of the days scheduled in each month or your children's actual attendance.

Assorted Fees

Drop In: \$80 Full Day (up to 10 hours); \$70 Half Day (up to 5 hours)

Sibling Discount: There is a 10% sibling discount on sibling tuition for the same schedule.

Annual Supply Fee: There is a \$100 yearly supply fee required upon enrollment. This fee is collected yearly at every anniversary month thereafter.

Administrative Fee: There is a non-refundable \$50 one-time administrative fee required upon enrollment.

Enrollment Deposit: There is a \$200 deposit required upon enrollment. These are refundable only with a 30-day written cancellation notice before care is set to begin. If a spot is offered and then accepted, the 30-day written cancellation applies.

Deposits are applied to your last month of care with Sequoia's Treehouse if you have given a written 30-days' notice of cancellation of care.

E. Two Make-up Days each Month

Sequoia's Treehouse families are allocated 2 make-up days each month for sickness/vacation which can be used only if space is available. These make-up days are used monthly and do not 'roll-over'.

F. Family Discounts

If you have 2+ children enrolled in Sequoia's Treehouse with the same daily schedule, each child receives a 10% discount.

G. Payment Arrangements, Late Fee Policy, Late Payments, and Returned Checks

We can set up payment arrangements to pay childcare fees bi-monthly or monthly. Please let us know what works best for your family.

Your payment schedule will determine when fees are due.

Bi-monthly: fees are due the 1st and 15th of each month. If fees are not paid by the 7th and 21st, a \$50 late fee will be applied to your next invoice, prepared twice monthly.

Monthly: fees are due by the 1st of each month. If fees are not received by the 15th of each month, a \$50 late fee will be applied to your next invoice, prepared monthly.

If you anticipate difficulty making a payment on time, promptly communicate with the Bookkeeper to discuss alternative arrangements. If you are given a past due notice and we do not receive payment in full by the 25th day of the month, care may be suspended immediately until payment is received. A \$35.00 charge will be assessed if a check is returned to Sequoia's Treehouse.

H. Subsidies

Sequoia's Treehouse is committed to helping families gain access to quality care regardless of their financial situation. Sequoia's Treehouse has contracted with State of Washington, Department of Social & Health Services (D.S.H.S.) to accept payments from this source. Information about this and other subsidy programs is available upon request.

I. Refund Policy

No refunds are given for sick days or individually chosen vacation days. Enrollment fees will be refunded if Sequoia's Treehouse is unable to accept a child due to space availability. Pre-paid monthly fees are refunded on a prorated basis if you give at least a 30-day written cancellation notice that your child will be discontinuing care. Exceptions may be made by the owner on a case-by-case basis.

V. Our Curriculum and Schedules

Sequoia's Treehouse Preschool uses child-centered Emergent Curriculum and Reggio Emilia as a basis for Learning Through Play.

Learning Through Play: Through play children develop social and cognitive skills, are able to mature emotionally, develop problem-solving skills, and gain the self-confidence to try new experiences and environments. Children's play can be divided into the following:

Active play Running, jumping, climbing, riding, and use of large muscles.

Quiet play Reading, beading, coloring or activities that involve only one.

Cooperative play Games and activities that involve more than one.

Manipulative play Puzzles, blocks, cutting and pasting, or activities that involve activities in which one expresses them self creatively.

Creative play Painting, problem solving, dance, music, storytelling, or pretending.

Dramatic play Dress-up, playing house, or any activity that involves eye-hand coordination or fine motor muscles.

Emergent Curriculum is a way of planning curriculum based on the student's interest. Child-initiated projects and exploration of topics suggested by students may last a day, month or all year.

Reggio Emilia is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment based on the interests of the children through a self-guided curriculum. Reggio Emilia schools emphasize creativity and artistic representation. www.reggioalliance.org

Small class sizes along with our self-motivated early learning environment provides a loving, nurturing atmosphere. Working in partnership with parents, we focus on the whole child and strive to engender a genuine love of learning in everyone.

We Document and Evaluate the children's work by discerning how and what the children are learning by observing them in the context of their play and our typical daily routines. The children's work is documented through Floor books which are accessible to the children and their parents at all times. Through use of a Floor book practitioners can document progression of the individual and the group and create Possible Lines of Development (PLODs) which will allow for future lesson planning.

A. Our Day

Each classroom has its own unique personality, flow, schedule and activities. However, some components which will be incorporated into the regular schedule for all classrooms are:

Whole Group Activities Children gather in the mornings for sharing, songs, and discussion of the day's events. Our understanding that intelligence is constructed in a social setting creates the basis for our belief that children's thinking is stimulated through interactions with others. Activities to expand cognition, stimulate new thoughts, and reflect on observations are incorporated.

In addition to the morning meeting time, children generally are together as a classroom group for mealtimes, nap time, and morning and afternoon outdoor play.

Small group Activities During much of the day, we break into smaller groups in which a primary caregiver works with a small group of children. This small group time is used for investigation, discussion, and experimentation that may not be possible within the larger group. At times, these are more teacher-directed activities such as a planned art activity or experiment and offers a balance to the child-directed play that is predominate during the day. This time allows us the opportunity to really tune-in and hear the children's thoughts and ideas, expand on activities experienced in the larger group, and work on developmental areas.

Children are encouraged to make their own choices for daily activities from a variety of play areas in the classrooms. Through independently making decisions about how they spend their time, children are empowered to explore and discover. In addition to the permanent materials such as blocks, manipulative, family living, literature, and art that serve as our classroom staples, novel materials are introduced to spark interest and encourage creative exploration.

Parents can find weekly activity schedules posted in their child's classrooms. Teachers write a "Today We...." message every day detailing the day's events. In addition, teachers will regularly communicate classroom activities to parents detailing the activities, learning objectives, exciting events, and books they are reading.

Snacks. We believe that snack times are a vital portion of the children's daily experience. It is an opportunity to try new foods, to take risks and discover new tastes, a chance to connect to their world around them, and practice independence. It is a time to listen to each other and be heard, to practice turn taking, to expand their vocabulary. It is also an opportunity for us to demonstrate our belief that children are capable and competent. When they are finished eating, they clean up after themselves. We do not assume that children have only a limited repertoire of foods. Instead, we offer nutritious whole-food snacks prepared by our staff that are kid-friendly but also healthy.

All children are served a morning snack, usually around 9:30am. Snacks are served in the classrooms and children are encouraged, but never forced to eat. Children are offered seconds upon request and are encouraged to serve themselves.

Snacks are prepared using fresh, organic ingredients as much as possible. Our staff create snacks around fruits and vegetables. Children drink milk at breakfast and afternoon snack. Typical snacks will include foods you will find from our community.

After nap, an afternoon snack is served in the classrooms. This is typically some sort of carb like crackers with fresh fruit or vegetables. Our menus are posted in our kitchen in each building.

Lunch We have parents bring a lunch from home which children eat together in our classrooms. Children sit at tables in their small groups.

Rest time Between approximately 12pm to 2:30pm the school rests – Seedlings sleep on individual schedules, Sprouts sleep 12-3, and Shoots from 12-2 and Saplings, Pre-K Sequoias, and K-Sequoias usually between 1-2:30. This is nap time for most children, but others rest and then read or listen to music while respecting their friends' need for sleep. Teachers clean, organize, and meet with each other during this time to plan, reflect, and consult with each other, meet with the Lead Teacher, and write observations of the children.

Outdoor learning We spend a great amount of time outdoors in all weather conditions. Rainy days mean puddles and streams. And mud!! Cold days are a chance to see our breath. Our play spaces are constructed from natural materials, including wood, stones, and logs from our forest. Older children tend to our gardens, planting seeds, watering, and picking vegetables.

Typical Daily Schedule

The outline printed here is only a guide. Each classroom varies to meet their children's unique developmental needs.

7:00 - 8:30 Arrival and free play
8:15 - 8:30 Breakfast and clean up
9:00 – 10:00 Circle time/morning meeting planned and free choice activities
10:00 - 10:30 Snack and clean up
10:30 – 12:00 Outside play
12:00 - 12:30 Lunch
12:30 – 3:00 Toddlers story and rest
12:30 - 2:30 Preschoolers rest and quiet activities
2:30 - 3:30 Snack and clean up, quiet activities at tables
3:30 - 5:30 Outdoor play
5:20 - 5:30 Clean-up
5:30 – 6:00 Snack and final departures
6:00 - Center Closed / Doors Locked

Mixed age groups During the first and last hour of the day, there will be mixed aged groups while children and staff are arriving or leaving for the day.

B. Transitioning to new classrooms

Sequoia's Treehouse staff is very invested in the cognitive, emotional and social development of all of the children entrusted to our care. We strive to present our children with stimulating and challenging opportunities daily and to observe and record the children regularly in order to monitor and document their growth and maturation.

While we roughly outline an age range for each of our rooms, our program is based upon the cognitive, emotional and social development of our children and not the chronological age of any child.

At times, children may fall above or below the average chronological age range for a given classroom. Sequoia's Treehouse believes that children move at their own pace and that given appropriate support and opportunities they will thrive in their own way at the right time for their own developmental process. We believe that it is our job to provide those opportunities and to group children of similar developmental levels together.

Teachers work very closely together with the Director to plan for a child to leave one room and join another. At times, a child may be ready to move mid-year. When this occurs, the child and their parents will be offered the next available opening in the appropriate classroom. While this is true, our community is very stable as a whole and spaces may not become readily available in the next classroom. As a general rule, most children move from one class to the next each September.

C. What to Wear and Bring

Your child will enjoy the program best if they are dressed for the weather. Appropriate clothing may include rain gear, shorts or long pants, tennis shoes, and a jacket.

We play hard and get messy often. Please do not send your child in their "best clothes". We encourage creativity and exploration and with that comes dirt, paint, clay, spaghetti sauce, mulch, and any other interesting material encountered during the day. We change clothes often so children need at least two clean, weather appropriate changes of clothing every day in their cubby including shirts, pants, under garments, socks and shoes.

The children all sleep on mats at naptime. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that is required during sleep time, please have it available on a regular basis. Otherwise, all toys and other personal items should be left at home

at all times. In addition, please keep candy, gum, money, and jewelry at home. These items can be difficult to share or get lost or broken. Children are welcome to bring books to share at story time. Books are always welcome!!

Infants and Toddlers

Infants and Toddlers need diaper wipes and at least one diaper for every two hours your child is in care. *Please note the policy concerning cloth diapers in the health section of this handbook.*

Staff will notify families when more diapers or wipes are needed.

At least two changes of extra clothes (please label) to be kept in your child's cubby in case of wetting accidents, mishaps with paint, spilled juice or a wild puddle.

Label everything that comes to school!! It is amazing the amount of lovely clothes, coats, and shoes that go into our lost and found each year.

D. Parents with Infants

Parents bringing children to the infant room must label everything with their child's name. Any bottles or jars of food must be labeled daily with their child's name and date. Breast milk may be frozen in the classroom freezer for up to one week in a clear plastic container as long as it is labeled and dated. Any bottle or jar that is not labeled and dated will not be served under any circumstances. When a child is trying new foods, we ask that the first introduction to a new food be done at home and be repeated for several days before bringing it to school. We ask that food from home be healthy, nutritious, and easily consumed by the baby.

For children with an older sibling in another room, we ask that you drop the infant off last in the morning and pick him or her up first in the afternoon. We try very hard to limit the exposure of our infants who are still developing their immunity. It is also difficult for our teachers to manage older children when they are (understandably) excited to be playing with the babies.

Safe Sleep Requirements Sequoia's Treehouse complies with WAC 100-300-0291 Infant safe sleep practices found here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-300-0291>

Child Sleep Pattern At Sequoia's Treehouse we allow infants to follow their normal sleep pattern and for toddlers to get as much sleep as needed.

E. Potty Training

When your child is ready, we will assist with potty-training. We consider a child ready when they are able to initiate the request to go to the potty. When your child

is ready and you are beginning to work together at home, it is critical that you let your teacher know. Our teachers are not potty experts but are ready and willing to work individually with each family to develop a plan for success for each child. While each child is different we do follow several guidelines during this process:

Children should remain in diapers while potty “practicing”. Children who are being taken to the potty to “try” are in the practicing stage. We will practice at school several times a day during this period as well, but children cannot be sent to school in regular underwear until accidents are infrequent. We also ask that only pull-ups with Velcro sides be sent to school with your child.

F. Labeling and the Lost and Found

Please label everything that can be marked. Sequoia’s Treehouse cannot be held responsible for lost items. At the end of each day all unclaimed articles will be placed in a lost and found box. At the end of each month, unclaimed articles are donated to charity.

G. Staff

The Center meets or exceeds the state’s required ratios of 1:4 infants, 1:7 toddlers, and 1:10 preschoolers at all times. The center is staffed with a Director, an Asst. Director, and 15 Childcare professionals. All professional staff have a minimum of 30 hours of basic MERIT training in Early Childhood and 10 hours continuing Early Childhood training annually. Most of the lead professional staff have an Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood, are attending school, or have a degree in a related field.

We also hire substitutes, administrative assistants and food handlers in the kitchen.

H. Field Trips

Sequoia’s Treehouse has wetlands behind the Center to use as part of our daily/weekly outdoor play. We use the wetlands often, sometimes spontaneously. This mini-field trip is covered by the blanket permission request found with your registration materials. Field trips away from Sequoia’s Treehouse will be scheduled in advance and require special parent permission.

I. Transportation

Sequoia’s Treehouse owns 2 minibuses used for transportation for field trips and elementary school pick-up and drop-off. Both minibuses have seat belts that are used while transporting children. One of the mini-buses has car-seats built in for our younger and lighter children to use while we are transporting children. There may be times we request use of your car-seat to transport your child during

fieldtrips. There are no field trips or transportation provided for infants or toddlers at Sequoia's Treehouse.

J. Animals at the Treehouse

Sequoia's Treehouse has 3 goats at the Center located outdoors next to the largest and smallest playground areas. There are two fences that provide a 3-foot barrier from the playground to direct contact with the goats. There are times your child's classroom may interact directly with the goats in small groups. We have an animal permission slip provided with your registration materials that allows your child to have direct contact with the goats.

There is also a rabbit at the Center.

K. Water activities

Water activities for the following groups at Sequoia's Treehouse:

Toddlers (ages 1-2 ½) are limited to small sensory bins which children stand next to. These are offered randomly, and the bins never have water over 4 inches deep.

Preschoolers (ages 2 ½ to 4) randomly have access to sensory bins with water while at the Center. The water in the bins is never over 4 inches deep.

Our Sequoia Kindergarten Classroom (ages 4-6) take monthly field trips to Discovery Aquatics located in West Olympia for swim lessons during the school year. Swim instructors and a certified lifeguard are with the children during these lessons.

Our Before/After School Program children often have swimming provided as a field trip during school and summer breaks. A certified lifeguard is always on duty during these swimming events.

*For any age group of children (we do not introduce water activities to infants) if a body of water is over 4 inches deep, there will be an additional staff out of ratio with the group of children (unless we are on a field trip with additional lifeguards on duty). If there is a body of water over 2 feet deep or more than 6 feet wide, there will be an additional staff member present with the children who is a certified lifeguard.

L. Emergency Plan

We practice emergency preparedness with regular earthquake and fire drills. The Center is stocked with emergency supplies. For our monthly fire drills, we evacuate to the edge of the largest playground just outside the building and next to the wetlands. If we must be evacuated from the building and the site, we will be out in the wetlands.

In case of an actual emergency, parents or guardians will be contacted promptly by a phone call, text message, and/or email. In the case parents or guardians are not able to respond, staff will refer to the emergency card that is filed for each child and contact the next emergency contact listed on the card. In the event of an early school closure due to an emergency, Sequoia's Treehouse will plan to be open for two hours after the closure, using available staff and volunteer parents. Parents will be notified by phone or email of closure and should make every effort to pick up their children as soon after the closure as possible. If a parent is unable to pick up the child within two hours (or earlier, if Sequoia's Treehouse determines two hours is impracticable), staff will call emergency contacts. If no one is reachable, the Director will take over responsibility for the children until an authorized person is available. If children are taken to another location, signs will be posted at Sequoia's Treehouse with complete information.

Parents or guardians will be reunited with the children in our designated safe place, which is along the back fence of the playground/wetlands, or in the indoor space if the emergency had nothing to do with the safety of the building structure such as a fire or earthquake.

J. Extreme Weather including Air Quality, Wind, and Lightning

For extreme weather including air quality, windstorms, and lightning, Sequoia's Treehouse would use the inside childcare space as the shelter to be used. If there was damage to the building, the other childcare building could also be utilized depending on the emergency.

VI. Health Matters

A. Snacks and Lunches

Morning and afternoon snacks are provided. Lunches are brought from home. All snacks will consist of protein, fruit or vegetable, cereal or grain, and water, juice or milk. Menus will be provided and are posted in each of our buildings.

Due to Sequoia's Treehouse requiring the lunch meal is brought from home, we will:

- (a) Notify parents or guardians in writing of the USDA CACFP requirements for the lunch meal brought in for your child/ren and
- (b) If necessary, supplement your child/ren's meal that does not comply with USDA CACFP requirements.

If Sequoia's Treehouse provides or supplements a lunch meal for a child, the child's parent, or guardian will be notified that an additional \$5 will be added to their next month's invoice for each meal or supplemented meal provided by the school.

State licensing authorities also require that all lunches brought from home must meet applicable nutritional guidelines. Sequoia's Treehouse may notify you if your child's lunches do not meet these guidelines.

B. Allergies or Special Dietary Requirements

Please let the staff know if your child has allergies or special dietary requirements. These needs will be met at each snack time in a respectful manner. These should also be noted on your child's information card.

Some of our children have special dietary requirements due to severe allergies and individual family beliefs. For this reason and for the safety of all our children, **we DO NOT ALLOW any sharing of food, candy, or drinks.** Any food, candy, or drinks to be shared with a whole classroom must be approved by the Director.

C. Peanut and Candy free Environment

Sequoia's Treehouse is Peanut-free. Due to some children's very serious, potentially life-threatening allergies to peanuts, Sequoia's Treehouse requests that snacks and lunches provided by parents/guardians also be peanut free and that children wash their hands if eating peanuts at home just before coming to Sequoia's Treehouse. We appreciate your support in helping us provide a safe environment for all the children. If you provide your child with a substitute to peanut butter in their lunch, please label the package so staff know your child can eat their food item.

Sequoia's Treehouse is a candy free environment for many reasons, these include: suppression of the immune system, sugar and behavior with the spike in blood sugar and the eventual sugar crash, the addictive cycle of sugar which takes the place of consuming healthy foods, sugar and obesity later in life, etc. Please read the following article for reference <https://kabritausa.com/blogs/nourish-blog/how-sugar-affects-children>

Please do not bring candy to the Treehouse for snacks, in lunches, or for any family holidays or birthdays. Please remove candy items from pre-made food packages like Lunchables.

Birthdays If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at the center, you have some options. You are welcome to come and prepare a nutritious snack to be shared with her/his group at snack time or bring store bought treats, individually wrapped with list of ingredients on the label. Washington State licensing (WAC 170-295-3180-1b) requires goodies served in our childcare to be prepared in licensed kitchens. If you would like to bake perhaps you could bake here at the center. We avoid serving sugary foods as a rule. If you are looking for creative alternatives to sugar, see our staff for some ideas.

D. Health Policy

If a child becomes ill, Sequoia's Treehouse staff will determine whether the child should be sent home or separated from others. We will supervise the child to reasonably prevent contact between the ill child and healthy children.

Staff will separate a child if:

- The illness or condition requires more care and attention than staff can give.
- The required amount of care for the ill child compromises or places at risk the health and safety of other children in our care.
- There is a risk that the child's illness or condition will spread to other children or individuals.

An ill child will be sent home or isolated from children in care if they have:

- A fever of one-hundred- and one-degrees Fahrenheit and there is a behavior change or other signs and symptoms of illness (including sore throat, earache, headache, rash, vomiting, diarrhea)
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous twenty-four hours
- Diarrhea where stool frequency exceeds two stools above normal per twenty-four hours for that child or whose stool contains more than a drop of blood or mucus.
- A rash not associated with heat or an allergic reaction.
- Open sores or wounds discharging bodily fluids that cannot be adequately covered with a waterproof dressing or mouth sores with drooling
- Lice, ringworm, or scabies. Individuals with head lice, ringworm, or scabies will be excluded from the premises beginning from the end of the day the head lice or scabies was discovered. Sequoia's Farm and Forest School may allow an individual with head lice or scabies to return to the premises after receiving the first treatment, but this must be discussed with the Lead Teacher or Director.
- Appears severely ill, which may include lethargy, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a significant change in behavior or activity level indicative of illness.

If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact designated people on the Emergency Card. It is important for sick children to be picked up promptly. If a Teacher or Director calls a parent to report that their child is sick, it is critical that all efforts are made to come to the school to pick up the child as soon as possible. Please know that before we make that call, we have done everything in our power to make the child comfortable and meet the child's needs. When we make the decision to call the parent, we do so knowing that we are asking the parent to leave their work or other responsibilities. While we understand the difficulties this causes, it is our job to keep all our children safe and healthy, including the child who is not feeling well.

If it is going to be more than one hour before you can arrive to pick up your child, we ask that you make arrangements for another person on your authorized pick up list to come for the child.

A child must be symptom-free, without a fever for 24 hours and well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play, before returning to school. While we respect the constraints and expectations of our families' workplaces, it is our job to protect the children in our care and to create the healthiest environment as possible for the children and Teachers.

We ask that parents use good judgment and common sense when considering bringing their child back to school after an illness. For example, if a child is sent home in the afternoon due to illness, it is best for the child to stay at home the entire next day and return in the morning of the following day. In addition, if a child is sick with a contagious illness, it is best practice for parents to also keep siblings at home to try to limit further exposure. We work very hard to keep the school germ free by washing our hands a lot, disinfecting toys, and teaching the children healthy practices such as coughing into their elbow and wiping noses with a tissue. We ask our families to support our efforts by always washing hands upon arrival, informing us about illnesses, and maintaining healthy practices in their homes.

Parents are asked to notify the school if a child is going to be absent from school, particularly if this is due to a contagious illness such as pink eye or chicken pox, etc. In these cases, parents of the child's classmates will be notified that there is an illness in the room, but your child's privacy will be respected and names will not be used.

E. Lice Policy

If a child is found to have head lice while attending Sequoia's Treehouse, the child's parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child immediately. Because lice are considered contagious we must look after the best interests of all children attending our program.

In the event a child is found to have lice or nits, all children will have their hair checked for nits by a staff member. Children found to have nits will be sent home with instructions for removal. Children will not be allowed to return to Sequoia's Treehouse until they are nit-free. Staff will be checked also. When lice are found, care-site dramatic-play clothes will be bagged up for a period of time exceeding the incubation period for lice. It is important that we have your cooperation in this matter.

F. Medications

When children attending Sequoia's Treehouse require prescription medications, written instructions from a physician and signature of parent or guardian must be

on file. Sequoia's Treehouse is not allowed to administer over-the-counter medications without a physician's written order.

No medications can ever be left at the school in a diaper bag or cubby at any time. Only non-prescription diaper cream may be left at the school providing that it is not expired and in its original container, with a medication form and handed to your child's teacher to be stored in a locked medication box.

An "Instructions for Medication" form must be completed for each medication given. All medications must be stored in their original containers, and will be kept in a specific sealed container with the first aid supplies. Medications will not be administered if the expiration date has passed. The medication must be clearly marked with the following: (1) child's name; (2) physician's name and number; (3) name and strength of medication; and (4) directions, time and method of administration.

Staff members will sign a medication form and log it in the first aid book after administering the medication. Although Sequoia's Treehouse staff periodically check the expiration dates on all medicines, it is the parent's responsibility throughout the school year to make sure medicines kept at Sequoia's Treehouse are current.

The school applies sunscreen once a day in the summer months. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen in the morning before arriving to school.

G. Dental Hygiene Practices and Procedures

Early Childhood Caries (ECC) is a term used to describe tooth decay, including filled or extracted teeth due to decay, in the primary teeth (baby teeth). Other names for this disease are Baby Bottle Tooth Decay (BBTD), nursing mouth, and bottle rot. Severe ECC is characterized by a distinctive pattern of tooth decay in infants and young children, often beginning on the upper front teeth and rapidly progressing to the other primary teeth as they erupt.

Dental hygiene will be conducted using the **Tooth Brushing Procedure** below:

- Children will have the opportunity after lunch, before rest time.
- Parents will have a form with the option to opt in or opt out of the dental hygiene program.
- Each child will have their own toothbrush, marked with their name. No sharing or borrowing of toothbrushes will be allowed.
- Following use, toothbrushes will be air dried and stored so they cannot contact each other.

- Toothbrushes will be protected from dirt and cross contamination (that is, protected from touching each other).
- A storage unit that holds multiple toothbrushes is used, this container will allow the brushes to air dry, and not be in contact with other brushes, and be protected from dirt.
- Storage containers will be cleaned once a week with mild soap and hot water. Toothbrushes will remain separated and not allowed to contact one another during this cleaning.
- Toothbrushes will never be decontaminated. We will not use bleach or disinfectants on toothbrushes. If a toothbrush becomes contaminated through contact with another brush or use by another child, it will be thrown away and replaced with a new one.
- Toothbrushes will be replaced when the bristles are flattened or splayed. Depending on the wear, brushes will be replaced about every three to five months.

VII. Discipline

A. Approach to Discipline – Conscious Discipline

The behavior management program in our classrooms is grounded in the philosophies and principles outlined in Conscious Discipline **by Dr. Becky Bailey**.

Conscious Discipline is an emotional intelligence program that teaches children to react or respond, rather than react during life events. Everyday life events are used as teachable moments and guide children to develop self-control, utilize tools for conflict resolution, boost self-esteem, and foster positive relationships and social skills. It is also based on current brain research, child development information and best educational practices.

Conscious Discipline is a classroom management program that practically links social-emotional learning and classroom management through guiding principles. It is developed upon a community model of discipline rather than competitive as indicated in the table below:

| <u>Models of Discipline</u> | |
|---|--|
| Competitive Model | Community Model |
| It is possible to control others through environmental manipulation | Controlling and changing ourselves is possible and has a profound impact on others |

| | |
|---|--|
| Rules govern behavior and are upheld through consequences | Connectedness governs behavior |
| Conflict is disruption to the learning process | Conflict is an opportunity to teach |
| Belief: We can make others change | Belief: We must first change ourselves and model our expectations for others |

Conscious Discipline promotes a positive relationship-based community in the classroom. As we develop our "school family", students will learn about safety (physical and emotional safety), and trust and problem solving. In our classrooms students will learn through:

- The 7 Basic Skills of Conscious Discipline
- Cultivating higher-order thinking skills through "Brain Smart" activities
- Class Meetings
- Creating a "School Family"

The 7 Basic Skills of Conscious Discipline:

The focus on the following basic skills of discipline apply to us all:

Composure-willingness to change your internal state from upset to calm and bring you mind to where your body is.

Encouragement-develop a school family and understand that "we are all in this together."

Assertiveness-learn how to say "I don't like that" and having thoughts heard and respected.

Choices-understand that the only person you can "make change is yourself and, in turn, build self-esteem and willpower.

Positive Intent-begin to look for the best in others turning conflict into cooperation.

Empathy-gain an understanding of the moment and validating the emotions of self and others

Consequences-learn that everyone makes mistakes and that they are viewed as opportunities to learn.

Consequences of Children's Inappropriate Behavior. We strive to have our consequences for inappropriate behaviors respect the child's spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. We honor normal developmental behaviors and address behaviors beyond the scope of what is appropriate for the child's developmental stage.

We occasionally use a *short* "breather" to help children calm down, also known as 'taking a break', but we do not use timeout as a regular teaching tool because it only halts undesired behavior. It does not teach the desired behavior or teach coping skills in dealing with others.

Through clear, consistent teacher responses we address a child's pattern of inappropriate behavior to name and bring to awareness the inappropriate behavior. Redirection and/or choices are offered to the child. Redirection is offered less often, as again, it teaches avoidance and does not teach skills to deal with situations.

If this proves ineffective staff meet and discuss the child's difficulties and plan a program to assist the child. The difficulties and program are then discussed with the child's family and then the program implemented.

If a child is unable to regain self-control and requires more individual attention than can be given within child to staff ratios, we will contact a parent. In emergency situations, staff may use limited physical restraint (holding a child as gently as possible to accomplish restraint and limited to the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation,) when:

- Protecting self and others from physical injury
- Obtaining possession of a weapon or other dangerous object
- Protecting property from damage

Staff will document any incident involving the use of physical restraint and inform parents in writing.

Parents will be notified immediately if a child is in danger of hurting himself or herself, others, or the environment. Sequoia's Treehouse complies with State licensing requirements, which state that "under no circumstances will corporal punishment, ridicule, or name calling be used as forms of discipline."

Staff work with parents to establish open communication and to problem-solve about children's behavior. In some cases, this may include referral outside the center (i.e. counseling). Follow-up at home may be necessary to help children

change their behaviors. The Director and the Owner are available for Parent conferences.

B. Serious Disciplinary Problem/Expulsion Policy

A serious disciplinary problem is defined as one in which the Director or owner determine that a child is engaging in inappropriate behavior that includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Inflicting physical or emotional harm on self or others
- Destroying property
- Running away from the center
- Disrupting Sequoia's Treehouse
- Failing to adequately respond to regular discipline
- If the child exhibits behavior that presents a serious safety concern for that child or others.
- The program is unable to reduce or eliminate the safety concern through reasonable modifications.

When Sequoia's Treehouse staff feel that a child is exhibiting these dangers/safety concerns, staff will start documenting these behaviors.

Communication with parents, and copies of incidents will be handed to parents physically so they can review the behavior. Steps will be made (based off staff and parent/guardian conversation) to see if behaviors and or safety concerns can be eliminated.

If Sequoia's Treehouse have made the decision to expel, staff will review the expulsion policy with the child's parents. During this time, staff will provide parents with a copy of the policy and provide documentation including: the date, time, staff involved and details of each incident that has led to this decision.

Staff will provide the family information about community-based resources or activities that may benefit or help the child. Once the decision has been made to expel, Sequoia's Treehouse will notify DCYF with the following information: child demographics, reason for expulsion and the resources that were provided to the parent or guardian.

VIII. Family Involvement

A. Visiting Sequoia's Treehouse

Parents are encouraged to visit Sequoia's Treehouse and are welcome to participate in any of Sequoia Treehouse's daily routine or activities. Your support is necessary to ensure that Sequoia's Treehouse continues.

B. Feedback and Suggestions

Sequoia's Treehouse welcomes suggestions for improvement, as we are constantly striving to improve our program. Please direct any suggestions you might have to the Director or owner. *Compliments are always welcomed.*

C. Problem Resolution (Resolving Family Concerns)

Should a situation arise that involves the Sequoia's Treehouse Preschool or staff, please follow the following guidelines to have your concerns addressed:

1. Bring your issues to the attention of the Director. Every effort will be made to address the issues and reach a solution.
2. If you feel your issues are still not resolved, please bring your issues to the attention of Sequoia's Treehouse owner, Sequoia Hartman. Every effort will be made to address the issues and reach a solution.
3. If you wish to make a formal complaint, provide a short-written explanation of the issue to the owner, Sequoia Hartman, and a meeting will be scheduled to address the issues.

D. Communication

Staff use a Transition Notebook for each classroom daily to document individual children's health needs, allergies and medication; any changes to a child's daily schedule; any significant educational or development information; any communication from the family; and information to be shared with the family. This transition notebook is used to ensure all vital information for an individual child is communicated between Teachers during transitions, staff breaks, or substitutions.

Parents of children in the infant class will receive an individualized daily report. In addition, Teachers in all the rooms are constantly working on Floorbooks for the classroom. The Teachers will include artwork and photographs in the Floorbooks. The Teachers will frequently complete "Today We" boards that will be posted inside the classrooms. We create a monthly Newsletter with happenings in the classrooms and at the center. The owner will send out information emails periodically as well for new updates.

When talking with the Teachers, it is important that communication remain positive and mutually respectful. If an issue arises that needs to be negotiated, we ask that this be done outside of the children's presence. We are happy to discuss any aspect of your child's development, school policies, or goings-on in the school. However, we respect our children's rights to privacy and take confidentiality very seriously. We will not discuss another child with someone who is not a parent or family member.

***It is important to remember that while communication is important, it is the Teachers' primary responsibility to supervise the children at all times. If you are requiring more than a quick check-in with your child's teacher, please schedule a time to see them one-on-one. Parent-teacher**

conferences will be scheduled during naptime or planning time Monday-Friday.

E. Family Engagement Opportunities

Every fall and spring Sequoia's Treehouse provide opportunities for families to engage with the school, the staff, and with each other. The Harvest Festival occurs each fall and the Spring Fling occurs each spring. These events have extended hours into the evening so parents may attend after work. Provided at each event are dinner, craft activities, a chance to visit with Teachers, and the opportunity to engage with other parents attending Sequoia's Treehouse.

IX. Risk Awareness and Management

A. Animals

Encountering Wildlife: Children may encounter wildlife. Children are encouraged to remain calm when wildlife is spotted. Staff will act quickly to ensure the safety of the children. If the scene is safe, staff will encourage children to stay still, quiet, and observe. If the scene is unsafe and children need to be moved, staff will do so calmly and swiftly. Staff will always be situated between the children and animals when encountering wildlife.

B. Strangers or Maintenance Workers

Staff may need to address strangers/workers to see if they need assistance to find who/what they need. Staff need to make sure that children are accounted for and that they steer clear of anyone that is not a part of the school program.

C. Campfire Activities

Children who are school age only (5-12 years old) will take part in campfire activities in the wetlands. Staff are required to be trained on how to start, maintain, and put out a fire before one is made. Staff must follow rules and regulations in accordance with Olympia Fire Safety Laws. Staff must also be aware that there is a 3ft boundary around the fire pit when it is lit and there is a 1:1 ratio for anyone who is within the 3ft boundary. Staff must also have the proper materials to put out a fire at the pit before it is lit. Staff members must not leave the firepit once there is a fire lit and until the coals are out. Staff members must use judgement if a child is not ready to be close to the fire.

D. Emergency Weather Where Shelter is Required

Staff will be proactive to look at the daily forecast and to discuss with other staff members the possibility for hazardous weather. Staff will be aware of where to go when hazardous weather begins and how long to stay there. **At the Center there are several buildings that can be utilized during hazardous weather.** Once

hazardous weather seems to disappear, staff members and children will stay inside for an additional 15 minutes to ensure it is safe to return outdoors.

E. Children's Clothing

Staff must ensure that all children are dressed properly for the weather and situation. Please be helpful to the staff by making sure that your child has required clothes listed in the Required Clothing Policy. Staff must not neglect the needs children may have when it comes to layers and assistance getting dressed. Staff members will not let children stay in soaking wet clothes for extended periods of time. If a child does not have proper clothes, staff will borrow from the school bin and communicate with parents the possible options for obtaining the proper attire.

F. Climbing Natural Features

Children are encouraged to climb as it builds strength, confidence, and it releases energy. Staff will be aware of branches and features that are marked for safety. **Safety flags or a ring of spray paint will visibly mark which branches are okay to climb on. Children will not be placed in trees by staff. Children must be able to climb into a marked tree on their own in order to be in it. Children will be instructed to climb high enough where a staff member can be within arms-reach of their torso.** Staff will inspect and continuously monitor climbing features to ensure they are not damaged or have any hazards. Staff will communicate with children which tree or branch is okay to climb on and which is not.

G. Foraging

Children are encouraged to forage for materials and gather materials for natural crafts and exploration, **but they are not gathered for consumption.** Staff will be aware what children are picking up and promote safety and environmental consciousness. If a staff member is unsure if the items are safe or may disturb the environment, staff must encourage children to leave it as is.

H. Poisonous Items

Staff must be aware of potential poisonous hazards. If there is a poisonous encounter, staff must call the poison control center, the parent/guardian, and the School Director. Staff must use first aid as needed.

I. Use of Tools

Children will use tools from time to time to create wood working projects or other items. Staff must create a safe environment, clear of distractions, and have direct supervision when a child is using a tool. Tools must be age appropriate. Young children may use a screwdriver but not a saw. Staff will adjust the tools to the children's age and ability.

J. Missing Children Protocol

In the case of a missing child, staff must follow these steps:

- Gather children and perform role call by using the daily attendance
- Secure one staff member to supervise any remaining children
- Have any other staff and adults start to look for the missing child at the most hazardous places on the Farm where the child could be
- Call 911
- Call the Director and Parents

The staff member supervising any remaining children will do so by using transition games to keep children engaged and calm.

K. Toileting

Children should be able to use any toilet facility on their own. Staff members will place themselves in a position where the bathroom can be supervised. Staff members will be aware who leaves to use the restroom and when the child has rejoined the group.

L. Hand Washing

Children are to use the hand washing stations before and after meals, after using the restroom, after outdoor activities, and after any animal encounters. Children may need assistance with the foot pump in the wetlands to activate the sink.

Temporarily Suspended (policies apply):

School-Age Before/After School Care (Program Specific Info)

Our School-age Before/After School Program follows the same philosophy, guidelines, requirements, snack preparation, goals, and discipline as our Full Day Program. The following information is more Program specific for the Before/After School Program. There is one AM and PM snack served daily, this includes Day Camp and Summer Camp.

Sample Daily Routine for the Before/After School Program

Before School (a.m.)

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 7:00 - 7:30 | Open, individual choices |
| 8:00 - 8:15 | Snack and clean up |
| 8:15 - 8:25 | Drop-off to School |

After School (p.m.)

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 2:55 | Pick-up from school |
| 3:15 - 3:30 | Sign-in/Afternoon meeting/Snack |
| 3:30 - 4:15 | Homework/Quiet activities |
| 4:15 - 5:15 | Enrichment activities/Group game |
| 5:15 - 6:00 | Free play/Clean up |
| 6:00 | Close |

Sample Full Day and Summer Day Camp Schedule

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 7:00 - 7:30 | Open/Free play |
| 7:30 - 8:30 | Enrichment activities |
| 8:30 - 9:00 | Snack and clean up |
| 9:00 - 10:30 | Morning meeting/Enrichment/Small group activity |
| 10:30 - 11:00 | Ready for field trip |
| 11:00 - 4:00 | Field Trip |
| 4:00 - 4:30 | Snack |
| 4:30 - 6:00 | Group Game/Inside quiet activities |
| 6:00 | Close |

Day Camp and Summer Camp Field Trip Days

During summer and day camps, Sequoia's Treehouse often schedules exciting field trips, swimming opportunities, and other large group activities. Children should arrive **no later than 10:00 a.m.** Children should be prepared to ride on buses or public transportation, or walk to nearby activities. *Field trips are subject to change.* For Day Camp during the school year, Day Camp ends at 6:00pm, Summer Camp ends at 4:00pm with the option for extended care from 4:00pm-6:00pm.

Transitions: Inside and Outside

While a child is checked in to Sequoia's Treehouse, transitions from outside to inside and from location to location are supervised by a staff member always.

Transitions: Field Trips

On field trip days, Sequoia's Treehouse staff take attendance in the morning by calling everyone by name (additionally asking if anybody had not been called to ensure correct attendance), counting all children, and matching both counts. Staff will have a copy of the original attendance list of each child in the group and will be doing various head counts and checks before, during, and after each field trip.

Absences and Schedule Changes

If your child is absent, no tuition credits or makeup days will be given; tuition remains the same whether your child attends. It is the parent's responsibility to promptly notify Sequoia's Treehouse if a child will be absent from a scheduled program. Follow-up fees may apply in the case of un-notified absences from the

after-school program. Sequoia's Treehouse charges a \$1 per phone call fee for each call made to follow up when a child does not show up as scheduled. Voicemail is available to record your absence message 24 hours a day at (360) 742-3651; alternatively, you may notify us via email at info@sequoiastreehouse.com

Please also keep your child's staff member informed of your child's schedule and any changes, as this is not Sequoia's Treehouse responsibility.

Sign-in Before School

Sequoia's Treehouse before-school program opens at 7:00 a.m. and children may not arrive earlier. Children must be signed in by a parent or another authorized adult. Licensing and safety requires a full signature on the sign-in sheet. Children may not legally sign themselves into the program. No calls to parents are made if children do not attend a scheduled before-school program.

After School Procedures

During the school year, a Sequoia's Treehouse staff member signs in children when children are picked up or come in off the bus. A \$1 fee will be charged for each after-school phone call made if Sequoia's Treehouse was not advised that a child would be absent. Sequoia's Treehouse has the right to discontinue care to parents who repeatedly fail to give notice of their child's afternoon absences.

All children picked up from Sequoia's Treehouse must be signed out by a parent or other authorized adult at least 18 years of age. To be authorized, an adult must be (1) listed as such on the child's information card or (2) have been given written permission by the parent to pick up the child. If necessary, a parent may call Sequoia's Treehouse and give verbal authorization. All adults are required to use their full signatures on the iPad or sign-out sheets.

Early Release and Day Camp Programs

During the school year, Sequoia's Treehouse provides coverage during early release days to participants in the after-school program. Early release hours are covered in your monthly fees. Sequoia's Treehouse also schedules day camps for teacher in-service days, as well as vacations (winter, mid-winter, and spring). Day camp sign-ups are posted well in advance of each vacation program. Fees for day camp are calculated separately from the regular monthly fees and will be recorded in your statement. Sequoia's Treehouse reserves the right to limit enrollment during day camp days due to licensing regulations or staffing concerns. Fees will be based on sign-up, regardless of actual attendance.

Permanent Enrollment Changes

Requests for schedule changes cannot be guaranteed, but every effort will be made to accommodate children on a space available basis.

- To make a permanent schedule change during the school year, you must provide **30-day prior written notice**. During the 30-day notification period, previously contracted fees will be charged.
- During the summer program, **a 30-day prior written notice** is also required to receive credit for a planned absence or change in enrollment. During the 30-day notification period, previously contracted fees will be charged.

School Year Before/After School Program Fees (Monthly)

You can find our School-age monthly fees on our website at <http://sequoiastreehouse.com/school-beforeafter-care/>. The monthly fee is computed based on the average of all days of the before/after school program (10 months). No proration is given, regardless of the days scheduled in each month or your children's actual attendance. **There is no additional charge for early-release or half-days.** Fees are billed shortly after the first of every month and are due upon receipt of the statement (bills are emailed). Late fees are assessed for payments received after the 15th of the month.

Day Camp (Daily)

Day Camp fees can be found on our website at <http://sequoiastreehouse.com/school-beforeafter-care/>. These days include winter, spring, and teacher in-service days. These fees are in addition to regular monthly fees and do not include additional field trip charges, if applicable.

Summer Camp (Weekly)

Fees are calculated by the month and are due the 1st of each month (June, July, August). Bills are emailed. Fees for summer camps are set in the spring. As a reference point, 2019 Summer Camp fees were \$220 per week.

Drop-in Fees for Children Not Regularly Attending Sequoia's Treehouse

If space is available, at the discretion of the Director, children may attend Sequoia's Treehouse at our drop-in rates. You can find these rates on our website at <http://sequoiastreehouse.com/school-beforeafter-care/>

Before/After-School Program

During the school year, before-school morning activities focus on easing the child into the school day. Quiet free-choice activities, free play or outside time will be available.

In the after-school program, children take part in a play-based, outdoor focused afternoon including meeting, snack, enrichment time, outdoor time, and free time.

Enrichment time may include group games, cooking, music, environmental education, arts & crafts, gardening, and drama. Occasionally, a small fee may be assessed. Children are not required to take part in any activity, but they are

encouraged to do so. Activities are led by our regular staff and specialized instructors. Enrichment areas reflect the interests of the children. A staff to child ratio of 1:10 is our goal. This allows staff to focus individually on each child's needs.

Day Camps and Summer Day Camp

Sequoia's Treehouse offers a broad variety of activities and field trips, including swimming, sports, gardening, biking, arts and crafts, games, cooking, nature and science activities, drama, and music. Children should **arrive by 10:00 a.m.**, so they can fully participate in field trips and planned activities and be **picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. for Day Camp and 4:00pm for Summer Camp.**

Activities are led by regular staff and specialized instructors. Although we do our best to follow the field-trip schedule, last-minute changes are sometimes necessary. Where possible, we will email parents regarding field-trip changes.

What to Wear and Bring

During the regular school year, Sequoia's Treehouse encourages parents to send only materials required for school with their children. Your child will enjoy the program best if they are dressed for the weather. Appropriate clothing may include rain gear, shorts or long pants, tennis shoes, and a jacket.

For summer and day camps, your child should bring:

- Nutritious, nut-free sack lunch that does not require refrigeration or heating—please mark your child's name and send only disposable containers on field trip days
- Good walking shoes
- Water bottle
- Backpack
- Sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat
- Swimsuit and towel (summer only, unless scheduled for day camp)
- Helmet, if your child will be riding a bicycle or scooter.

Labeling and the Lost and Found

Please label everything that can be marked. Sequoia's Treehouse cannot be held responsible for lost items. At the end of each day all unclaimed articles will be placed in a lost and found box. At the end of each month, unclaimed articles are donated to charity.

Parents may find a copy of the following located at the front sign-in/out counter in designated spiral folders:

- I. Health Policy
-

- II. Staff Policies
- III. Consistent Care Policy
- IV. Liability Insurance
- V. Inspection reports and notices of enforcement actions
- VI. Animal Policy

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Sequoia's Treehouse *Parent Handbook*

Child's Name

I/We have received a copy of Sequoia's Treehouse Parent Handbook and had the opportunity to read all policies. I/we agree to follow and abide by Sequoia's Treehouse Parent Handbook's policies.

Parent Signature
Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature
Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Director Date: _____

If there is anything Sequoia's Treehouse needs to know that would help us care for your child, including any special needs, please explain:

Parent Signature(s) Date: _____