



### **Brookline Sprouts at Tree of Life Open Bible Church**

1036 Brookline Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15226

#### **Mandi Rhoades - Director**

[Director@BrooklineSprouts.com](mailto:Director@BrooklineSprouts.com)

Office: 412-531-0590 x 105

#### **Amanda Wolfe - Assistant Director**

[Amanda.w@BrooklineSprouts.com](mailto:Amanda.w@BrooklineSprouts.com)

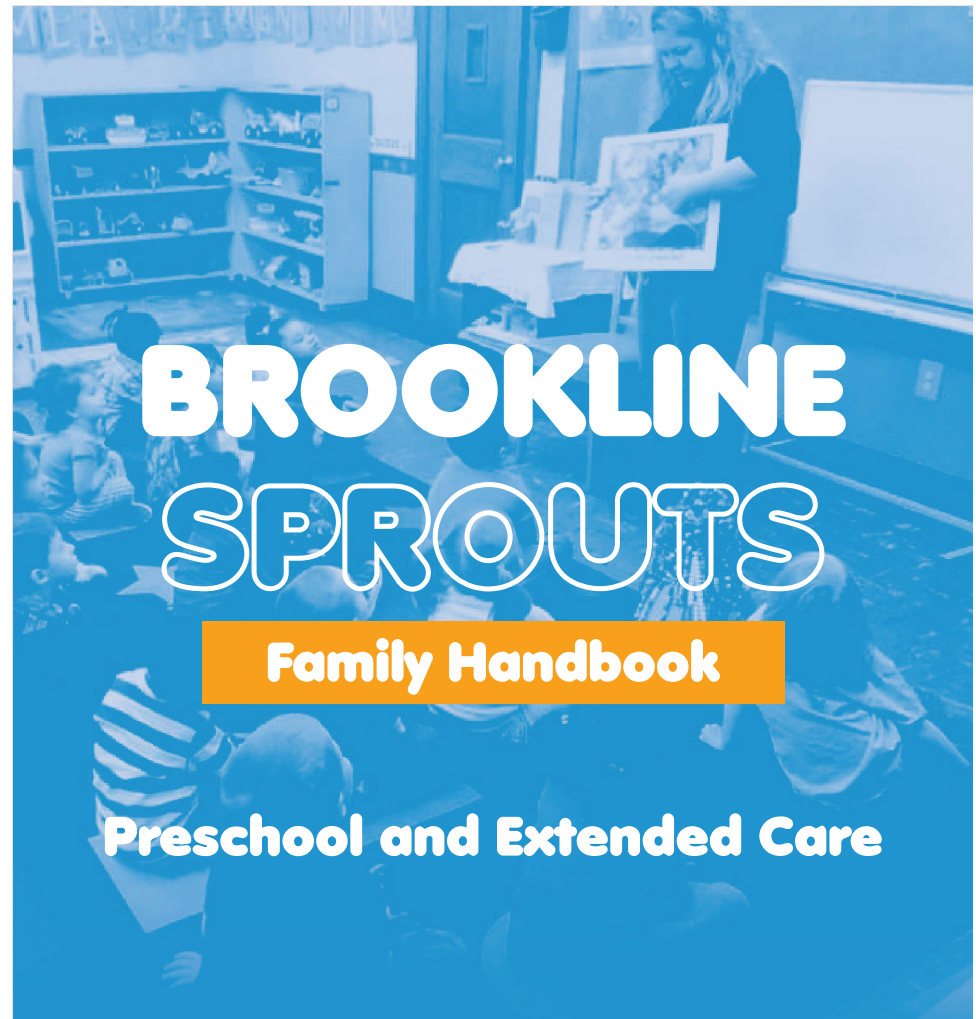
Office: 412-531-0590 x 106

#### **Lance Rhoades - Administrator**

[Lance@GodLovesBrookline.com](mailto:Lance@GodLovesBrookline.com)

Office: 412-531-0590 x 205

**Revised March 2024**



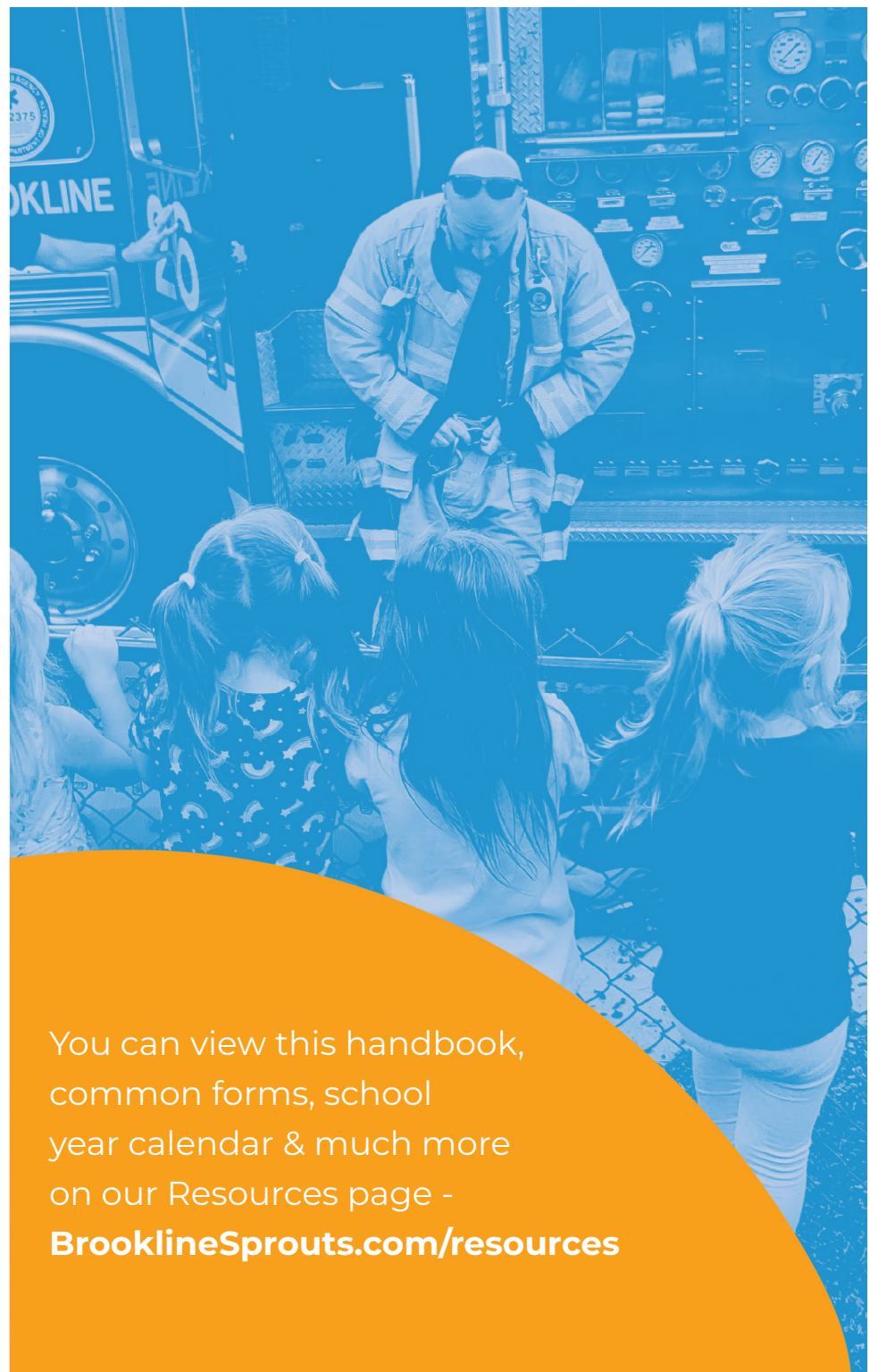
# **BROOKLINE SPROUTS**

## **Family Handbook**

### **Preschool and Extended Care**







You can view this handbook,  
common forms, school  
year calendar & much more  
on our Resources page -  
**[BrooklineSprouts.com/resources](https://BrooklineSprouts.com/resources)**

# USDA Food Programming Non-Discrimination Statement



In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

## 1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

## 2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

## 3. email:

[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

# Table of Contents

Bathroom & Accidents .....	Page 14
Behavior Management Policy .....	Page 28
Challenging Behaviors .....	Page 29
Developmental Screening and Early Learning Standards .....	Page 9
Dual Language Learners .....	Page 26
Emergency Procedures .....	Page 3
Health Policies .....	Page 20
Health Records & Vaccinations .....	Page 20
Illness .....	Page 21
Medications .....	Page 22
Allergy Prevention .....	Page 22
Communicable Diseases .....	Page 23
Inclusion .....	Page 24
Late Drop-Offs .....	Page 2
Meals .....	Page 18
Celebrations .....	Page 18
Sprouts Authoritative Feeding Policy .....	Page 19
Nondiscrimination in Services .....	Page 30
Outdoor/Indoor Policy for Gross Motor Play .....	Page 8
Parent - Teacher Communications .....	Page 5
Payments .....	Page 10
Personal Property & Items from Home .....	Page 13
Dress to Promote Indoor/Outdoor Gross Motor Play .....	Page 12
Clothing & Blanket Policy .....	Page 11
Pickup & Drop-Off Procedures .....	Page 1
Screen Time Policy .....	Page 6
Availability & Daily Practices .....	Page 6
Suspensions & Expulsions .....	Page 29
Weather - Related Closures .....	Page 5
USDA Food Programming Non-Discrimination Statement .....	Page 31

# Pick-up & Drop-Off Procedures

1. Brookline Sprouts Preschool is located in front of Tree of Life Open Bible Church on Brookline Blvd. Please do not attempt to enter the building through the playground in the back of the church or any other door because the doors are locked.
2. Please approach your designated door (Preschool Door or Ramp Door) and ring the doorbell. A staff member will let you in via buzzer or in person. You will be informed upon enrollment which door to use according to classroom assignments.
3. Once inside, please use the check-in tablet to sign your child into Brightwheel. PINS should never be shared among pick-up/drop-off adults. If you need help with additional PINS, please get in touch with the Director. Then, please help your child with their coat and other belongings. After that, walk your child into the classroom area.
4. Parking is available in front of the church or behind the church on Chelton Avenue. As a safety reminder, please do not leave your car running or any other child unattended in the vehicle as you drop off/pick up. The same procedures apply at pick up; ring the doorbell to be let in, sign out in the binder or on the tablet, and then help your child with their coat and belongings to leave.



**Subject: Nondiscrimination in Services**

**To: Parents**

**From: Amanda Rhoades**

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

Program services shall be accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods. These methods include but are not limited to equipment redesign, providing aides, and using alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any individual/client/patient/ student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with the following:

## **Tree of Life Open Bible Church Brookline Sprouts**

1036 Brookline Blvd Pittsburgh, PA 15226

## **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services**

### **% Bureau of Equal Opportunity**

Room 225, Health & Welfare Building

P.O. Box 2675 Harrisburg, PA 17110 PA

## **Human Relation Commission Pittsburgh Regional Office:**

301 Fifth Avenue, Suite 390,

Piatt Place Pittsburgh, PA 15222 U.S.

## **Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights:**

Suite 372, Public Ledger Building

150 South Independence Mall West

Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111



## Suspension & Expulsion

Brookline Sprouts considers suspension or expulsion only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances. This is when there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by incorporating reasonable modifications. Brookline Sprouts will collaborate with local agencies and specialists in determining these appropriate modifications whenever possible. If behavior(s) posing a safety concern to the child, staff, and/or other children are repeated, the child may be suspended for several days. If there are repeated instances, the child may be suspended indefinitely until an alternate plan is made in writing with the help of professionals, procured by the family, and accepted by Brookline Sprouts. Even in such extraordinary cases, the center will assist the child and family in accessing services and an alternative placement through, for example, community-based childcare resources and referral agencies.

If a family, staff, or director has a child with unique needs/challenging behavior, contact the CONNECT helpline for **Referral: 1-800-692-7288**.

### Specific to a child with an IFSP/IEP, the EI Program shall ensure the following procedures:

- i. A request from an ECE program for the child's Early Intervention Program for assistance in preventing suspension/expulsion shall result in the Early Intervention Program responding to the ECE program via phone or email within 48 hours. And holding an IFSP or IEP team meeting within 10 Early Intervention program calendar days from the Date of the request for assistance from the ECE program.
- ii. If the behavior was not previously identified as a special consideration on the IFSP or IEP before this request for assistance, Early Intervention must include the information in the IFSP/IEP at this time.
- iii. The parent's procedural safeguards are followed concerning the placement changes.

If a child has not been previously enrolled in Early Intervention is at risk of suspension/expulsion, the program must work with the child's family to schedule an Early Intervention evaluation.

If the child is found not eligible for Early Intervention, the Early Intervention evaluator and the ECE Program should assist the family in accessing other services and/or providing some strategy suggestions.

## Late Drop Offs

We appreciate families considering our Daily Schedule when dropping off their children. If your child will be absent or late, we request that you send us a Brightwheel message at least 30 minutes before their scheduled drop-off time. This is extremely important for staffing purposes. An accurate meal count, illness tracking, and most importantly, the safety of your child/children. If you do not give us this vital information, we may not have lunch available and may not be able to accommodate the staffing needs to add an additional child to the center, etc.

Because of these things, families must drop their children off by 10:00 am to attend for that day. Special arrangements can be made for scheduled appointments, etc., with proper notification. The preferred method of communication for this is Brightwheel because this alerts both Classroom Staff and Administration at once, and teachers can view it at their earliest convenience if they are busy with classroom activities.

Furthermore, there are times during the day when interruptions, including escorting a child into their classroom, make it difficult for both staff and children to remain focused. Circle Time/Morning Meeting is essential for developing social interactions and positive relationships among young children through engaging and fun activities. This point of the day benefits their development and education here. It makes it very difficult for teachers to complete Circle Time Activities when there are interruptions of any kind, especially if children are arriving. The students need more focus, and staff must orient and re-orient all children before they can continue. If you come with your preschooler between these times, you will be asked to stay with them in the check-in area until it has ended or leave and return.

## Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency that requires us to exit the building and evacuate, staff follows the below procedure:

1. In a calm manner, staff will gather the children and follow the posted evacuation route to the designated emergency location, Cannon Memorial at Brookline Veteran's Memorial Park, Corner of Brookline Blvd and Queensboro Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15226
2. The person in charge must carry the following items:
  - a. Emergency Contact Book
  - b. Portable Phone
  - c. Complete First Aid Kit
  - d. Child Medications
3. The person in charge must contact Pastor Lance Rhoades and proceed to the emergency evacuation location to be with the group.
4. Once arriving at the designated emergency location, staff will call the children's families to inform them of the emergency and allow them to come to pick up their child(ren) as soon as it is safe.
5. Staff will **not** release a child to anyone who does not show proper identification.
6. The person in charge will stay with the children until the last child is picked up from the emergency shelter.

If we would need to shelter in place or have a lockdown at the center, staff follow the below procedure:

1. Staff will first assess if the safest area is locking themselves in the children's classrooms. Only the designated person in charge will answer the door or approach windows.
2. If the person in charge determines that the children should be moved, staff will:
  - a. In a calm manner, gather the children and take them downstairs to the Social Hall.

### *The following behaviors are considered inappropriate:*

- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom.
- Verbal and/or physical aggression.
- Prolonged tantrums (considering age and/or IEP/IFSP).
- Verbal and/or physical aggression.
- Inappropriate use of language.
- A physical danger to oneself and/or others.
- Requiring constant one on one attention from staff.
- Threats or attempting intimidation.
- Attempting to leave the classroom, playground, or other designated areas without permission/escort by staff.
- Physical Restraint - Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline.

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs within the context of our program.

1. Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families An incident report will be written and will be available for viewing on Brightwheel.
2. After three incidents of the same behavior within a month, in-person parent-teacher conferences or phone calls will be held. This is both to discuss concerns, as well as to make plans about addressing the behavior(s) in the future.
3. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents us from being able to care for the other children appropriately.
4. If all attempts are exhausted, permission must be granted for Brookline Sprouts to seek support and advice from local specialists and/or agencies to assist with the behavior.
5. On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant finding a more suitable care setting.
  1. A child appears to be a danger to others or himself/herself.
  2. Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel
  3. Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.



## Responsive strategies:

When a child is having difficulty, staff will:

- Encourage children to use their words when disagreeing.
- Help facilitate their attempts to settle their own disputes.
- Redirect behavior.
- View the behavior deficit as a missing skill.
- Identify the underdeveloped executive skill to provide strategies for specific interventions.

These interventions will teach the student how to change the problem behavior and recognize how to regulate the emotions related to this deficit.

## Children may encounter consequences for their behaviors:

**Natural consequences** - (Natural consequences are outcomes that happen as a result of behavior that is not planned or controlled)

For example, if a student cuts in front of another student in line, the natural consequence may be that the other child won't play with the "cutter" during recess. A teacher does not plan or control this consequence, but they may discuss and help students predict natural results to encourage them to see the connection between their choices and what happens to them.

**Logical consequences** - (Logical consequences do not naturally occur due to behavior but are intentionally planned by teachers and administrators.)

Logical consequences are like what would happen to an adult in a similar situation. Therefore, teaching students skills they will need to succeed later in life. Logical consequences need to be related, respectful, and reasonable. Teachers at Brookline Sprouts will inform parents of behavior concerns.

## Challenging Behaviors

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain zero tolerance for bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report them to the Director of the Center.

**b.** The person in charge must carry the following items:

- i. Emergency Contact Book
- ii. Portable Phone
- iii. Complete First Aid Kit
- iv. Child Medications
- v. All will shelter against the interior wall of the Social Hall (by the Food Pantry storage).

**3.** Staff will contact each child's parent/guardian to inform them that the center is sheltering in place, and when it has ended.

In a medical emergency, staff will complete the following procedures:

1. Call 911.
2. Give the child(ren) first aid/CPR if needed.
3. Staff will contact the child(ren)'s parent/guardian.
4. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with the child until a designated guardian arrives.

The center will also notify parents immediately if their child:

1. Is injured, and the injury requires medical attention by a healthcare professional.
2. Has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the program.

Other Considerations:

1. The center does not currently enroll children under 3 years old. If they are enrolled, this plan will be amended to include special accommodations.
2. If parents or staff feel that a child will not be able to participate in an evacuation, lockdown, or shelter in place due to a disability or chronic medical condition, a plan for special accommodations will be made in partnership between the family and center upon enrollment (and the child's doctor, if necessary). This will be included in their file and with posted Emergency Plan instructions as long as the child is enrolled, and staff will be trained.

## Weather-Related Closers

If it is snowing or bitterly cold, please be sure to check if there are any delays or closures. You can visit: <https://www.wtae.com/weather/closings> or your local Channel 4 News Channel to check for closures. Also, there is no breakfast on 2-hour delay days. Refer to the calendar on our resource page for planned holiday closures.

## Parent-Teacher Communication

At Brookline Sprouts, we consider your child's enrollment the beginning of a partnership between you and us to best facilitate your child's growth and development.

We have scheduled parent-teacher conferences two or more times a year. Typically this takes place in the fall at the beginning of the school year, in the spring at the end of the school year, and a third at the end of a summer session, if applicable. This is in addition to a day-to-day environment that has open communication between parents/guardians and Sprouts staff. Additional parent-teacher conferences can also be arranged with the Director upon request.

Please utilize your child's mailbox and cubby. This is where we will send home projects your child completes as well as periodic newsletters to keep you up to date with what is happening at our school, and information about special events.

We utilize the classroom management software Brightwheel, which allows our center to communicate with families throughout the day, from if your child ate lunch to pictures and reminders. An invitation for this app will be sent to you via the email provided at enrollment. Brightwheel is used year-round.

We also have a Facebook page where you can see pictures and posts about what the children are doing, as well as our special events, such as our Winter Concert & Fire Truck visit.

## Dual Language Learners

We believe in embracing diversity and creating a climate that is strength-based. Brookline Sprouts strives to support dual language learners to help promote their academic achievement.

- Families are considered partners.
- Bilingualism is a strength that is to be fostered.
- Visual and learning materials that support and reflect the languages and cultures of the children in the program are provided if needed.
- Specialized Training for all staff if needed.

## Behavior Management Policy

As a part of our inclusive educational curriculum, Brookline Sprouts believes in Conscious Discipline's evidence-based, trauma-informed approach to supporting problem behaviors in the classroom.

We have created a behavior policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children.

## Behavior Management Procedures

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

## Each student at Brookline Sprouts has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place.
- Be treated with respect.
- Receive the help and support of caring adults.
- Preventative strategies.
- Positive nurturing and caring relationships.
- A safe and secure environment.
- Developmentally appropriate classroom rules.
- Be provided for through classroom routine and structure.
- Be given positive verbal encouragement.
- Model & encourage appropriate behavior.
- Promote cooperative learning.



Brookline Sprouts believes in meaningful participation. All children learn from each other, and Brookline Sprouts encourages and supports the development of genuine relationships and a sense of belonging. Brookline Sprouts provides adapted experiences and routines so that all children can participate in all activities. To ensure equal participation, teaching strategies are intentional to provide scaffolding learning, and models of instruction are tiered to meet the needs of all children.

Through relationships with local agencies and specialists and access to a comprehensive Social/Emotional Curriculum, Brookline Sprouts strives to establish a system of services and support for children with disabilities and their families. It is important to us that all our children and their families feel included in every aspect of their child's education and care.

If your child has an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan / IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan, it is essential to your child's development and for the continuity of services that you share with us. All information will be kept confidential. Please give a copy to the Director upon enrollment or establishment of the document. **We will NOT have access to your child's IEP unless you provide it to us.**



## Brookline Sprouts Screen Time Policy

"Screen time" is a term used for activities done in front of a screen, such as watching tv, working on a computer, or playing video games. Screen time is a passive activity, meaning you are being physically inactive while sitting down, very little energy is used during screen time.

Children's time on screens impacts their health in many ways. Too much screen time can keep children from being physically active and playing with peers. We are committed to limiting screen time in our program. We believe limiting screen time helps children be physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy. By limiting screen time, we help children get more physical activity, develop social skills, and learn school readiness skills through active play and hands-on learning.

### Availability & Daily Practices

We offer 0 - 20 minutes of screen time each week for children when it is not directly related to lessons and interactions to supplement learning.

There may be special "movie" days and other event-related times that screen time is used. This is rarely done and only with the approval of the Administration to prevent overuse.

All movies and shows will be G - Rated. Children will always be given other options and not forced to watch movies or other videos.

While videos and recorded songs may be used to enhance learning times, screen time will never be used as a substitute for staff instruction.

If screen time is used, teachers are talking to children about what they see and learn. Screen time is always supervised and always accompanied by live interaction, which may include pausing the video at times to ask questions and reflect on the content. ("Look at all the animals!" "Can we count how many kids have ice cream cones right now?").

Music videos of various types can be utilized for Music and Movement times to provide an option for guided dance. Following the movements of the video is never required, but general movement and physical interaction are greatly encouraged. (“Let me see your dance moves!” “Let’s get our wiggles out!”)

We utilize Cognitive Toybox, an evidence-based assessment tool, to evaluate the children throughout the year. This includes both student and teacher-led “mini-games” on a tablet that are less than 5 minutes per week.

Our rooms may include a tablet or desktop computers with interactive, educational activities as outlined by Headstart and ECERS requirements as a technology interest center.

When we use television shows or videos in our programs, they are always educational and commercial-free. Educational shows and videos are age appropriate and support the children’s learning goals.

When screen time is being used outside of interactive/lesson times, teachers always give children the option to participate in another activity, such as extended free play, instead of watching a program.

Screen time is never used as a reward or to manage challenging behavior unless outlined in a child’s IEP or IFSP.

## Inclusion

In accordance with the policy statement of the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education, Brookline Sprouts Preschool and Daycare policy promote inclusion while reducing suspension and expulsion.

At Brookline Sprouts Preschool and Daycare, we support the belief that every child and family, regardless of ability, has the right to participate in all activities. Brookline Sprouts Preschool and Daycare believe that giving children, with and without disabilities, opportunities and experiences will create a sense of belonging, promote positive social relationships, and provide children the opportunity to reach their fullest potential. As teachers and caregivers, we are determined to provide access to high-quality education and promote participation and support to all children in learning and social activities.

Access to high-quality education is the right of all children. We believe in providing a fun and safe learning environment for all families. Providing access to information and helpful services is the first step to helping a family find early intervention for their child. If a child has a diagnosis, all established services and accommodations for the child shall be implemented with full acceptance by the teaching staff.

- The physical environment is set up to provide equal opportunities for all program activities.
- Curriculum and instructional strategies provide multiple ways of learning and expression of learning.
- Strategies that promote independent participation are provided.
- Families are provided contact information for community agencies.
- For further evaluations.
- Professional development is provided to all staff.
- IEP Planning and Implementation.
- Special Training for all staff.



## Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an center employee has a (suspected) reportable disease, we must legally notify the local Board of Health or the Department of Public Health. We will notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- COVID-19
- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus - Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment
- Vomiting - green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- Chickenpox until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Brookline Sprouts uses Caring for Our Children to establish policies and practices regarding care plans for children with special needs and medication administration.

## Outdoor/Indoor Policy for Gross Motor Play (Large Muscle Play)

Partial-day preschoolers will have 30 - 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily. Full-day children receive 90 or more minutes. This is achieved through playground and gym time, as well as Music & Movement time.

Children attending Brookline Sprouts Child Care shall play outdoors when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. The time planned for outdoor play and physical activity depends on the classroom and weather conditions.

Activities shall include structured play, led by teachers and other staff, & free play, which an adult does not lead.

Staff will use the outdoors as an extension of the classroom. This is done by:

Planning outside lessons, activities, and walking trips

Incorporating gross motor skills practice (skipping, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking, balancing, stretching, etc.) into lessons, routines, transitions, and other times throughout the day.

Staff will take advantage of “teachable moments” to talk with children about the Importance of physical activity.

Adults will take an active role in helping children stay active during indoor and outdoor free play time, including verbally encouraging children's activities and, when appropriate joining in with children's activities to promote more movements.



The center will provide a variety of toys and equipment in good condition, both indoors and outdoors, to help encourage children's physical activity.

Staff will have opportunities to participate in continuing education related to physical education and activities in child care regularly.

Outdoor play will never be revoked as a punishment for managing challenging behaviors. Children who appear overheated or overextended will only be removed from play for a few minutes to "cool down."

Children with challenging behaviors will be redirected to another activity rather than sitting out altogether, such as moving to the side from the balance beam.

## Developmental Screening and Early Learning Standards

Every child, 5 years old and younger, who enrolls at Brookline Sprouts will complete an Act

Early developmental screening within 45 days of enrollment to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies. The results of the screens are communicated with families, and referral support is offered as needed. We also use the evidence-based assessment tool Cognitive Toybox throughout the year to complete baseline assessments and track your child's progress. Upon enrollment, parents are invited to the Cognitive Toybox parent portal to see evaluations and view home strategies for learning.

As our teachers prepare their lessons each week, they will ensure that the lesson plans reference Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards to support the planning and documentation of children's learning. We also complete evaluations of kindergarten readiness in the fall and spring to coincide with parent-teacher conferences and as deemed appropriate by staff. If there are any concerns about your child's development, parents/guardians may contact Early Intervention for a formal evaluation at 412-529-4000 if you reside within PPS. Outside PPS, families must contact DART at 412-394-5904.

## Medications

All medication should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer independently. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- Prescription medications require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medicine meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication. We will track all times and administration of the medicine being received.
- Non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications require a note signed by the child's physician.
- Non-prescription (over-the-counter) topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream; sunscreen; insect repellent) require a note signed by the family and/or physician specifying the frequency and dosage administered.
- Expired medications must be sent home and can not be used.
- Ointments for rashes, cuts, etc., are considered medications and must have proper documentation.

## Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies.

Families of children with diagnosed allergies must provide us with a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the central area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

## Children who have been ill may return to the center when:

- Without medications, they are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They can participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They can provide us with a doctor's note stating that they are able to return if required, according to the illness or symptoms.



## Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but you may not bring a sick child to the center in order for us to protect other children. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill.

You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. The following is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but they will be excluded from all activities until you arrive. The symptoms are:

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (100.5 degrees or higher), and the child must be 24 hours fever free without fever-reducing medicine and/or a doctor's note.
- Diarrhea - stools with blood or mucus and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in their underwear or toilet.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Vomiting and the child must stay home until at least 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or doctor's note.
- Persistent cough or runny nose without being cleared by a doctor or without a doctor's note related to diagnosed environmental allergies
- Undiagnosed rashes.



## Payments

Invoices and receipts are sent and received via the Brightwheel app. Please speak to the Administration if you need any help gaining access to billing. We accept cash, checks (Made payable to Brookline Sprouts), ACH transfers, and credit/debit cards. There is a payment box in the entryway for dropping cash and checks.

All electronic payments (and setting up auto pay) can be made in Brightwheel.

Processing fees may apply for electronic payments. If you have any questions regarding tuition payments and other financial policies signed at the time of enrollment, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Director or Administration to review them with you and/or give you a copy.



## Clothing & Blanket Policy

Please have your child wear comfortable clothes that he/she can play in. Children need to feel free to enjoy materials without worrying about getting their good clothes dirty. Also, make it easier on yourself by not sending your children in clothing you do not want to get dirty.

Additionally, we recommend the children wear closed-toed shoes to run and play in. Flip Flops are prohibited. Other sandals must have a strap that wraps around the back of the heel. We also need a complete set of weather-appropriate extra clothes on hand (shirt, bottoms, socks, underwear). Please put your child's name on any articles (including hats, mittens, coats, etc., and extra clothes) so they are not mixed up with another child's items.

If your child's schedule includes nap/rest time, please provide a small blanket to be kept at the center. Please do not send comfort items that must be taken to and from the center daily. Nap blankets are washed on-site weekly with hypoallergenic detergent. We encourage families to put their child's name on blankets and clothes.

## Health Policy

### Health Records and Vaccinations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the CDC. Every year, we check with the ACIP and the American Academy of Pediatrics to ensure we utilize the most up-to-date recommendations. Our state regulations regarding the attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. ***This includes recommended annual flu shots.*** Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. **A copy of your child's physical (not just an immunization record) can be received before but no later than 30 days after your child begins in the program.**

Failure to turn in a full unexpired, dated, and signed health report from your child's physician could result in your child being suspended from our program till we receive these essential documents. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to Sprouts. They are expected to be renewed a minimum of once every 12 months. Failure to turn in the required health assessment and vaccine records by deadlines will result in suspension from attendance until the center is provided with all the necessary paperwork.



## Sprouts Authoritative Feeding Policy

At Brookline Sprouts, teachers use an authoritative feeding style during meals and snacks. Staff maintains the structure of meals and snacks by following the guidelines on how meal times will be presented to children. We want to give children the control to make the right choices, but they're still developing and learning to make good choices. Adults set examples of how to eat healthy and make good choices while still giving them an option. We know that children learn better when there is consistency among caregivers. Food is never withheld as punishment or given as a reward for good behavior.

All preschoolers are served a complete meal per USDA guidelines during meal times. Then, condiments are offered when available. After a set amount of time, the children are encouraged by staff to try at least a portion of the meal's components. Partway through the meal, water is offered. Staff avoid comparing children and strive to provide verbal positive reinforcement and praise when the children make healthy choices at meals and snack time. Staff is encouraged to eat alongside the children, as well as discuss the food being served in a positive way.



## Dress to Promote Indoor/Outdoor Gross Motor Play

*Please send your child to school in season-weather-appropriate clothing and footwear, so they can participate fully, move freely, and play safely.*

*Childcare providers will inform parents, caregivers, and families that children need to be dressed appropriately to play outdoors in the current weather conditions. Appropriate clothing items (such as hats and gloves) will be provided when available.*

*Children should wear clothing appropriate for the current weather and activities:*

- *Snow: heavy coat, waterproof boots, hat, and mittens.*
- *Different temperatures during the day: layers of clothing.*
- *Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Appropriate footwear includes sneakers, gym shoes, and other shoes with rubber soles that enclose the feet and will not come off easily.*
- *Examples of inappropriate clothing and footwear include:*
  - *Footwear that can come off while running or that does not provide support for climbing (examples: flip-flops and clogs).*
  - *Clothing that can catch on playground equipment (examples: clothes with drawstrings or loops).*
  - *Clothing that does not protect children from the current weather conditions.*



## Personal Property & Items from Home

We make every effort to keep track of all student belongings and teach the children about treating personal items with care. However, there are still times when things may wear out, break, or become lost while at school. Children should only bring necessary items (nap blanket, extra clothes, coat, backpack, etc.) and leave all their items, such as personal toys, at home.

Prohibited items must be kept out of personal belongings altogether (hand lotions, medications, adult-sized scissors, electronics, etc.). If restricted items must come to school due to caregiver handoff (such as medication being passed from mom at drop off to grandparents at pickup for the weekend), they must be given to a staff member to be locked away for the day and requested by the other adult at pickup.

While we try to accommodate when possible, Sprouts reserves the right to refuse to temporarily store items for any reason.

Brookline Sprouts does not claim any responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen personal property. Personal property includes but is not limited to, clothing, outerwear, shoes, jewelry, blankets, or any other personal effects. To reduce the chance of lost items, you are highly encouraged to label your child's belongings with their name. Please do not send items of excessive value to the school, including worn clothing and jewelry.

## Meals

At Brookline Sprouts, we strive to provide nutritious and flavorful meals for the children. Preschool-only (partial day) children will be provided breakfast and lunch. Extended care and Head Start children will also be provided a snack as long as they are present during those times. The menu will be posted weekly on the entryway board and electronically in Brightwheel. Copies to take home are available on request. Meals and snacks are partially funded through the Child & Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP).

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, Brookline Sprouts does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity for meal programming.

We make every effort to provide substitutions rather than omissions of certain items when there is an allergy or dietary restriction. We cannot, however, accommodate if a child is simply a "picky eater." Medical documentation is required if you feel that meals need to be supplemented.

If you do so, please only send meals that are "ready to eat" and require no preparation other than microwaving or opening the package. We cannot serve any foods to your child that contain any ingredient/ ingredients previously restricted in their diet without a written statement from the parent/guardian.

## Celebrations

Any food brought in for sharing (such as parties or birthdays) should be store-bought and individually wrapped, if possible, to ensure that staff is aware of all ingredients and that nothing is served to restricted/allergic children. We also ask that at least 48-hour notice be given in case the staff needs to adjust the menu. You can obtain our Celebrations Treat form on our Brookline Sprouts Resource page.



- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Offer Fidgets or other calming sensory objects.
- Attempt distraction via toys or other activities.
- Offer use of the Calm Down Area if one is available in that room.
- Take the child for a short walk.

## Other Prevention Strategies

- For staff (which includes the operator and other administrative staff who may be counted in ratio, additional caregivers, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers):
  - Allow staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children.
  - The center will provide training related to classroom management, helping children with challenging behaviors, and other related topics.
    - Staff will also have infant-specific training made available if the center enrolls infants.
  - Before caring for children from birth to 5 years old, new hires/volunteers will complete training on SBS/AHT. Training includes recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment and children's brain development up to five years of age. This training will be recorded in their file via an SBS/AHT Acknowledgement Form.
  - Will ensure all families enrolling children five years old and younger have the center's SBS/AHT policy reviewed on or before their child's first day in care. The parent/guardian acknowledgment form will be kept in the child's file.
  - The center will provide support when parents/guardians try calming a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

## Bathroom & Accidents

We strive to provide the best care and education to all students at Brookline Sprouts. We are a facility that requires children to be potty trained. We understand that sometimes children will have occasional accidents. However, when accidents are frequent, it hinders the staff's ability to fulfill all of their duties to not only your child but the rest of the class. You may be asked to pick up your child early if they have accidents during class time because your child requires a level of care (diapering) that our classroom structure cannot accommodate. By our Health Policy, you may also be called to pick up your child early if they have an accident involving loose stools.

Children are sent home if they have two accidents in one day. Children with more than three accidents in a week require a plan between the family & the center that may involve obtaining a doctor's note.

No child should arrive at school in a diaper or pull-up. Diapers and pull-ups are prohibited in a child's bag or cubby without written approval from Administration. If your child stays for extended care and you feel that your child requires a pull-up during nap time, please address your concerns to Administration. We can work on an individualized care policy that works for both staff and your child. If your child needs pull-ups or diapers at any other time, we are sorry to say that we can not accommodate this level of care. When the situation changes, we can re-evaluate to ensure our program fits your child correctly.



## Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy

### Belief Statement

We, Brookline Sprouts, believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is essential to keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

### Background

Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to the PA Department of Human Services, Caring for our Children Basics Health & Safety Foundation for Early Care and Education 3.4.4.3, each childcare facility licensed to care for children up to the age of 5 years of age shall develop and adopt a policy to help prevent SBS/AHT.

### Procedure/Practice

**Recognizing:** Children and infants are observed for signs of abusive head trauma, including irritability or high-pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, the failure of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or hitting the head.

### Responding:

- If SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will:
- Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director.
- Call the parents/guardians.



- If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.
- Reporting:
  - Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing [webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov).
  - Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the Allegheny County Department of Social Services: (412) 473-2000 or Childline: 1-800-932-0313.

### Prohibited Behaviors

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):

- Shaking or jerking a child.
- Tossing a child into the air, a crib, chair, or car seat.
- Pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

### Prevention Strategies To Assist Staff In Coping With Crying, Fussing, Or Distraught Child:

- Staff first determine if the child has any physical needs, such as being hungry, tired, sick, or needing a diaper change or to go to the bathroom. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:
  - For infants and toddlers:
    - Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
    - Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend your knees.
    - Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
    - Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
    - Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy.
  - Take the child for a ride in a stroller
  - Turn on music or white noise.
    - For older toddlers and preschoolers:
      - Ask them to use their words to describe what is upsetting them (and help/encourage them).
      - Offer a hug or sit with them.