

Children's Academy Sarodgini

TEACHER HANDBOOK

Our Mission Statement: Our mission is to work in partnership with parents and teachers to create an educational environment that provides emotional and physical safety and helps children learn and be prepared to do well in school and in life.

Philosophy Statement: To help children learn and grow, we provide an integrated curriculum. More information on our curriculum and activities is available in our brochure for prospective families.

Application for teaching position

A candidate for any position at Sarodgini must file a standard application and any supplemental applications in writing and be responsible for making available facts about him/herself with regard to education, experience, capabilities, and interests as it relates to the position. Failure to disclose any pertinent information or to falsify information on the application is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Job Descriptions

Sarodgini hires teaching staff at three levels: Lead Teachers, Co-Teacher, and Assistant Teachers. Job descriptions for each position are made available at time of interview.

State Requirements: Once a teacher has been hired, he/she is required by Washington State Law to provide Sarodgini with and maintain the following information:

1. Accurate record of employment - Application and/or resume
2. Criminal Background Check- FBI fingerprint check if residing in WA less than 3 years.
3. W-4 Withholding Allowances Certificate

4. Verification of Education - diplomas, early childhood education transcripts
5. HIV/AIDS blood-borne pathogen training Certificate
6. CPR and First Aid Training Certificate-must include infants
7. Food Handler's permit
8. Orientation Checklist-to be completed by the director and teacher
9. TB test

S.T.A.R.S. training certificate- must complete within the first 6 months of employment. This is a Washington State Requirement for caregivers with less than 12 credits of early childhood education. Caregivers that exceed these qualifications must attend at least 10 clock hours per year of STARS approved trainings.

Center Tour: During orientation, teacher is given information about the building, Classroom management, schedules and activities, Health Plan, Health and Sickness policy, First Aid kit, Fire extinguishers, Garbage dumpsters, Janitorial supplies, Laundry room, bathrooms, Staff parking, kitchen, art supplies & curriculum materials, Evacuation plans, Disaster Plan

State Ratios: The maximum state teacher: child ratios for 2½ years to 5 years- 1:10

Planned daily activities & routines: Teachers are to follow the posted daily schedules. Lead teachers and the Director work closely to develop the lesson plans and activities, while the assistant teachers help the children and assistant the lead teachers as needed. Assistant teachers are welcome to contribute to curriculum development.

Cultural Relevancy: Activities are to be culturally relevant to the children currently in care.

Child guidance & Behavior management method: When a child is having a difficult time following directions or treating others or equipment with

respect, developmentally appropriate guidance techniques are used. These techniques are as follows (**PRWIT**):

Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when s/he is demonstrating acceptable behavior.

Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.

“When...Then” Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to accomplish something before going on to something else. Example: “When you finish picking up the blocks, then you can go outside.”

“If...Then” Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to make a positive choice. Example: “If you pick up the blocks, then you can go to the Dramatic Play area.”

Take A Break: The child is separated from the group for a child-regulated period of time. This technique is used only when a child is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior or hurting self, others, or equipment. When the child shows that he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, the child is encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again.

Use of corporal punishment is illegal in Washington State. Neither a staff member or client may use corporal punishment on the premises. Striking a child is cause for immediate dismissal of that caregiver.

Playground rules: When outside teachers monitor children at playhouses, concrete area, gate, fences, trees, and give appropriate reminders and re-direct.

Health Care Policies and Procedures: You will be given a booklet of our Health Care Policies and are expected to read, ask questions, and understand the material provided.

Allergy Lists: Staff and Children’s allergies are to be posted in each classroom.

Medical/Incident Log Notebook: There is a Medical/Incident Log Notebook located in the building. Training by Director will be given on how to use the notebook.

Meetings: Staff Meetings are held one on one with Director once per week and/or in small groups at least once every quarter

Professional Conduct

Children learn ethics by our behavior and our attitudes toward other people. As early childhood professionals, it is imperative that teachers consistently model appropriate behaviors for both children and parents.

Sarodgini strives to provide a professional image to parents, the community, and to employees of Sarodgini. Once an employee is hired by Sarodgini, they become a member of our professional team and represent Sarodgini within the community. Staff should conduct themselves appropriately.

If teacher find themselves in an uncomfortable conversation with a parent, s/he should immediately terminate the conversation and refer the parent to the Director. We recognize that some parents are difficult to work with. If you have any concerns, please refer to the Director.

Dress and Appearance

It is the expectation of Sarodgini that teachers dress in a manner appropriate for their positions i.e. as conservatively as possible. Business suits are not recommended, but pressed clothing is expected. Staff should dress in manner that allows them to comfortably interact with children at their level while still presenting a professional image.

Halter/midriff tops, mini-skirts, short shorts, and tattered clothing do not present the professional image that Sarodgini strives to maintain. Sweatpants, faded, lint-covered and tight clothing are not to be worn to work. Shoes need to have low or flat heels, and non-skid soles.

Tattooing, body-piercing are not to be seen at work. Nails should be neatly manicured and kept short. Hair has to be trimmed and worn neatly.

Smoke Free Environment

Smoking will not be allowed on or near the premises per WA State law.

Confidentiality

Staff are to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Information about another child's development, co-workers, family matters, and/or personal issues are not to be disclosed to another parent or co-worker. Preserving the confidentiality of children, their families, and co-workers is essential to continued employment. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Parent/Teacher Communication

It is the responsibility of the staff to approach parents on a regular basis and discuss, when necessary, their child's progress. The primary method of communication is the Parent Bulletin Board on which is posted: current lesson plans, daily classroom schedule, newsletter, and special information. Parent Conferences, which are scheduled every six months. Completed assessments should be kept in the child's file. Based on the child's evaluation, the teacher discusses progress with the parent. If a child has problem areas, they should be mentioned to the parent along with the teacher's suggested strategies to correct the problem. At all times, teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of the families at Sarodgini.

Work Schedules

Teachers are assigned a specific work schedule. To ensure proper child: teacher ratio, everyone is required to work their assigned schedule. All teachers are expected to arrive such that they will be ready to begin the day's activities at their scheduled time. Regular and punctual attendance is an essential requirement of continued employment. Work schedules are

determined by the Director and based on many considerations. Please note that particular work schedules, concrete time for lunch hours, and/or total number of hours is not guaranteed.

Failure to contact the Director, when reporting an absence, is considered an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences will result in corrective action, up to and including immediate termination.

Staff Time Sheets: Employees are required to accurately clock in and out with the time clock. If you work anything other than your regular shift, you must document the reason in the irregularity log, which is located next to the time clock. Entering false timings is reason for dismissal.

Snow/Severe Weather Policy

It is our policy to consult Bellevue Public School District #405 for school closures and/or delays. **We will, however, make our decisions independently by 5:30am on any questionable weather day.** It is your responsibility to contact the Director to determine our status.

DO NOT rely on radio and/or TV reports to determine if you are to report to work.

Probation Period

All new teachers hired are on automatic 3 (three) month probation. During this introductory period, he/she will be provided with an orientation to Sarodgini and our policies, procedures, and services, roles, and responsibilities of the position, and there will be careful monitoring of the his/her performance at work. We recognize that this is a learning and adjustment period for new staff. During this period, new staff should feel free to discuss Sarodgini policies and standards with Director. During the orientation session, new staff will be given written materials that are required reading prior to end of the probation period.

Discipline/Termination

Sarodgini attempts to provide a uniform administration of disciplinary action. The following are examples of expressly prohibited actions which cannot

happen, even once, and are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination:

Hitting a child.

Threatening a child.

Threatening another staff member or parent.

Failure to pass State Patrol Criminal History Check.

Lying to the director about any situation at Sarodgini

Demonstration of disrespect of staff, parents, and management.

Failure to comply with the school policies.

Incompetence in the performance of duties,

Negligence in the performance of duties

Careless, negligent, or improper use of property or equipment

Absence without approved leave

Falsifying sign-in/sign-out times ie misrepresenting the actual amount of time at work

Leaving children unsupervised

Habitual pattern of failure to report for duty at the assigned time and place

Failure to obtain or maintain STARS training, current license or certifications required

Engaging in any activity which represents a conflict of interest with Sarodgini operations

Deliberately accessing confidential files, information or data without permission for reasons not related to work

Stealing toys/equipment/personal items of others (Sarodgini, teachers or parents)

Conviction of any crime, any crimes against a person(s), child abuse or neglect, or a felony

Misuse of Sarodgini funds

Falsifying or omitting job information to secure a position

Participating in any action that seriously disrupts normal operation and routine

Harassment, including sexual harassment of center employees, parents, or vendors

Willful acts that could endanger the lives and property of others

Possession of a firearms or lethal weapons on the job

Refusal to accept a reasonable and proper assignment from an authorized supervisor (insubordination)

Making false, vicious, profane, abusive, or malicious statements concerning Sarodgini, or any teacher or child/family

Violation of confidentiality or code of ethics

Reporting to work while impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs

Giving or accepting gifts in exchange for “favors” or “influence”

Any expression of *any* form of prejudice.

This listing is simply a description of the types of actions, which may result in discipline. It is not intended to be all-inclusive and in no way limits the reasons for discharge. Employment remains at will and either Sarodgini or the employee can sever the relationship for any reason or no reason.

Teachers will be given one verbal warning for inappropriate behavior. If the behavior continues, a written warning will be issued. The employee should read, sign, and will receive a copy of the warning. The written warning will remain in the employee’s personnel file for 12 months. Corrective action should be immediate and sustained. If the behavior does not occur again within 12 months, the employee can request in writing to have the warning withdrawn from his or her file. Employees are not eligible for annual pay increase during this 12-month period.

Grievances

If you have concerns such as policy, personnel, or procedural questions that need to be addressed, please contact the Director.

Resignation

Our program is unique in many ways because of the particular age we serve, and children are sensitive and may experience sense of loss. Thus, please consider the impact on the children when you decide to resign from your position. Please give as much notice as possible so that we can arrange appropriate, healthy closure for the children and their families when you leave. Except in the case of extreme emergency, you should give no less than three weeks notice (15 business days).

An employee who is not on authorized leave, and fails to report to work for

three consecutive workdays without daily notice, will be considered resigned without notice.

Requesting Time Off: If you wish to schedule a day off for personal leave, you need to give the Director at least 1 month notice. Then follow these steps:

1. Check the calendar in the office. Understand that if anyone else has been scheduled off, you might not get that day approved.
2. Give a written note to the Director with dates you will be gone. Make sure the Director has given approval in writing, before assuming you will automatically take the day off.
3. Your days off will be put on the calendar.
4. If it is not on the calendar, contact the Director and show her the approval on the note

Do not write it on the calendar. It is not officially approved unless it is on the calendar.

Calling in Sick: It is the policy of Sarodgini that if an employee is suffering from high fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or is completely unable to function, s/he must call the Director at home and cell phone the night before. If the illness is sudden in the morning, the Director must be contacted no later than 6:00 AM in the morning.

10 min./lunch break regulations: Sarodgini is required by law to give teachers a half-hour **unpaid** meal break to eat after 2.5 – 5 hours of work. Because teachers arrange for intermittent potty breaks and have access to food and drink, we are not required by law to give 10-minute breaks for every 4 hour period. Lunch breaks for full time employees may be 30 minutes or 1 hour. Occasionally, due to a staffing shortage or special events, teachers may be asked to take an on-site paid lunch break.

Child Sign-In and Sign-Out Policies

Parents are required to sign in their child with complete signature when arriving and sign out when departing on a daily basis. This sign-in/out sheet is located by the door.

Teachers are to keep this attendance sheet updated with children's arrival and departures

Children will be released only to adults authorized on their *Enrollment Application*. Written parent permission must be obtained before releasing the child to an adult not previously authorized. Proof of identity will be required for all authorized pick-ups. Children may not sign themselves in or out of the Center. Children leaving for school and returning from school will be signed out and in by child care staff. Attendance sheets are to be taken along with family contact when evacuating the building so that attendance can be taken accurately in emergency.

If a parent appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, *and if you feel safe* talking to him/her about it, suggest to the parent that you call another authorized escort or a cab. If the parent insists, you must release the child. As soon as he/she leaves the building, try to take note of the car and the direction that they leave. Call 911 immediately.

CPS Reporting Procedures: When a staff person suspects a child has been abused, neglected, or suffers from malnutrition; the staff person must follow the following procedure

- a) Document why he/she believes this has occurred on an incident report and turn into the director immediately.
- b) The director will call CPS and licensing.

It is important that teachers at Sarodgini document such incidents accurately and thoroughly to prevent false accusation and hardship for the client.

Failure to follow this procedure could be cause for immediate dismissal.

Program Transparency

For the children's safety as well as your own, it is important to *never* be alone with a child any place that is not in full view of others. Do not take a child to a

storage room or to any other room that does not have a window.

Children are not allowed to go alone or with another child into any area of the school.

Fire prevention & safety procedures: Teachers can prevent dangerous situations by doing the following:

- Make sure all heater vents are clear of furniture and toys.
- Pathways to exit doors are to be kept clear at all times
- Material hanging from the ceiling must be kept at least 2 feet from the smoke detectors
- Fire Drills are to be practiced at least once a month.
- Evacuation procedures are to be followed as posted in each classroom.
- Children must be supervised during food preparation activities.