



Sprouts Nature School – Behavior Guidelines & Policies

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At Sprouts Nature School, we value kindness, curiosity, safety, and respect for people, nature, and community. These guidelines help ensure a safe, positive, and inclusive environment for all children, families, and staff.

1. Core Expectations

Children are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness, compassion, and respect.
- Listen to teachers and follow safety instructions.
- Stay with the group unless given permission.
- Use safe hands, safe bodies, and respectful language.
- Care for nature, wildlife, and outdoor spaces.
- Use equipment and materials safely and responsibly.
- Communicate their needs, feelings, or worries to staff when they feel comfortable.

2. Safety Guidelines

To keep everyone safe, children must:

- Stay within sight of a teacher at all times.
- Follow boundaries set for parks, trails, and indoor locations.
- Walk—never run—near fires, stoves, tools, or ice.
- Use kitchen equipment such as peelers, knives, cooking stove, handheld blender only with direct supervision. Matches and fire tending only with direct supervision.
- Keep hands, sticks, and objects to themselves unless invited in safe play.
- Wear weather-appropriate clothing and gear (additional layers will be offered if a child arrives under-prepared for the day's conditions).

3. Communication & Conflict Resolution

We recognize that conflict is a normal part of play and learning. At Sprouts, teachers:

- Support children in using calm voices and listening to others.
- Help children express their feelings and needs clearly.
- Model respectful communication, problem-solving, and empathy.
- Facilitate conversations between children to resolve conflict when needed.

4. Behavior Redirection Process

When unsafe or harmful behavior occurs, Sprouts educators use a calm, supportive process:

Step 1: Gentle Reminder

A teacher offers a reminder of expectations and provides support.

Step 2: Redirection

The child may be redirected to another activity, tool, or area to help them reset.

Step 3: Cool-Down / Regulation Break

A brief break with an educator for calming or grounding.

Step 4: Parent Communication

For repeated or escalating unsafe behavior, parents will be contacted.

Step 5: Safety Plan

A short- or long-term plan created with parents to support success.

Step 6: Program Pause (Rare)

If safety concerns continue, a temporary pause may be required.

5. Non-Negotiable Behaviors

The following require immediate intervention:

- Intentional, serious physical harm (hitting, kicking, biting)
- Repeated disregard for safety instructions around fire, tools, water, roads, or boundaries
- Running away from the group
- Bullying, harassment, or targeted exclusion. Repeated concerns with swearing or inappropriate language
- Dangerous use of sticks, rocks, or equipment
- Bringing weapons or harmful objects

6. Inclusivity & Respect

Sprouts Nature School is committed to maintaining an inclusive, affirming space. Discrimination, slurs, or exclusion based on race, identity, disability, or family background is not tolerated.

7. Parent Partnership

We value strong parent communication. Please reach out if your child:

- Is experiencing stress, transitions, or challenges at home
- Has sensory, social, or emotional needs that would help us support them better
- Benefits from specific calming strategies or scripts

8. Dismissal from the Program (Very Rare)

Dismissal may occur only after:

1. Multiple attempts at behavior support and collaboration with parents
2. Safety concerns remain unresolved
3. The child's needs exceed what we can safely support in an outdoor group setting

9. Communication

Questions or concerns about behavior expectations are always welcome.

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