Sunshine's Parent Handbook

For the academic school year beginning August 2027 through May of 2028

©October 2026

Sunshine School in Oro Valley, Inc.
9000 N. Oracle Rd., Suite 204
Tucson, AZ 85704-7490

An Introduction from the Director…

Sunshine School in Oro Valley has been loving and educating children since 1984. Our quality educational curriculum includes Social/Emotional Development, Cognitive Development, Language Development, Physical Development, Science, Art, Music and Movement, Spanish Enrichment and Math Concepts. Our professional, nurturing and dedicated team encourages each child's love for learning through activities that facilitate growth in each of these areas. Our goal is to build each child's confidence, social skills, creative problem-solving abilities and to fully prepare each child for a lifetime of learning. Our Philosophy is based on addressing the developmental needs of the whole child in a secure and loving atmosphere.

I welcome you to our Parent Handbook. It's probably unlike any other preschool handbook you've read. Then again, Sunshine is a unique school.
Make a nice cup of coffee or tea and sit back and read. Take your time and ponder what you've read. Contact us if you have questions or comments.

When you register your sweet child at Sunshine, you will acknowledge that you have read all this information and that you will abide by our policies.

Thank you,

Marla Ayers
Director

Table of Contents

Page 3: Daily schedule; closure information

Page 4: Summer program; licensing, insurance, corporate information; mission statement

Pages 5-11: Goals and Policies

Pages 11-12: Rate and billing information

Pages 13-16: The academic curriculum

Page 17: Reflections & observations about young children

Pages 18-20: Importance of Preschool

Sunshine's Daily Schedule for 2027-2028

7 to 8 a.m.	Early care is available by reservation Monday through Thursday.
8 a.m.	School begins and the children arrive. It's time for reading, drawing, playtime, & chatting with friends.
8:15 – 8:55 a.m.	Weather permitting, we play outside; everyone washes hands before coming inside.
9 – 9:55 a.m.	First session of centers and classes.
10:00 – 10:20 a.m.	Snack time.
10:20 – 10:55 a.m.	Recess inside & outside. Everyone washes hands once recess ends.
11 – 11:55 p.m.	Second session of classes and centers.
12:00 – 12:20 p.m.	Lunch for everyone. (And we washed hands @ 11:55 a.m.)
12:20 – 12:40 p.m.	Parent pick-up.
1:00 – 4 p.m.	Monday through Thursday: Sunshine is available for childcare before school and after school. Parents reserve time in this program on a monthly basis. The staff offers a variety of guided activities until parents return for their children. There is a daily snack (provided by the parents) and, as a special treat, a G-rated short film each Thursday afternoon. There is NO aftercare offered on Friday's. Sunshine closes at 12:30 pm on Friday's.

Closures

Sunshine's academic year is aligned with the School calendars' in our community. Sunshine's fall semester begins on Monday August 9, 2027. The final day of preschool will be Wednesday, May 17th, 2028. In any academic year, Sunshine is closed for **Labor Day** on September 6th; a week-long **Fall Break** for a week, October 11-15th; **Veteran's Day** November 11th and the **Thanksgiving Holiday,** November 24-26th; a 2-week **Winter Break** in December 20-January 2nd; January 17th for **Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday**; **Rodeo Break** for 2 days, February 24-25th; and a **Spring Break,** March 13-17th. Additionally, we will close for **Staff Professional Development, once in September and once in April.** Please continue reading. . .

Sunshine's Summer Program

We usually offer a "light" session of classes and fun to our new and current students and to preschool children in the community. For Summer 2027, we may hold a few brief summer sessions in June and July. Classes are held Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday from 8 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.; fees are paid in advance. Please contact us in March or April for further information about summer school dates (520) 742-6874. Thank you.

STATE LICENSURE

We are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services to care for 59 children, none of whom may be infants or one-year-old children. Our license number is 1409. Marla Ayers is the Director. Generally, a child must be 3 years of age by 8/31 to enroll at Sunshine. Regardless of age, a child must be completely potty-trained to enroll at Sunshine – and "completely" means every day & all the time. Teachers and staff do not wipe bottoms unless it is a real emergency. Per State Regulations, the ratio of adults to children is 1:13 for our age group. However, at Sunshine, we operate at a ratio of 1:8 to better serve our children.

A copy of our most-recent inspection by the Department of Health is kept on-site and is available upon request. The Tucson office of the AZDH is located @ 400 W. Congress, 85701. The phone number is (520) 628-6540 and the website is www.azdhs.gov.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS

Sunshine School in Oro Valley, Inc. admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, or any school-administered program.

INSURANCE INFORMATION

Arizona state law requires that licensed preschools carry general liability insurance in the amount of at least $300,000. We exceed that requirement.

CORPORATE INFORMATION

1. Sunshine was incorporated in 1984 as a non-profit corporation under section 501 c 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Our E.I.N. is 74-2350552.

2. We are recognized, and in good standing, by the Arizona Corporation Commission as a not-for-profit domestic corporation organized under the laws of the State of AZ. (as of 6/26/84).

3. Sunshine is a licensed business in the Town of Oro Valley.

Sunshine School Mission Statement

Sunshine School strives to provide a loving, inclusive learning environment which includes a curriculum that introduces early concepts in literacy and STEAM through play-based and hands-on learning experiences. Incorporating a holistic approach to childhood emotional, social, and academic development Sunshine creates confident, independent children prepared to enter kindergarten. We provide a joyful environment where children feel inspired to learn, grow and shine

Sunshine School: Goals

To provide opportunities for children:

1. to develop a sense of self-identity, competence, and self-worth.
2. to establish positive relationships with adults and other children.
3. to become responsible, self-directed, and self-disciplined.
4. to learn to respect others and their property.
5. to become skillful in using language and understanding concepts.
6. to experience sensory and creative awareness through exposure to the arts.
7. to develop each child's mental, physical, and social potential.

The role of the staff at Sunshine School is:

1. to help children feel at ease away from home.
2. to guide the children with gentle and consistent discipline.
3. to foster the unique abilities & meet the individual needs of each child.
4. to help the children develop responsible and positive attitudes towards each other, their families, and the community.
5. to create an atmosphere in which a child will be comfortable with group or solitary activities, and physical or passive activities.
6. to share a curriculum with the children which provides sensory, creative, physical, and intellectual experiences.
7. to pursue professional growth.
8. ***to work with parents so that together, we can provide the best possible developmental outcomes for their children.***

General Policies

- ***Class registration & placement*:** Sunshine often has a waiting list for upcoming years, and for that, we are thankful. Read through this website thoroughly and visit 3 or 4 other programs, too. Then, call us for a tour and to register. While it's best for a child to begin in August, we do make exceptions now & then for a child to begin mid-year. Your child will be placed in a class determined by her/his date of birth.
- ***Discipline Policy*:** We have high expectations for our children. They may not hit, break toys, climb on furniture, or be loud or rude. Staffers speak to children with respect and model behavior that is friendly and courteous. We think the Golden Rule applies to all ages. When children misbehave, we speak to them about alternative behaviors and empathetic responses. Time out/away is used whenever necessary: the child is removed from the situation so that she/he may become calm. If the child remains uncooperative and disruptive, we will call you to come take her/him home; we'll try again the next day. If the behaviors continue to occur, despite our collaboration for the child, a child may be disenrolled. When children have conflicts, we intervene with the approach recommended by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. A synopsis of this approach follows:
  1. Approach calmly, stopping any harmful actions
  2. Acknowledge children's feelings
  3. Gather information
  4. Restate the problem
  5. Ask for solutions; select one together
  6. Be prepared to give follow-up support
- **Suspension/Expulsion Policy:** We implement strategies that prevent behavioral issues before they escalate to suspension or expulsion. We advocate for creating supportive and inclusive environments that cater to the diverse needs of all children, particularly those from marginalized communities. We

value collaboration among educators, families, and community resources to address the root causes of challenging behaviors.

- ***Emergency procedures:*** Sunshine has developed Emergency Procedures to cover fire drills, bomb threats, lock-downs, and environmental emergencies. This packet of protocols is updated annually, and it is sent to the OVPD school security officer for review. Contact the Director if you wish to discuss Sunshine's procedures.
- ***We welcome every culture***: Sunshine honors the histories of all families. Initially, we'll discuss your traditions; language & dietary preferences; child-rearing practices, and any other topic which will make your child's experience with us even richer. We are always available to continue this dialog. Be assured that we will love & respect your child, no matter the language or ethnicity.
- We follow the guidelines for **Keeping Immigrant Families Safe in Early Childhood Programs**. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)and Customs and Border Patrol (CPB) have internal guidance called "sensitive locations policies", which restricts immigration enforcement actions (such as apprehensions, arrests, interviews, searches and surveillance) in locations like schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship and public demonstrations. DHS is committed to ensuring that people seeking to participate in activities or utilize services provided at any "sensitive locations" are free to do so without fear or hesitation.
- ***Bullying policy***: Bullying will not be tolerated at Sunshine School. What is bullying? From The Bully-Free Classroom: "Bullying is when a stronger, more powerful person hurts or frightens a smaller or weaker person deliberately and repeatedly." When we see this happen or have reports of this happening, we will intervene. We'll work with the children who are involved so that the bullying will end. The parents will also be notified. If the situation cannot be resolved, the bullying child will be asked to leave Sunshine. Sunshine will not tolerate bullying from parents or family members towards staff, and if this occurs, a child/family will be disenrolled.
- ***Biting policy:*** Young children bite for a variety of reasons, and here's how Sunshine will handle the situation:
    1. We will maintain a structured, well-planned environment;
    2. Staff will provide plenty of positive attention for appropriate behavior;
    3. We'll stay physically close to the children so that we can intervene early before a situation escalates;
    4. We'll try to divert a child from biting and remove her/him from the area if necessary;
    5. School's rule is "No biting." After a few moments, we'll discuss what happened between the children; find a better solution than biting; and offer words of encouragement when we see progress;
    6. We'll notify both sets of parents about the incident and while respecting privacy, convey what happened and the outcome.

  Children who bite or repeatedly present significant risk to themselves and/or others. In these cases, we'll meet with the parents and discuss referrals to specialists. The child will be disenrolled if we feel Sunshine is not a good fit for the child and/or family.
- ***Sunshine is a weapons-free zone, and that includes toy weapons.***
- ***Sunshine Disenrollment policy:*** Sunshine maintains the right to disenroll a student/family if we feel Sunshine is not a good fit.
- ***Parental access***: Per State regulations, parents have access to the areas on facility premises where the parents' enrolled child is receiving child-care services. (Translation: parents always have access to their children at Sunshine.)
- ***Reporting Suspected Abuse***: Arizona state law says we must report suspected child abuse or neglect. We've always known this is our responsibility. Our staff receives training and we would, without hesitation, make a report if we thought a child was in danger.
- ***Pesticide notification:*** School is inspected monthly for termites. A schedule of these visits by Northwest Exterminating is provided outside on bulletin board #2. In recent years, the inside of the building has not required pesticide application. When and if this becomes necessary, we will post a notice on a front bulletin

board 72 hours before the pesticide is applied. The school grounds are sprayed once a month by Premier Pest Solutions. Please see bulletin board #2 or the one at our front desk for further information.

- ***Sunshine School is a smoke-free facility, inside and out, and that includes e-cigarettes.***
- ***Employing Sunshine Staff***: From time to time, our staff are available to you as baby-sitters or house sitters. While we do not have a policy which prohibits our employees from working for our clients, we want you to understand that any arrangements you make are totally independent from the work we do at Sunshine School in Oro Valley, Inc. Sunshine will not be responsible for any difficulties which may result from these private situations.
- ***Sunshine asks staff and families to be mindful of using highly fragranced perfumes or oils or laundry products.*** Every year, a few children and adults are negatively affected by scents. Thank you.

Operating Policies

- Sunshine's administration looks like this:
  a. A director who oversees the well-being of the entire school program; children and their families; and the staff. Marla Ayers is the Director.
  b. An assistant director for parent services. You'll contact this person whenever you need answers to billing, enrollment, or how to maneuver through the day-to-day events at Sunshine. Kristen Haskell fills this position.
  c. Another assistant director, Billie Loehr, handles the afternoon programming. When you have questions about the extended-day schedule, contact Ms. Loehr.
- We place children in classes according to their dates of birth. Usually, we have one class of 3-year old children; a combo class of late-3's & early 4's; a Pre-K class of 4's; & a Pre-K class of 5's. Because demographics change slightly year to year, Sunshine's classes may look somewhat different year-to-year. You will work with assistant director, Kristen Haskell, to determine which class placement fits your child best.
- ***Communication:*** Because it's so important that we communicate with our families well and often, Sunshine sends material to you via e-mail (newsletters, calendars, and announcements, etc.). Of course, we make every effort to speak to you in person, too. You are always welcome as an observer or to participate in our program.
- Other areas of importance under or near the front ramada: We have a large mailbox where parents return the children's library books. You'll see laminate-protected bulletin boards with teachers' calendars & children's art & articles for parents to read.
- ***Transportation***: Sunshine offers no transportation to/from other destinations.
- ***Field Trips***: We do not take trips with the Sunshine kids. Sometimes, we go on supervised walks in the surrounding desert. Because the Health Dept. considers these excursions to be "field trips," teachers will ask you to complete a field trip consent form whenever the children walk off-site.
- You'll find triangular shelves behind the staff entrance door where you may store your child's car seat for the day. Label the seat with your child's name.
- ***Attendance***: if your child is ill or won't be attending, do call early in the a.m. — we worry. If we don't hear from you by 9:30 a.m., we'll call you. Also: do not bring a sick child to school; we'll send him right back home with you. If a child becomes ill during the day, he will be isolated & we'll call you ASAP.
- Use the Main Gate (with the arty sun design) to enter school. If no one is in attendance at the gate, ring the door bell to the right of the gate and a staffer will admit you. We keep

the front door and the North Gate locked at all times. (While we can exit, no one can enter.) Please close & latch the gate after you enter and exit. Thanks.

- An adult needs to sign a child in/out by writing the adult's name (not initials) & the time of admission/release on the proper attendance page. We also expect to see an "ETA" (**E**stimated **T**ime of **A**rrival) and other pertinent daily info (today's best phone # & the pick-up person) written on the right-hand column of the page. Thank you.
- On your Academic Registration Form: **Under Parental Notices, you may indicate that you give the administrative staff permission to sign your child(ren) in and out of the program in the rare event that you are unable**. For instance: during the pandemic, we are asking parents not to enter the building, so if you come at a different time than normal drop-off or pick-up and books are in the building, we can sign for you OR if you're transporting a sleeping baby in addition to your Sunshiner, give us a call. *We'll* meet you at your vehicle; walk your preschooler into or out of school; and sign the attendance book for you.
- We do not accept phone calls from parents in which verbal authorization is given for a child to go home with another person WHO IS NOT LISTED ON YOUR CHILD'S REGISTRATION PAPERWORK. So, think ahead: we must have written permission from you & we will insist on photo I.D. from your designated person. (We do accept your faxed and signed permission note.)
- Children – and you – say goodbye to one another outside the gate. While parents are certainly welcome at Sunshine, it is important training for both of you to learn to part, and our gate is just the spot for that sweet sorrow. Make simple routines for leaving or picking up your child. Don't get drawn into "Just one more hug or kiss or snuggle or . . ." Be kind and firm and ask for our help, if necessary, and then walk away. Call us later for an update. (After about 8 weeks, you'll wonder why this was ever a big deal.)
- **When picking up or delivering children, do not let them run away from you. Both the parking lot & the nearby desert are very dangerous places for small children.**
- Kids walk into school; please don't carry them – they're "big preschoolers" now. They also carry their own gear into and out of the building. It's their stuff and they should carry it.
- When it's time to leave us in the afternoon, insist that your child tidy up his projects before she/he leaves. It's the right thing to do.
- ***Photography:*** If a child is photographed or videotaped for Sunshine's website or for any other purpose, we will **NOT** identify that child by her or his full name; if a name is used, it is the child's first name only. If we video a child having behavioral difficulties, that video will be shared **only** with the parents and then immediately deleted in their presence. IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT THE DIRECTOR.
- ***Food*** **--** is critical to all life. So, one of our most important tasks is to help children understand that eating real, unprocessed food in reasonable amounts is a key to a healthy, well-lived life. Parents are responsible for providing nutritious snacks & lunches & 100% juice (or milk) for their children. In August of each year, Sunshine gives each *new* student an insulated lunch sack to carry food and drink items; the bag stays in the child's cubby during the day, so you'll need to provide an ice pack. This one bag is to be used throughout your child's career at Sunshine. (If a replacement is needed, the cost is $10. Sunshine provides drinking water for the children throughout the day, and we urge you to send *only* water in your child's water bottle every day (and please label this bottle with our child's first & last name.) **Lunch** should meet nutrition guidelines from the Department of

Agriculture. It should include the following: 2 small servings (1/4 c. each) of 2 different fruits or vegetables or one of each; 1 serving of grain (e.g. ½ slice of bread, ¼ c. pasta or rice); 1 ½ oz. of meat or meat alternative (e.g. cheese or 3/8 c. beans); 1 serving of fluid milk (not yogurt or other milk products.) **Snack** is any ***two*** different components from the lunch list above. We encourage eating healthy food before our "sometimes" food.

- ***Besides the nutritional aspect of food, eating* together** is an important part of our teaching program. This is the time to find solutions to real-life dilemmas: What do you do if your friend has peanut allergies – and you have a peanut butter sandwich? Can you eat food that has fallen on the floor? Should you leave the table before others are finished eating? Lots of education takes place during lunch and snack times. We also love to have guests, so bring a lunch and join us whenever you're in the neighborhood.
- Because of allergies, Sunshine children never share their food with others. We do not allow purchased or home-baked treats for the children as part of birthday or other celebrations (again, those allergies can be tricky.) While treats for birthdays are not expected, little non-edible trinkets are always fun. Thanks for understanding.
- Sunshine reserves the right to remove a child from school when the health, emotions, and / or safety of that child, the staff, or other children are in danger. We will document the activities that concern us, meet with the family & child, propose alternatives & solutions, and refer to other professionals. When either the parent or Sunshine decides the child is not progressing, disenrollment will occur.
- For families of children with special needs, please speak with the Director. We'll discuss your goals & our abilities as teachers. Together, we'll determine if & how best we can care for your child.
- We encourage your child's therapist, doctor, or evaluator to come to Sunshine to see how your child functions here. Please call the Director to make arrangements.
- ***Volunteering***: If you're able and inclined to do so, volunteering can be a rewarding experience. Speak with the Director about training; it takes quite a bit of time. But we shower you with appreciation in the form of hugs, smiles, and chocolate.
- ***Charity work*** is meant to involve the children. Children, parents, and school join together to provide a lesson in compassionate activism. Now's the age to begin!
- ***Books:*** August - May, you'll be able to go online and order Scholastic books for your children – good books, reasonably priced, *and* Sunshine earns credit toward free books for our children's library. We have a Parents' Library and a lending library of children's artwork for your office. Ask the Director for help with these resources. (We gratefully accept donations of *good* children's books for the library. Thanks.)
- ***Clothing*:** All children's clothing needs to be easy-on and easy-off (think…elastic waistbands.) You'll provide a seasonal change of clothing for your child; we'll keep it in a private, labeled box here @ school. When your child has an accident, we'll place the wet or soiled clothing in a Ziploc bag in your child's cubby. We'll stamp your attendance page with "Wet clothing in cubby" so you'll remember.
- ***Odds & Ends*:** the children practice a fire drill every month at Sunshine; you should have a monthly drill at your house, too. Once a semester, we practice a lock-down drill, too.
- Backpacks aren't allowed at Sunshine. They are often BIGGER than the child & they don't fit into our little cubbies. Save backpacks for kindergarten. Thanks.

- Your child's toys, games, dolls, jewelry, etc., **stay home**. Label everything that does come into school (homework, clothing, water bottles, etc.) We keep a **Lost & Found** basket near the admissions desk. Check it whenever something is missing.
- We know accidents happen, but if your child intentionally breaks our equipment, he/you will pay for the damage.
- The Sunshine faculty has worked with many children, so we've observed a wide range of development in young children. If we suspect your sweetheart would benefit from some type of therapy, we'll speak with you about a referral. We acknowledge that this information may create discomfort, but our intent is to help every child grow well. Early intervention is best.

****

QUIET TIME POLICY:

The AZ. State Dept. of Health no longer mandates that children must rest for a specific amount of time. Now, it requires centers to offer a ***resting opportunity*** to the children. Sunshine has interpreted this revision to mean that at our school, parents determine if their children should lie on a mat (with a library book) for a minimum of 30 minutes sometime early in the afternoon, OR if their children will play quietly (reading, doing puzzles, drawing, etc) in lieu of lying down. You know your child best. Let us know which option you prefer, you may call us for clarification (520.742-6874.) Thanks.

ACCIDENT AND MEDICAL POLICIES:

Sunshine has experienced only a few bloody accidents in 30 years. When it does happen, please know that nearly 100% of our faculty is trained in CPR & First Aid – and all of us hope we'll never need to rely on these skills. When we suspect a child needs to be taken to the doctor, we go to your file; find your 1st choice for an emergency phone number; and call. (If there's an especially traumatic situation, we call 911 first & then the parent.) Does your registration form give us current and correct information? Contact Kristen whenever you have updates. Thanks.

Additional medical notes:

- When a doctor prescribes antibiotics, a child may not return until 24 hours after the medication was started. Also, a child may not return to Sunshine until fever free for at least 24 hours. Even if a child is on antibiotics, he/she may not return until the fever (100° or more) is absent for at least 24 hours.
- If your child needs to take medication (OTC or prescribed), it must be brought to us in its original container, labeled with the child's full name. Sunshine will have you complete a medication permit and we will administer the medication as you have directed. The remainder will be returned to you at the end of the day.

About head lice:

- The Sunshine staff will be vigilant to the outbreak of head lice in the community or within the Sunshine families.
- We will pay particular attention to children and adults who repeatedly scratch their heads throughout the day.
- We'll take these individuals aside to search for head lice.
- If lice are found, the child/adult will be isolated & sent home. Parents will be given instructions on how to treat (and possibly retreat) the infestation.
- A child may return to Sunshine after treatment.
- The child will be checked by a staffer as s/he reenters Sunshine.

- If the child is deemed safe, he may return to school. S/he will be closely observed for itching during the day(s).
- The child's parents will be called if re-infestation is suspected.

****

Play yard policies:

Please know that we have many rules covering play time on our 10,000 square feet of exterior play space; staff train to these rules; the kids learn them; and we post signage throughout the yard so that everyone remembers how to use the equipment. We want the kids to run & swing & climb as safely as possible.

Generally:

- All children need to wear appropriate footwear in order to play safely in the play yard. Flip-flops are not appropriate. Sandals must have a heel strap. Athletic shoes are best.
- Girls should wear shorts under their skirts and dresses.
- We walk, not run, on the patios and on the garden paths.
- We don't climb on our trees or pull on the limbs or pick off the leaves or flowers.
- We don't disturb the ants or bees or lizards or spiders. We can observe them for hours.
- Kids find an adult when they need help.
- Each teacher monitors about 8 children.

Sunshine School

Rates for the August 2026 – May, 2027 Academic Year

Sunshine's Annual Fees:

- A Sunshine family pays a non-refundable registration fee of $150 per year for their child. That fee covers attendance from one school year to the next, including summer programs. **To recognize their commitment to our community and nation, Sunshine reduces the registration fee to $100 for the children of first responders and active military personnel. Thank you for your service.**
- Sunshine also has a program fee of $125 per semester. Please speak with Kristen about personalized payment arrangements, otherwise it is due in August and January.

Monthly Tuition: 8 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

- A **3-day preschool** program for our youngest 3's (dates of birth: March 2024-August 2024) costs $580.00 a month. This class meets on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
    1. If a parent wishes to add a Monday of Enrichment to the 3-day schedule, tuition becomes $680 a month. We can accept up to 8 students in this class.
    2. As an alternative to Enrichment on Monday, a parent may simply wish to add a Monday morning of double centers now and then. That cost is $50.
- The **4-day** class for our older 3's, turning 4 (dates of birth: September 2023-February 2024) costs $680.00.
- The **4-day Pre-K** for our 4 & 5 year old children. Classes will be arranged into 2 classes by dates of birth (March 2023-August 2023 & September 2022-February 2023). The cost of the Monday-Thursday is $680.
- The **5-day Pre-K** for our 4 & 5 year old children. This class includes an added day of enrichment in Kinder Readiness for the children who will start Kindergarten the following year. This class costs $780. This class meets from 8:30-12:30, no extended care is available.

Reserving childcare *before* or *after* school:
Sunshine is happy to provide childcare from 7 – 8 a.m. Monday through Friday mornings and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday through Thursday afternoons. We offer a little "siesta" time before 2 p.m. *when parents request that their child rests*. Ms. Billie, the director for the afternoon program, publishes a calendar of activities for the children, laced with lots of playtime both inside & outside on the play yard. Parents register & prepay for this care monthly; we will staff the program only for the number of children who have registered. The charge is $6 per half hour. If you unexpectedly need "drop-in" care or if you need to extend past your e.t.a., we'll be happy to accommodate you *if we have the staffing.* Lastly, the charge is $30 per half-hour for a late fee, which is any child staying after 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and after 12:30 p.m. on Friday. **Questions? SEE KRISTEN.**

- Tuition payment will always be due on the first of the month, August-May. If payment is not made by the 7th of the month, we add a late fee of $25 to your next bill. Your child may not be admitted after the second late payment unless you have made financial arrangements with the Director. We also reserve the right to refuse extended care services if tuition is delinquent.
- We only accept cash or checks, no credit cards. Please deposit checks into the secure metal "Payment" boxes at the Main & North Gates or into the box mounted on the interior wall near the front desk. Please see Kristen when paying cash, and place in envelope with child's name. Thank you.
- There is a $35.00 fee for a returned check.
- When two siblings attend Sunshine at the same time, we'll reduce tuition by 10% for the second child.
- If a family is having difficulties paying tuition, please know that we are always willing to listen to your needs. Sometimes, we are able to craft an arrangement which is beneficial to both of us. Please see Marla or Kristen to discuss financial arrangements.
- **Refund policy:** We do not give credit for days absent due to illness or vacation. We also do not "switch" days. A parent needs to give Sunshine a 2-week notice before withdrawing from school. Otherwise, you will be liable for the entire month of tuition. If you are leaving and have a credit in your account, we will be pleased to issue a refund check
- **Donating to Sunshine:** Sunshine was incorporated in 1984 as a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation. Our EIN is 74-2350552. Any person or group or foundation may bless Sunshine with money or goods. We issue letters of receipt for donations over $250. Sunshine is not able to provide State Tax credits. We thank you for your support.

****

Regarding our Curriculum

On the following pages, you'll read Sunshine's curriculum. Although our curriculum has largely remained the same for 40 years, we continually evaluate our program to ensure we are providing the best educational experience for your child. We evaluate our curriculum against Arizona's State Standards, and not only are we well aligned with these standards, Sunshine School exceeds the State's expectations in several areas. We also have evaluated our curriculum in light of Common Core, and find we offer a strong foundation above and beyond State Standards. Continually evaluating our program reflects the excellent teaching we provide and assures parents that the academic and social experiences their children are receiving at Sunshine are in harmony with kindergarten and Common Core expectations.

Because we believe all early childhood education should be both age AND individually appropriate, teachers adapt the curriculum to fit the needs of each class & each child. Some of our 3-year-old children don't know which end of a pencil is usable; some of our 5's can add in their heads. Both are normal and welcome at Sunshine.

We also recognize the critical importance of unstructured play. Therefore, before & after preschool and during recess, we encourage the children to just have fun doing whatever they wish. At these times, our work is to observe the children, help them when necessary, and keep them safe.

Because social development is rapid at this age, we include an affective section in our curriculum. We also devote a section of the curriculum to "Life Skills," focusing on many of the necessary tasks children learn both at home and at school. You'll notice that we don't offer computer work to our children. We think that they'll use computers all their lives, but the joys and lessons of childhood are available for only a few, brief years.

REMEMBER: AT NO TIME DO WE EXPECT MASTERY OF CURRICULUM ITEMS. The curriculum is simply meant to offer children & educators a world of educational opportunities.

The Sunshine School Curriculum

1. **Cognition** (things to know):
    - **A. Language development. How to:**
        1. follow directions
        2. listen attentively in different situations
        3. identify colors
        4. use age-appropriate sentence structure
        5. talk with others about personal experiences
        6. share self-expression & creativity through dictation of stories
        7. visually discriminate between likenesses & differences
        8. categorize things by groups
        9. follow left-to-right, top-to-bottom progressions
        10. identify upper- & lower-case alphabet letters
        11. discriminate between sounds
        12. associate letter symbols with sounds
        13. identify & use rhyming words, synonyms & antonyms
        14. recognize common types of texts: stories (fiction); poetry; non-fiction
        15. define the roles of author and illustrator
        16. describe the sequence of a story
        17. retell familiar stories, including key details
        18. identify real-life connections between words & their usage

B. <u>Mathematical skills</u>. How to:

1. distinguish, describe, and utilize shapes in a variety of ways
2. do rote counting, 0 - 20 +
3. identify the written symbols, 0 - 10 +
4. understand left and right
5. experience /describe spatial relationships
6. describe / compare attributes of things
7. sort and match
8. arrange items in a series or pattern
9. demonstrate an understanding of a one-to-one correspondence
10. identify greater than, less than, equal to
11. write numbers with no model
12. relate the written symbol with the number of objects in a group
13. demonstrate the concepts of addition, subtraction, and simple algebra (solving for what's missing)
14. demonstrate the concept of parts and whole
15. understand that money has value
16. identify articles of measurement: ruler, scale, thermometer, etc.

C. <u>Physical goals</u>. Development of:

1. large muscle coordination by hopping, skipping, jumping, bouncing balls, etc
2. non-locomotor or anchored movement by bending, twisting, rocking, swinging one's arms etc.
3. small muscle coordination by holding a writing implement correctly, coloring & drawing, using detail in pictures, using clay, cutting, etc.
4. eye-hand coordination by doing puzzles, sorting small objects, connecting dots, tracing, etc.

D. <u>Arts & Sciences</u>. To experience:

1. child-centered cooking projects
2. art classes with our art specialist
3. dancing, poetry, drama,
4. self-expression through role-playing, pretending; imitation of actions & sounds;
5. music, movement, singing
6. personal exploration through the appropriate use of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell
7. simple musical and rhythmic instruments
8. self-awareness: body, health, and emotions
9. appropriate safety measures
10. understanding and respect for our environment
11. animal and plant studies
12. simple astronomy and history
13. the concepts of time and routine
14. STEM: activities involving science, technology, engineering, and math

2. **The affective realm (social development):**
    A. **<u>Personal and group relationships</u>. To develop:**
        1. ability in making & expressing choices, plans, and decisions
        2. problem-solving skills encountered in daily situations
        3. competency in taking care of one's own needs
        4. appropriate self-expression of feelings and needs
        5. willingness to participate in large and small group, and solitary activities
        6. empathy for the needs and feelings of others
        7. positive relationships with Sunshine children and adults
        8. civility through politeness and the use of simple manners
        9. ability to eat together in a socially appropriate manner
        10. a sense of commitment to the family & Sunshine by taking responsibility for daily tasks
        11. a sense of commitment to the community by participating in charitable projects
        12. respect for all people

3. **Life Skills**
    A. **<u>Nutritional aspects</u>. To learn:**
        1. the difference between healthful "everyday" food & the "sometimes" fun food
        2. how to clean up spills
        3. how to set & clear the table
        4. how to experience new foods by using all 5 senses, then taking a bite or two

    B. **<u>Safety issues</u>. How to:**
        1. ride safely in a vehicle
        2. recognize the symbols for poisonous or dangerous substances
        3. avoid guns, lighters, matches, dangerous implements
        4. stay close to an adult in public places
        5. call 911; scream for help/run away when necessary
        6. exit buildings during a fire drill
        7. protect a baby sibling from harmful situations
        8. how to stay safe in Arizona's environment

    C. **<u>Social situations</u>. To develop:**
        1. manners by saying "Please" & "Thank you" and by writing thank-you notes & invitations
        2. comfort in saying "Hello" & "Good-bye" to friends (both children & adults)
        3. phone manners: learning not to interrupt when an adult is speaking on the phone; how to safely and politely answer the telephone
        4. an understanding of when it's appropriate to share OR to take turns
        5. the habit that we knock on a closed door before entering a room
        6. the conceptual difference between borrowing & stealing
        7. an understanding that tattling, whining, and lying are rarely appropriate
        8. strategies for dealing with bullies

    D. **<u>Personal tasks</u>. How to:**
        1. dress/undress; put on socks/shoes; select proper clothing for the environment
        2. comb hair, brush teeth, wash hands, etc.
        3. blow noses and cough without spreading germs

4. tend to bumps, scratches, bleeding, insect bites; know how to stay calm & when to get help in an emergency
5. protect yourself in the Arizona environment (sun safety)
6. respect others by being punctual (and that includes getting ready for school on time)
7. help with housekeeping: sweeping, dusting, washing windows, setting table, etc.
8. help with the laundry: gathering dirty items, folding & returning clothing to proper place
9. care for pets
10. tend a garden
11. engage in sustainability practices, such as recycling, composting, harvesting rainwater, etc
12. develop an "I CAN DO IT!" attitude

Reflections & observations from Sunshine Founder

Please read the following & ponder if the sentiments "feel right." If so, Sunshine would be a good preschool for your child –

- **Things I've learned About Kids & Childcare (*written in 1988 and STILL valid*):**
  1. Parting can be sweet, loud, & tearful sorrow. Please: give your child one hug, one kiss, one smile; say "See you (whenever);" and LEAVE! We'll call you if there's a problem.
  2. Forget cute clothes and fancy shoes. Kids should wear old, comfortable stuff and tough shoes. Can your child change into /out of the clothing to go to the bathroom? Do you mind if mud or paint comes home on shirts or shorts? AND: jewelry, scarves, and belts disappear. So please send us regular play clothes; we'll have a great time.
  3. We don't necessarily "share." We take turns. There's a big difference! Kids here have the right to say, "No, thank you. You can play next, but I'm playing with … now." (The children may not be rude or unkind when they say this.) (For further explanation of #'s 4 & 5, check out the **2012** book, It's OK Not to Share, by Heather Shumaker.)
  4. We teach our Sunshine Kids to tell the OTHER PERSON FIRST when there's a problem. "Please don't do that! It hurts me. I don't like that." If words don't work, then kids go to a teacher. We want children to be sensitive to another's situation and feelings; we also think kids can handle many of their own problems.
  5. We explain things to kids in a reasonable manner, and we have marvelous discussions! But we'll make you a deal: you believe only half the stuff they tell you about preschool & we'll believe about half the incredible stuff they tell us about YOU! We definitely believe in open communication, however, so always talk to us about your concerns.
  6. We use logical consequences, the if-you-do-this, then-this-will-happen approach. KIDS HAVE CHOICES AND THERE ARE RESULTS. We are consistent on this and it works. Time-outs help, too, for quiet thinking. (Check out www.loveandlogic.com)
  7. Simple, nutritious lunches and snacks are best. And, please, don't send anything adults need to open, slice, or heat; we just don't have the time and our license doesn't allow us to slice or heat (that would be "preparing" food.) Kids need to be able to handle lunch without frustration. We encourage your child to pack his lunch (with your wisdom guiding him.)
  8. Kids are naturally curious about their world. Intricate, elaborate toys are not necessary; blocks are. Playtime can be the most valuable learning situation for a young child. Ask your child to explain his play to you—what a joy!

9. Art is a basic necessity at Sunshine School. Art class projects are creative and educational and the results are breath-taking. As always, enjoyment and learning from the process are infinitely more important than the finished product. We celebrate with an annual Art Show.
10. We work! Everyone helps to pick up toys, clean up after lunch, and keep school tidy.
11. Kids go to the bathroom alone. Teachers do not wipe bottoms – unless it's a real emergency.
12. We invite you to share your interests with us. Would you like to come and show us how you: play the sax, bake bread, use a drill? We'd love it! You are welcome here anytime.

Here are some of the most important things your child is learning at preschool:

How to be a student

Children quickly learn their teacher's expectations and how to function at school. They learn how to conduct themselves in a classroom and other settings and how to be a part of a group. Your children have learned about acceptable behavior in different settings (story time or circle time, art, centers, snack and recess) and the rules and procedures of Sunshine. They know where to put their personal belongings upon entering school, the routine for hand washing, and how to line up before school starts. They have learned how to sit in a particular manner so that everyone can see and to raise their hands when they wish to speak. They also know the clean-up routine and manners expected at snack time. They are learning that what may be acceptable during recess is off limits inside the building. Ask your child about the bike rules. He or she can probably tell you that you have to first wait your turn on the bench until a bike or scooter becomes available. Then, you must begin at the starting line and proceed around the bike path in the direction of the arrows until you have gone around three times at which time you need to park your bike so that another child can have a turn.

Children also learn that they must exercise self-control. They can't just wander around the school doing whatever they would like. Rather than reacting immediately to a situation, the children are learning to regulate their behavior and emotions by taking time to think, reflect and delay gratification. This can be difficult at age three, but your children are making progress.

How to get along with others

Preschool offers opportunities for children to learn how to develop social skills and to connect with others without the help of a parent. Preschoolers learn how to approach other children, to initiate conversations and to be comfortable around their peers. They learn how to cooperate, negotiate and settle differences by expressing their feelings and empathizing with others. These social or interpersonal skills are essential for emotional well-being and academic success.

How to be independent

Children learn how to take responsibility for themselves and to perform tasks independently. The children take care of their own belongings, clean up after themselves, dress and use the bathroom independently, and complete their projects by themselves. At recess, they learn to navigate their way up the climber dome and tire. When children discover they are capable of many things, their confidence grows and it motivates them to tackle the next challenge. Although children need a lot of encouragement and modeling, they must be allowed to do things independently so they can learn through the process. As children take on more responsibility, they gain a sense of power and control over their environment and great satisfaction.

How to tell a story

Picture storybooks support children's development at the preschool level in many ways:

- stimulate children's imagination by introducing them to a wide range of experiences
- increase children's knowledge and understanding of other times and cultures and connect them to their own culture
- teach children about narrative structures such as plot sequences, story language, and character development
- provide children with good examples of oral language and expand their vocabulary and storytelling abilities
- develop children's thinking skills and problem-solving abilities
- increase children's appreciation of literature and promote a love of reading

Early experiences with books have a large influence on children's success in learning to read in later years. Pre-literacy involves far more than the ability to identify letters, numbers, or shapes. It includes skills such as oral language, the awareness of sounds, knowledge of the alphabet, and an understanding of common print concepts.

How to ask for help

Children learn to be more assertive & to ask for help when they need something or when another child is bothering them. They learn to rely on their peers & adults outside their family. These early experiences will help them develop good relationships with others once they enter kindergarten. Your children are learning that Sunshine is a safe community & that there is always someone available to help.

How to draw, paint, cut, and paste

When given art materials, children have an opportunity to express their creativity while developing their fine motor skills. Small muscle development is critical during the preschool years and will help them once they enter kindergarten and begin forming their letters.

How to build with blocks and construction materials

Because blocks can be used in a variety of ways, children learn important spatial skills and gain hands-on math experience. When playing with blocks and other manipulatives, children learn sorting, classifying, and patterning. They also give children a foundation for understanding division, fractions, and geometry in later years.

How to use their bodies in a variety of ways

Preschoolers have many opportunities during recess to strengthen their muscles and improve their coordination. Running, swinging, jumping, and playing with balls are fun ways in which the children learn how to control their bodies and develop large motor skills. Sunshine children also participate in music and dance. When children use muscles during exercise, they engage specific areas of the brain. Movement helps to form neural pathways for cognitive development, problem solving, and creativity. Movement is the only thing that unites all brain levels & integrates the right & left hemispheres in children.

How to investigate and explore

Preschoolers need many opportunities for hands-on, active learning. They are natural scientists and need time to explore, investigate, and experiment at their own pace and in their own way. Children develop new concepts or ideas when given an opportunity to engage in the process of discovery. The children are "learning how to learn" as they engage in developmentally appropriate play and respond to their surrounding environment.

Find us on Facebook:

Search for our page at Sunshine School in Oro Valley. We do have a private page, please see Kristen for more info. Join us for all the latest news & photos.

Thank you for spending so much time reading about Sunshine. We hope to see you soon.