



Family Handbook

21776 Palomar Street, Wildomar, CA 92595

(951) 678-3557 FAX (951) 678-0897

Email: admin@annesullivanschool.com

State License #330901543

Welcome to Anne Sullivan Preschool and Kindergarten! We have prepared this booklet to acquaint you with day-to-day life at Anne Sullivan. It addresses parents' most frequently asked questions, so we hope you will keep it handy for easy reference.

Reminder: Anne Sullivan Preschool is a smoke-free area, both indoors and outdoors. No smoking on the school property.

This school is open to all children regardless of race, creed, religion, ethnicity, gender or disability.

PHILOSOPHY

Our program works closely with parents to build a foundation for lifelong learning. Underlying all educational endeavors is the belief that children are unique individuals who develop in distinct developmental stages and that the child's sense of wonder and reverence for life, coupled with respect for others and joy for learning, is to be continuously nurtured.

MISSION

Anne Sullivan Preschool and Kindergarten is a nonprofit, interracial, nonreligious, nonsectarian institution dedicated to enriching children's lives by creating an environment in which the children as well as families and staff have the opportunity to develop into their full potential. Our school is a community of children and adults that fosters attitudes and ways of relating that make a better world.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school is open from 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday throughout the year, except for established vacation days which are listed yearly on the School Calendar. Children enrolled in the half-day program will attend from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Late Fee: The school closes promptly at 5:30 p.m. Parents are requested to come by 5:20 p.m. to have time to greet your child and teachers, pick up belongings, and sign out. If your child is picked up after the closing time of 5:30 a fee of \$10.00 every fifteen minutes per child will be charged. The late fee also will apply if a child who is enrolled in the half-day program is picked up after 12:15 p.m., the scheduled time.

TUITION AND PAYMENTS

Tuition is due in advance of service and is charged weekly. An invoice is issued at the beginning of each month for payment due for that month. If you would like to receive the monthly statement electronically, please provide your email address. A daily diaper fee will be charged for children who are using diapers. Parents will receive an invoice at the end of each month for this fee based on the number of days attended.

Payment schedules may be established on a weekly, biweekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. Regardless of payment schedule, tuition rates are calculated by the week. **Tuition must be paid in advance**—weekly, bi-weekly, or in 4 or 5-week periods. An invoice is issued at the beginning of each month for payment due for that month. Regardless of payment schedule, tuition rates are calculated by the week. If the tuition payment is not paid by Thursday morning, a \$15.00 late fee will be charged.

If a parent falls behind on tuition payment, the child will not be allowed to attend the school until payment is brought up to date **including the late fee paid.**

Checks (not cash) for tuition payments and other notes are put through the slot on the wall if the office door is closed. Receipts are given immediately for cash payments. Receipts for checks are filed in the Parent File if requested. Tuition will be charged for all absences. An exception is absences due to illness. Please refer to **“Absences Due to Illness”** section on this document.

* One week's tuition is charged as a deposit before a child starts in the school. This deposit will be held until the child leaves the school, at which time it will apply to his/her final week of tuition.

* Two weeks' notice is required before withdrawing a child from the school. If this notice is not given, tuition will be charged for those two weeks.

Tuition for the Kindergarten program is due through the last day of Kindergarten in June.

DROPPING OFF/PICKING UP CHILDREN

Arrival at and departure from school is an important transition for the young child. The teachers and families can work together to make it a meaningful time.

Dropping off: Please have your child wash his/her hands upon arrival at the classroom. Also, please direct your child to one of the teachers so they can greet each other, and alert your child's teacher of any circumstance that might influence the child's day at school (changes in the family, visiting grandparents, new pet, death, loss of job, nightmare, etc.) The teacher will perform a daily health check at this time.

Picking up: Check the whiteboard for daily activities or other news of the classroom so you can ask your child about **them**. Check your family file and attendance sheet for messages from the teachers. If team teachers are not present at this time to discuss any concerns, attempt to contact them by telephone. Supervising teachers are present to answer immediate questions or relay messages to team teachers.

Signing in/Out

State regulations require that the adult who drops off or picks up a child sign him/her in and out. A sign-in sheet is made available near the front entrance of each room. Parents should fill in their full legal name and the time.

Authorized Pick Up

NO unauthorized adult will be allowed to pick up a child. The following are approved authorizations:

- Persons whom parents have included on their child's registration papers under the section "PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK CHILD UP FROM SCHOOL."
- Persons for whom the parents have provided written permission. Written permission will be posted by the attendance list. If something unexpected comes up, you may send written permission, either with the person you are authorizing, by FAX (951) 678-0897 or email.

Any adult, including authorized persons, will be asked to show appropriate identification if they are unfamiliar to the staff member releasing the child. Please check at the office with the appropriate ID for clearance.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please drive safely in the school parking lots, remembering that children are often present. Always park in marked parking spaces to allow for free passage of emergency vehicles. Children are to be accompanied by an adult in the school parking lots. Please leave your car's motor turned off. When your car is idling, it emits harmful emissions that are linked with asthma attacks, lung disease,

allergies, and even cancer. If you need a car seat to take a child home, Anne Sullivan Preschool has one available for you to use.

*** Be present in those precious minutes with your child. Please do not use your cell phone during drop off or pick up.**

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

LEGAL HOLIDAYS (tuition due):

- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving, Thursday and Friday
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Thursday and Friday before Easter
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

SCHOOL VACATIONS (no tuition charged, specific dates to be provided)

- * Winter break: One week at the end of December
- * Spring break: One week in Spring
- * Summer break: One week in Summer

FAMILY VACATIONS

Each child receives one week of vacation from August to June. No tuition will be charged for this week, and parents may use them any time during the academic year. Parents are asked to inform the staff and office of their vacation plans. The week cannot be used as individual days. A child's days of attendance may be reduced during the summer.

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

The policy for absence due to illness is the following: One week of tuition will be credited after 15 absences within one school year for children who come 5 days a week; 12 absences within one school year for children who come 4 days a week; 9 absences within one school year for children who come 3 days a week; 6 absences within one school year for children who come 2 days per week. The absences need not be continuous. Parents are requested to notify the school if the child will be absent. If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, please inform the administration.

MEALS AND FOOD

The food served at school is homemade and prepared on the premises. Children who attend full days receive a midmorning breakfast/snack, a hot lunch and an afternoon snack daily. Children who attend half days will receive a midmorning breakfast/snack and a hot lunch. The school participates in the Child Care Food

Program. If there is a need, children who arrive at the school before 8:00 a.m. may bring a breakfast with them and eat it at the school.

If you bring food for your child, please mark it with the child's name and the date that you bring it. If your child has any diet restrictions, please inform the Administration. The Educational Director and the Administrative Assistant will collaborate with the parents, the classroom teachers and the kitchen director to provide appropriate substitute food for children with diet restrictions.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Families are provided with a file in the classroom marked with the child's last name. This file is used for communication from the administration and the classroom teachers to the parents. This communication includes newsletters, accident reports, tuition invoices and receipts, notices, and reminders. Parents are invited to use this file to communicate with the parents for such things as birthday party invitations and thank you notes. If you wish to communicate with the classroom teachers, there is a file marked "Teachers." The parent file is not to be used for solicitations. The newsletter and other information is sent electronically. Please provide the office with your email address if you have one. **The "Administration File" is for surveys and communication with the office.**

ILLNESS

Parents should not send children to school with a contagious illness such as cold or flu. In case of illness, the child needs to be picked up by a parent or parent-approved adult within an hour. A child cannot stay at the school if s/he:

- Has a fever of 100 or higher taken under the arm or 101 taken orally
- Has an infection of the eyes, such as conjunctivitis, or of the upper-respiratory system
- Complains of not feeling well
- Vomits or has diarrhea that is not associated with changes of diet and cannot be contained by the child's ability to use the toilet
- Cries inconsolably
- Has severe coughing and/or sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Has a skin rash accompanied by behavior change or fever that has not been identified by a phone call or in writing by a physician
- If the child manifests less serious symptoms of illness, parents will be informed and asked to remain in close contact with the school in case the condition worsens.

To return to school a child must be fever free. Please take your child's temperature before administering fever reducing medicine such as acetaminophen. If antibiotics have been prescribed they must be used for a full 24 hours before the child returns to school.

MEDICATION

In accordance with state law, staff can administer medication to children only when it is accompanied by specific instructions signed by a physician. Medications, including those that are over-the-counter, must be in the original bottle, marked with the child's full name, and, in the case of liquid medications, be accompanied by a measuring device. Nebulizers require a Consent/Verification form which is available in the office. Parents will be asked to fill out a "medication slip" which indicates the days, time and amount of medicine to be given. Medications will be placed under lock and key.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Please bring the following items:

Jacket/Coat/Sweater (seasonal): CLEARLY MARKED

Please take all outer garments home at the end of each day.

Bedding: CLEARLY MARKED

Bedding consists of two articles. The bottom piece of bedding should be a flat sheet to cover a 2 feet by 5 feet cot. The top may be a sheet or blanket of your choice that fits in the child's cubby. Please take bedding home periodically, at least every 5 days the child attends school, to be laundered.

Extra Clothing: An extra set of clothing should be brought and left at the school. It should include underpants, socks, and a complete change of outer clothing. When soiled clothing is sent home, parents should bring a clean set to replace it.

WHAT TO WEAR

Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play, weather and air quality permitting. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. As there is often a wide temperature variance during the day, it is advisable that you send your child to school with clothing layered for warmth in the early morning that can be taken off as the temperature warms up. Messy art, interactive and creative activities are planned every day, and your child will want to participate, so send your child in clothes that can be washed.

We encourage the children's independence. Velcro or slip-on sneakers that your child can manage are most appropriate. For their safety, please send children with shoes in which they can run, jump, and play actively. Please avoid open toed shoes. PLEASE NO FLIP FLOPS OR BACKLESS SANDALS.

WHERE TO FIND THINGS

Children's work: In children's file boxes.

Written Communication between school and parents (including monthly newsletter, announcements of special events, tuition invoices when not sent electronically, and notification of minor accidents): Under the child's last name in the "Parent File Box" near the front door of each classroom.

Weekly menu: Posted on the bulletin board of each classroom.

School closings: Distributed at the beginning of each school year. This handbook, "Yearly tuition and Vacation Schedule," newsletter, notices in each classroom, and on the web site.

Medications: Under lock and key, please check with classroom teachers. Parents are requested to review the medication permission slip to find out when the medicine was administered and by whom, and take home expired medication and replace it.

Soiled clothing: Hamper in the children's bathroom. A clothes pin marked "Clothing" will be clipped to the parent's file.

Educational material for sharing: In a special place for this purpose in each classroom
Information on community events: The bulletin board at the entrance of the school next to the office.

Information on parenting and parenting classes: Our library has resources for parents, including a variety of articles, CD's, videos and books on guidance, child development, special needs, etc. Consult the Educational Director.

WHERE TO PUT THINGS

Jackets, coats and sweaters: Hooks in each room (All outer wear brought to school should be marked and have a loop or other means for hanging.) *Bedding:* In individual cubby. *Medicines* (accompanied by permission slip): Give them to a teacher who will place them in a locked medicine box. Please inform if the medication needs refrigeration. Note: All unmarked jackets, sweaters or unclaimed toys will be removed from the school for 2 weeks and held in storage for an additional week, after which they will be donated to a charitable organization.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Anne Sullivan Preschool and Kindergarten has an open-door policy: Parents and family are welcome to visit at any time at your convenience and spend some time with your children and participate in classroom activities. However, planned visits are also welcome. Each child's home environment is a vital resource for the children's learning experiences. We enthusiastically encourage parents, family members and friends to come to the classroom and share their knowledge, abilities, interests and customs with us.

To ensure the health and safety of the children, all volunteers who mingle with the children are required to be immunized against influenza, pertussis, and measles. You may sign and submit a written statement attesting that you have been immunized as required until you can acquire proof of vaccinations.

While teachers are conducting inside classroom activities, parents are welcome to converse or socialize outside the classroom, so as not to interfere with the normal functioning of inside activities.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Parents are welcome to contact the teachers daily to briefly transmit information about the child or classroom events. If you wish to give us special instructions for the day, please put your request in writing, dated, and signed.

Parents are welcome at any time to schedule an appointment to speak with the classroom teacher or Educational Director. Teachers will plan conferences with each child's family to facilitate a good relationship among the parents and teachers, to create a greater understanding of the family's ethnicity and the child's needs and characteristics, and to share observations and assessment results of the child's development and learning. If parents wish to receive written feedback on a daily basis, they may make arrangements during a parent/teacher conference regarding how this will be carried out.

ASSESSMENT OF CHILD'S PROGRESS

Team teachers are trained in In-Services and college courses how to conduct assessments based on authentic observations of each child. Observations on all areas of children's development and learning are done during the daily routines, planned activities, group games, circle times, individual conversations with the children, dramatic play and other forms of play. Teachers write anecdotal records, complete check lists, take pictures of children, select work samples, and document observations of behaviors. These are compiled in the child's portfolio and are kept confidential. Preschool teachers use these informal assessments to inform the written progress reports given to parents, as well as the formal assessment tool they use during the year, Teaching Strategies GOLD™. This is offered to parents to review and contribute with their knowledge of their children.

Kindergarten teachers use the above informal methods of assessment to inform their written Progress Report Cards given to parents twice a year (in January and June).

PHOTOGRAPHS

Each fall the children are photographed by a professional photographer. There is no obligation to purchase these photographs.

POLICY REGARDING CHILDREN'S PHOTOGRAPHS

Anne Sullivan Preschool requires all parents to request authorization from the office if they wish to publish any photograph taken at the school, including pictures of their children's school friends, on the Internet or other public places. For confidentiality reasons, some parents have not given authorization for their

children's photos to appear in any public site, display, newsletter or movie outside the school's walls.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

Please assume direct responsibility for supervising at all times by sound and sight all children whom you bring to school who are not enrolled. Parents and those authorized by the parents are also responsible for the children coming to and from school and in the parking lot. Please keep your child by your side when accompanying him/her from the car to the classroom until the supervising teacher takes over.

ON BRINGING TOYS FROM HOME

The school is equipped with toys, games, books and learning materials for the children's enjoyment and development. Play has been defined as a "child's work." Latest research has found that when children are trained in socio-dramatic and/or fantasy play they increase their ability for perspective taking, group cooperation, social participation and impulse control. Young children commonly wish to bring toys from home. Since this is an educational setting, we ask you to keep at home toys that are highly structured, realistic toys with features that can be used only one way. Your child can bring to school educational materials that encourage creativity, symbolic play, skill development, tool mastery and cooperation. Your discernment is essential in determining when your child is ready to share with his/her companions.

The following are examples of things to bring:

- A small stuffed toy for nap time
- A photo album
- A book, song or story tape or instructive video, CD or DVD appropriate for young children that would enhance the topic the children are studying
- Things from nature like shell or rock collections in unbreakable containers
- A didactic game, card or table game that reinforces counting, sorting, association, or science skills in a nonviolent way
- Open-ended material that can be used in multiple ways, such as a set of blocks or art materials
- Items from family's ethnic, cultural background to awaken interest and initiate discussion of your cultural background

Examples of things that stay at home:

- Realistic toys with features that can only be used one way
- Toys or other materials that stimulate imitation and trigger repetitive violent or aggressive play
- Toys with many and small pieces that can easily get lost
- Delicate and breakable items
- Makeup

BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

We try to make the child's birthday and holidays a special day, but we also respect cultural or religious diversity. Should they wish to do so, parents are welcome to provide something special for the children, such as an activity, craft, or a healthy and nutritious lunch or snack. Please follow these safety guidelines to avoid choking: Children younger than age four are not served hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, spoonful of peanut butter, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Please consult with the teachers about children with allergies. See Health Guidelines for healthy treat suggestions.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Children are treated with dignity and respect. To support the children in their cognitive, emotional and behavioral self-regulation, teachers create a predictable and developmentally appropriate environment and schedule, and are consistent, trustworthy and responsive to each child's strengths and needs. Classroom rules help set limits and make children feel safe and secure. Teachers use positive guidance strategies to promote the development of self-regulation. These include modeling language to express needs and emotions, redirection, changing the environment to meet specific needs, offering choices, and conflict resolution skills. Specific interventions will be created by the teachers together with the family when a challenging behavior persists.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Parents are invited to make their telephone numbers and email addresses available to other parents who may request them for play dates, meeting each other, or for planning special events. If you would NOT like your telephone number shared with other families, please inform the office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All records and information concerning your child are shared with the Administration, teaching staff, hired professional consultants, and regulatory authorities. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members and anyone mentioned above who have an obligation of confidentiality shall require written familiar consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).

We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest. Assessment information and screening results are in the custody of and used by the Administration and Staff of Anne Sullivan Preschool and Kindergarten solely for the welfare and development of the child.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

When a parent has a concern or complaint about some aspect of our childcare program, the following steps should be taken to help resolve the issue as promptly as possible:

If applicable, the parent should discuss the issue with the teacher involved. If no resolution is reached with the teacher, the parent should then discuss the issue with the Educational Director. The Educational Director will receive all the facts from both the parent and any staff members that are involved with the issue. If the director's decision is unsatisfactory to the parent, the parent may request a mediation session with one of the officers of the Board of Trustees of the school.

Anne Sullivan Preschool will make every effort to resolve complaints expeditiously, keeping the safety and well-being of the children and staff members a priority.

To report a complaint or concern you may report to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) hot line: 1-844-LET-US-NO. (1-844-538-8766). All staff members have a Criminal Record Clearance from the FBI and DOJ. A staff member accused of abuse or maltreatment will be placed on administrative leave from their position until an investigation is completed. If the charges are found to be true, employment will be terminated.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

Besides providing a healthy and safe environment in which children learn and grow, Anne Sullivan Preschool introduces healthy living habits to the children. Exercising the mind and the body in appropriate ways and eating nutritional foods can lay a healthy foundation which will affect them throughout their lives.

Physical activity is important for children's healthy growth. Moving supports the healthy development of the entire body: hearts, lungs, muscles, and bones, as well as the neural pathways which children later use to read, write, spell and do math operations. All children need, and benefit from, at least sixty minutes of physical activity every day. In our ample and shaded play yard, the children find many activities that help them enjoy physical activity such as walking, climbing, riding tricycles, skipping, hopping, running, playing catch and jumping rope. These activities also stimulate their imaginations, develop social skills and encourage creative play.

For these same reasons, Anne Sullivan Preschool limits the use of videos, television and computer games. New research has shown that these electronic entertainments overstimulate children's nervous systems and block their neurological development.

Nutritious foods are also a basis for health and development. A well-balanced, home cooked lunch is provided. Children are introduced to healthy foods and

guided to make sound nutrition choices. The school meets the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

When bringing foods for special events, please bring foods and drinks that contain natural fresh fruits and vegetables and are low in fat, salt and sugar and do not contain high fructose corn syrup and trans-fat. Also, check with the teachers to determine whether children in the classroom have any food restrictions. Snacks should include two different food groups, as required by the CACFP. These guidelines apply to Goodie Bags if food is inside them. Some examples of nutritious snacks include: fresh fruit salad with low fat yogurt; mini bagels with low fat cream cheese; cupcakes or cookies made with natural ingredients such as fruits, vegetables, apple juice, oats, canola oil, raisins, cheese; cheese and whole wheat crackers; low fat frozen yogurt with shredded almonds as a topping, baked tortilla chips with a low-fat bean or avocado dip.

SUGGESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

Communication among parents, staff and administration is one of our foremost concerns. Feel free to contact administrative staff by phone, e-mail, or by visiting the office. For questions and suggestions regarding registration, payments, vacation weeks, extra days, health, safety and maintenance contact Diana Autumn, Administrative Assistant. For questions and suggestions regarding your child's adaptation, special visitors, relationships with staff, parents, and children, curriculum and assessment of your child's progress, resources and referrals, contact Margarita Blatman, Educational Director. As Anne Sullivan Preschool is accredited by the NAEYC Academy, you will be participating in a comprehensive annual evaluation that measures progress toward NAEYC's ten standards. A report of the annual evaluation findings will be communicated to you via newsletters. The results are used as a basis for further improvements. We welcome your suggestions as to how to improve any aspect of our program.