The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about the policies and procedures at Susan Gray School. It is our desire to have a good relationship with all our SGS families. We encourage you to become familiar with the handbook. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to bring them to the attention of your child’s teacher or any of our administrative staff.

**SGS Four-Fold Mission:**

The Susan Gray School has a four-fold mission to service, training, research, and demonstration. Specifically, the SGS is dedicated to:

1. **Providing high quality services to young children and their families.**
   - We provide individualized instruction for all children using evidence-based and developmentally appropriate practices.
   - We value family participation in their children’s education and we seek to be collaborative with families in supporting their children's development across home and school.

2. **Supporting the training of individuals studying for careers related to early childhood development and education.**
   - Teachers, staff, students, therapists, paraprofessionals, families, and children are participating, respected citizens of the SGS community.
   - We serve as a training site for Peabody College’s Early Childhood Special Education master’s program and students are a very visible and valuable part of our school. All ECSE students complete one or more practicum at SGS, and much of their coursework includes assignments that involve SGS classrooms.
   - SGS has partnerships with other Vanderbilt departments and local universities to support student training.

3. **Supporting research on early childhood development, early childhood disabilities, and early childhood education and special education.**
   - Graduate students often complete theses in the classrooms of Susan Gray School. The topics of theses range from positive peer interactions to the benefits of family style dining.

4. **Demonstrating high quality early educational models that serve young children with special needs and typically developing children.**
   - We are a Pyramid Model school that promotes social emotional learning and provides positive behavior support for all children.
   - We believe that strong teaming among teachers, staff, therapists and other instructional personnel is key to providing excellent instruction and creating positive classroom environments.

More information about the four-fold mission and how it directly relates to your child can be found in the mission-related information and consent form found in your enrollment packet.
SGS Philosophy

We believe that...

- All children are individuals with unique strengths, needs, and personalities.
- Families are essential to their child’s physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth.
- Children are an integral part of their family.
- *Early childhood inclusion* means every child has the supports they need to be a participating member of the group.
- Children grow and learn best when they can explore their environment, engage in developmentally appropriate activities, and interact with peers and competent caring adults.
- The SGS community offers valuable resources and opportunities that can support the child, the family, and the school.

As staff of SGS, we are committed to ensuring our program provides children with a safe and accepting environment that promotes independence and includes frequent opportunities to practice and successfully master developmentally appropriate cognitive, communication, motor, social, and adaptive skills.

Programs of SGS

The SGS Inclusive Classroom Program is one of only a few fulltime early childhood education programs in TN where children of all abilities play and learn alongside one another. The SGS Inclusive Classroom Program can serve up to 85 children approximately 35% of whom are children with special needs.

The SGS Community Outreach Program provides early intervention services to children and families in their homes, local child care centers, or other community settings. The Community Outreach Program serves children with disabilities, birth to age 3.
**SGS Policies and Procedures**

**Arrival, Pick-up**

**Early Care Arrivals:**
The Early Care program operates between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Children in Early Care can be dropped off in the Early Care room anytime during the 7:30 to 8:30 hour.

**School Day Arrivals:**
The SGS school day begins at 8:30 a.m. Parents who arrive with their children before 8:30 are responsible for supervision of their child until the classrooms open for the school day. Morning snack is offered between 8:30 and 9:00. If you want your child to participate in morning snack, they need to arrive by 8:50. Morning snack is not served after 9:00.

**Late Arrivals:**
It is important to us that all children are present to participate in the day’s activities. Because late arrivals disrupt the morning routine, we discourage arrivals after 9:00 a.m. by charging a late fee of $1.00 per minute. We understand mornings with young children can sometimes be difficult, so we excuse one late arrival (up to 15 minutes) each month.

**Excused Late Arrivals:**
If your child has a scheduled appointment that necessitates a late arrival, we will not charge the late fee if you bring verification of the appointment to the office when you bring your child to school. Please note we do not accept children between 11:45 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., to avoid disrupting nap time. It is also important to check with your child’s teacher about the lunch schedule. We cannot hold lunch for excused late arrivals.

**Late Pick-up:**
To discourage late pick-up, we also charge a $1.00 per minute fee. A statement will be sent to you as we update your account with a late fee. Please note we do not extend the once-a-month fee waiver for late pick-ups. Late pick-up fees apply to all pick up times (3:00, 4:30 and 5:30).

**After 5:30 Pick-up:**
SGS closes at 5:30 p.m. and families who purchase Late Care are expected to pick up their children before the school closes. Only three pick-ups past 5:30 per year are allowed. After the third pick-up past school closing, your child will no longer be permitted in the Late Care program.
Attendance Tracker

The Attendance Tracker is a computerized key-pad located in the main hallway just outside the school office. State regulations require that children are signed in and out of school each day and we use the Attendance Tracker for this purpose. Upon enrollment in SGS, parents are assigned an Attendance Tracker pin numbers and shown how to use the key-pad. We ask that you become familiar with this tracking system and make sure your child is signed in and out each day. If you have authorized another adult to pick up your child, communicate this information with the office staff and the staff will assign an individualized pin number. If a code is lost or forgotten, the office staff will be happy to help you retrieve it. Please note that the tracker system is the method used to track late arrivals and pick-ups. Please be sure to have your child signed in at the appropriate times to avoid late fees.

Behavior Management: Positive Behavior Support

At the Susan Gray School, we take a positive approach to supporting children’s behavior. We use the Pyramid Model to address the social and emotional development of young children and to address challenging behavior. The Pyramid Model is about promoting positive social and emotional development and preventing challenging behavior. We believe all children are communicating at all times even when they use inappropriate behavior. It is our job to help students develop appropriate strategies for communicating their wants, needs, and feelings so that they don’t have to engage in challenging behavior.

There are four levels in the Pyramid Model: Nurturing and Responsive Relationships, High Quality and Supportive Environments, Targeted Social and Emotional Strategies, and Individualized Intensive Interventions. Each of these levels includes a set of practices designed to teach children specific skills to help children participate in the learning environment and learn to navigate social situations in positive ways.

Using the Pyramid Model creates a school environment where children are highly engaged in learning activities and are able to participate in quality learning across all areas of development. Also, when children understand how to behave and interact with others, teachers are able to spend less time managing behavior and more time providing instruction. More information about the Pyramid Model and family resources to support social and emotional development in young children can be found at www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel.
Sometimes, even when we use high quality promotion and prevention strategies, some, some children may exhibit challenging behavior. When this happens, we have a system in place for collaborating with families and teaching teams to understand the message of the child’s behavior and develop a plan that uses a positive approach to teaching and supporting more appropriate behaviors.

Parents are important partners in promoting social and emotional development, and we believe that partnering with you for your child is essential. See the “Pyramid Model Parent Guide” on our website for more information about each level of the Pyramid model, examples of specific practices that you might see being used at school, and some examples of things you could try at home. As part of the Pyramid Model, we have developed the SGS “STAR” behavior expectations for the whole school: “We are Safe,” “We are Team members,” And “We are Respectful.” We look forward to collaborating with you in helping all our students become “SGS STARS!”

Birthdays
At SGS, we want birthdays to be a special occasion for all children. We do not, however, want birthday celebrations to overshadow the daily curriculum of the classroom program. Families choose to celebrate birthdays at home differently, and at SGS, we choose to celebrate birthdays VERY simply. If you want to bring a favorite snack to honor your birthday child, we ask that you check with your child’s teacher about food allergies and special diets. Please note these treats must be brought in pre-packaged containers. Please also note: SGS is a Nut-Free school!

Changes in Enrollment
If you need to withdraw your child from SGS, or make other changes in your child’s enrollment status please contact the SGS Office. You are welcome to stop by the welcome desk, call 615-322-8200 or email sgsoffice@vanderbilt.edu. If you are withdrawing your child from SGS we ask that you respect our need to enroll another child. We require a two-week notice, but appreciate a longer notice when possible.

Change of Placement and/or Expulsion Policy
- The administration of Susan Gray will work closely with the parents, teachers, therapists and MNPS staff, if applicable, if a change of setting or expulsion is deemed necessary.
- Other options shall be considered prior to a change or expulsion, such as but not limited to reducing the number of days or amount of time the child may attend, or if applicable, referrals to the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), Early Intervention System, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Procedures shall be developed to allow for a planned transition of the child to another program if expulsion must occur.
- Data gathered throughout the process will be maintained. This could include a behavior plan, day to day teacher reports, incident reports, etc.

Child Abuse and Neglect
At SGS we are aware of our role in preventing, not just reporting, child abuse and neglect. As part of Vanderbilt University our staff must adhere to Tennessee state law on mandatory child abuse
reporting to either the appropriate law enforcement agency or the state hotline operated by the Department of Children’s Service. In addition to external reporting, Vanderbilt has a mandatory internal child abuse reporting procedure. If you have reason to believe abuse or inappropriate behavior has occurred concerning a minor participating in a Vanderbilt University program, please consult the program director, or Risk and Insurance Management (615-936-0660), or report via the Vanderbilt hotline at 866-783-2287. The Tennessee Child Abuse reporting hotline number is 877-237-0004. Child Care Licensing

TN Child Care Licensing are available online by clicking CCL and a copy of these regulations, along with a Summary of Childcare Approval Requirements, is available in the SGS office. Please familiarize yourself with the information in these documents. We are happy to provide you with a copy of the documents upon your request.

Child Records and Confidentiality

School records containing enrollment information are kept on every child in SGS. If your child is in a special education program at SGS, we also keep IEP and IFSP information. Parents may look at their child’s school records at any time, and may request copies of any information in the file. Teachers and staff at SGS respect your right to confidentiality and we do not share information about you or your child with outside agencies or professionals unless we have your written permission. Often families ask questions concerning individual children in their child’s classroom. Due to the confidentiality policy, however, SGS staff cannot talk to parents about children other than their own. Children’s records are maintained for 11 years and public notification is made prior to destroying records.

Classroom Supplies

Bug Spray:

SGS staff will apply bug spray to children when mosquitoes are present. Bug spray is included in the cost of tuition. However, families wanting their child to use a particular brand of bug spray may bring a bottle labeled with the child’s name.

Clothing:

At SGS we are busy and your child will likely get dirty at times! Thus, we encourage families to dress their children in clothing that will withstand finger paint, glue, and dirt. We also ask that all children have a complete change of clothes at school. In the winter, our children go outside even on cold days, so please make sure your child has a warm jacket, mittens, and hat. In the summer, each classroom enjoys water play once a week and we ask that children come to school in their swimsuit and “water play” shoes on their designated water play day. A change of clothes for after water play should be brought for your child on these days. Please make sure all of your child’s personal belongings are clearly marked with his or her name, including shoes.

Diapers:

If your child is not toilet trained, please send diapers to school. Most parents find it convenient to send a large supply. We will remind you when the supply gets low.
**Nap Time Items:**
The school provides a cot, sheet and blanket for each child. These are laundered each week. If your child likes to sleep with a certain naptime blanket or small stuffed animal, it is fine to bring them. The blanket will be sent home once a week to be laundered. Because the stuffed animal will only be used at nap time, please consider the size of the animal brought to school. It should fit safely inside your child’s cubby.

**Safe Footwear:**
SGS children are very active, especially outdoors! As a preventative measure against potential accidents, children must wear full shoes, such as athletic sneakers, or sandals with a solid rubber sole and a heel strap. On water play days, children must wear water shoes. These typically have rubber soles and are made of mesh and nylon. **Flip-flops or crocs are not appropriate for active SGS play, even on water play days!**

**Tissues and Wipes:**
SGS provides wipes and tissues for children enrolled in the classroom program. Families wanting their child to use a particular brand of wipes may bring them labeled with the child’s name.

**Sunscreen:**
Because our playgrounds are fairly shady, we do not routinely apply sun screen. However, on sunny days when protection is needed, SGS staff will apply sunscreen to children as needed. Sunscreen is included in your tuition. Families wanting their child to use a particular brand of sunscreen may bring a bottle labeled with the child’s name.

**Communication:**
As a SGS family, you are very important and we want to be sure you stay informed of your child’s experiences at school. Two-way communication between teachers and families is very important to us. Teachers will communicate using an app called Brightwheel. This is an immediate update that will come to you throughout the day. We encourage teachers and families to connect as often as possible to ensure that information regarding your child is shared.

We encourage parents to communicate with teachers in person, by email, or by phone. Your teacher will give you contact information at the beginning of the year or once your child is enrolled in their classroom. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled each fall and spring and our teachers are always happy to schedule a conference with you after school or during the lunch hour. The teacher will respond to you within 24 hours of you sending a message.

Please note that our teachers have classroom responsibilities during the drop-off and pick-up times, so if you need to have a conversation with your child’s teacher beyond daily information, we ask that you schedule a meeting.
We also want to keep our families informed of school events occurring throughout the year. We distribute reminders and newsletters via email with all families. We post flyers near the entrances, on the Parent Board, and near the attendance tracker.

Parents can easily communicate information to and through the SGS Office to your child’s classroom by calling 615-322-8200 or emailing sgsoffice@vanderbilt.edu.

**Curriculum & Assessment**

**Curriculum**

Our commitment to research-based, high quality, inclusive early childhood education hinges on the understanding that instruction for all children should be developmentally appropriate, child-directed, and engagement focused. The following curricula and approaches provide us with the platform from which to do so:

**The Creative Curriculum**

Used by teachers in both the Toddler and Preschool villages, the Creative Curriculum provides teachers with a research-based framework and resources to encourage and support every type of learner using developmentally appropriate practices. With a focus on a classroom environment equipped with learning centers and a variety of materials children can access in a variety of ways, the Creative Curriculum promotes child-directed learning and hands-on exploration.

**The Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence**

The Pyramid Model is a systematic framework rooted in responsive adult-child relationships that promotes the social and emotional development of all children through a high quality learning environment, targeted social emotional supports, and individualized intervention for children with persistent challenging behaviors. This approach provides teachers in every classroom at SGS with the resources to support every child’s unique social-emotional development while also providing a systematic, data-based system for positive behavior support. See additional information about the Pyramid Model on our website or at www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel.

**Connect4Learning**

The Connect4Learning curriculum focuses heavily on teaching math, literacy, and social/emotional skills designed to provide children ages 3-5 with repeated opportunities to practice prerequisite skills for kindergarten. For example, children will learn shape identification in a small group setting and then given opportunities for independent exploration of shapes during center time. Additionally, C4L provides science-themed, highly engaging units of study such as, museums (including dinosaurs and castles) and the environment (including animals and the coral reef). By providing these types of activities we are able to teach children the skills they need
to participate in academic-based instruction and independent work-times often required of children in Kindergarten

The curriculum and approaches to early learning listed above align with our philosophy that children learn best when they can explore their environment, engage in developmentally appropriate activities, and interact with peers and competent caring adults.

Assessment
In addition to child screening, ongoing assessment is a key component to providing children with meaningful, appropriate, and engaging experiences. Ongoing, authentic assessment requires teachers to systematically collect data to support each child’s growth regarding curricular and individual objectives over time. These data are kept within a child portfolio.

Portfolios
All children have a portfolio including individualized learning objectives developed using assessment evidence and family feedback. This portfolio is divided into the following:

AEPS domains:
- Fine motor
- Gross motor
- Cognitive
- Adaptive
- Social-Communication
- Social

The types of documentation found within a child’s portfolio could include:
- Work Samples
- Observations (Anecdotal Notes)
- Photographs and Video Samples
- Checklists and Matrices

Children’s most recent assessment records will be stored within their portfolio, in a secure location only accessible to the classroom teachers and administrative staff. Families can access their child’s portfolio and assessment records upon request in the presence of their child’s teacher or a member of the administrative team.

The SGS employs the following tools and procedures for child assessment: Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children (AEPS)
AEPS is a curriculum-based assessment developed as a strong alternative to norm-referenced tests to support the delivery of quality instruction and intervention to children with delays or disabilities and their families. The teachers in every classroom at the SGS use the following practices when assessing young children:
An AEPS assessment is completed on each child a minimum of three times per year, in September, January, and May. Assessment information will be shared with families. A minimum of two parent-teacher conferences will be held each year (typically in the fall and spring) to develop or revise individual learning goals, share their child’s portfolio, review highlighted evidence, and discuss their child’s development at home and school. In addition, the SGS has an open door policy whereby parents can discuss their child’s development with teachers at any time.

During weekly planning sessions teachers discuss the data collected for each child and use that data to inform their planning. Data on children’s individual learning objectives is used to guide and refine instruction, as well as to monitor each child’s progress over time. In some instances data collected may indicate the need for additional screening or further diagnostic assessment. In these instances teachers, with the support of the Associate Director, will meet with families to share their findings and recommend additional screening or further diagnostic assessment.

There are many purposes and uses for assessment. These purposes and uses include:

• arranging for developmental screening and diagnostic assessment when indicated,
• identifying children’s interests and needs,
• describing developmental progress and learning of children,
• improving curriculum and adapting teaching practices and the environment based on individual children’s needs,
• planning program improvement, and communicating with families.

**Early Care and STAR CARE:**

SGS offers Early Care and STAR CARE to families who choose the extended-day tuition option. Early Care is provided from 7:30 am to 8:30 am and STAR CARE from 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Early Care and STAR CARE is provided for combined groups of children with the adult child ratio meeting state guidelines. Classrooms used for Early Care and STAR CARE typically rotate each week. Families using STAR CARE are discouraged from entering closed rooms and allowing children to play with toys or classroom furnishings that have been cleaned and sanitized for the next day.

**Emergency Situations:**
At SGS, we try to be prepared for emergency situations. Upon enrollment, families provide us with emergency contact information and authorization for emergency treatment procedures. We update emergency information each year at spring re-enrollment, and it is very important that you let us know any time your emergency contact information and telephone numbers change.

Should your child be seriously injured or become ill at school, we will contact you. If we cannot reach you, we will call someone you have designated for emergencies. A SGS staff member will stay with your child until you arrive. If your child needs immediate medical attention, we will call 911. If a weather related emergency should arise, children are taken to interior rooms in the school.

Should there be damage to the building, children will be evacuated to the 1st floor of the Peabody Education Library. Administrators and teachers will have emergency contact information so they can quickly notify families of the relocation site. SGS staff will wait with the children until all have been picked up by their parents.

**Family Activities:**
At SGS we value family involvement. Each year we host several activities especially for families. In September, families are invited to our Family Pot Luck. In October, we have our Punkin’ Parade. The SGS annual Holidays Around the World event is held each year in November or December. In February, grandparents (or other special friends) are invited to the Grandparents’ Tea. In May, families are invited to the SGS Family Picnic. Classrooms and the Outreach program host special events throughout the year. The Parent Committee meets regularly to plan activities that support the school. Susan Gray School is fortunate to have so many wonderful people volunteering their time to make our school the best it can be! If you are interested in being part of any of these activities please stop by the office and let us know. Each year we invite families to tell us about their satisfaction with all areas of our program. Your comments, concerns, and praise are highly valued.

**Field Trips:**
Field trips are ongoing activities at SGS that enrich our children’s learning. However, at SGS they happen a little differently. We are fortunate to be located on a college campus where there are many things to explore and see. Children will often take walking field trips on the Peabody campus. Sometimes, these walking trips may extend beyond the Peabody campus. When these situations occur, you will receive a Field Trip Permission Form from your child’s teacher indicating where the class will be going and the educational purpose of the trip. Field trips range from simple campus nature walks or off-campus trips on the city bus to the public library. Field trips are always well staffed and supervised, but we welcome the extra help parents can provide. If you would like to join your child’s class on a field trip, please let us know.

**Grievance Procedures:**
The Susan Gray School staff is committed to providing quality services to children and families
enrolled in the school. In the event that you find any procedure or policy of the school or any action of a staff member to be questionable or objectionable, please be aware of the procedures one can follow to address these issues.

1. Talk to the staff person most directly related to the concern or problem. Often, problems arise due to a misunderstanding, and can be resolved quickly by open communication.

2. If you feel your grievance or problem has not been met to your satisfaction, contact:
   Director, Patti Yon:
   615-343-9351 or patti.l.yon@vanderbilt.edu
   Associate Director, Michelle Wyatt:
   615-322-8466 or michelle.wyatt@vanderbilt.edu

3. If you are not satisfied by the action taken by the Site Directors, you may take your grievance to the chair of the Special Education Department
   Dr. Joe Wehby:
   Joseph.wehby@vanderbilt.edu

Although we do not anticipate problems, it is important that you know your input and opinions are valued. In the event problems arise, we want you to be aware of your rights and procedures for handling concerns.

**Health Exams and Immunizations:**
Our licensing agency (TN Department of Human Services) requires that all child records include an annual health examination signed by a health care provider and a current immunization record. Health and Immunization forms are available at your pediatrician's office. Failure to provide SGS with the required documentation in a timely manner may result in disenrollment.

**Holidays & Closings:**
SGS closes for holidays and staff development workdays. A school calendar that notes these closings as well as other SGS activities is distributed at the beginning of each school year and is posted on our SGS web site. Should changes to the calendar become necessary we will inform you as soon as possible.

Snow and inclement weather closings occur occasionally during the winter months. The classroom program will close for children to attend only if road conditions are so severe our staff cannot safely get to school. If a weather-related closing or delayed opening occurs, it will be announced on Channel Four, email sent to parents, posted to the SGS Facebook page, and announced through the Brightwheel app by 6:30 AM.

The Chancellor could declare up to two days per year in which the campus will be closed. These could be due to weather or unforeseen events. Susan Gray School will be closed if these days are put into effect.
Laundry:
At SGS cot sheets are laundered weekly and classroom items (towels, paint shirts, etc.) are washed daily. We do not launder children’s personal items such as pillows, blankets, or soiled clothes. If your child has a favorite blanket or pillow for napping we will send it home on the weekend for you to launder and return to school the following Monday. If your child’s clothes become soiled at school, we will change your child into clean clothes and send the soiled clothes home. It is important that your child have an extra set of clothes at school, so we ask that you replace the extra clothing as possible.

Meals and Snacks:
Each day children at SGS receive a nutritional hot lunch, milk and a morning and afternoon snack for a $75 per month fee. Our food program complies with state regulations and menus are posted weekly. If your child has a food allergy or dietary restriction noted on the enrollment form, we will let you know if we can accommodate the need. Should you need to change allergy or dietary restrictions during the year, please come by the office or email sgsoffice@vanderbilt.edu so we can update the information in our computer system and kitchen. If you wish to bring your child’s lunch each day, it must meet Child Adult Care Family Provider (CACFP) guidelines and the $75 per month food surcharge will not apply. In cases, where your child is on a Special Diet and that diet will not meet CACFP guidelines, we must have a Special Diet form completed and signed by a medical professional on file.

Please note, morning snack is provided between 8:30 and 9:00. If you want your child to have morning snack, please be sure they arrive in time to enjoy the snack. Morning snack is finished promptly at 9:00.

Meal and snack times at SGS offer many opportunities for social skill and language development. Families are always welcome to join us, with just a day’s notice and $3.50, we will provide you with a tasty lunch and lots of enjoyable conversation!

Medications at School:
Before administering any medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, parents must complete the Medication Consent Form found at the front desk. All medications must be in original pharmacy container and accompanied by a Medication Consent Form containing the following information:

a. Child’s name
b. Date
c. Name of medication
d. Specific dosage and administration instructions
   *A doctor’s order must also be attached to the Medication Consent Form in order for medication to be administered.
e. Possible side effects
f. Number of days to be given
g. Parent signature
For the safety of the children, ALL medications are stored in a locked box out of children’s sight and reach.

**Parking at SGS:**

Curbside parking is reserved FOR PARENTS during “peak” pick-up and drop-off times: 7:30-9:15 am, 2:45-3:15 pm, and 4:30-5:30 pm. During non-peak times, curb parking is available to visitors on a limited basis. Priority for non-peak parking is given to families and visitors attending IEP/IFSP meetings. Non-peak parking passes are available able in the office. Please be sure any guest or visitor coming to SGS to see your child knows cars parked in a reserved spot without a non-peak pass are subject to ticketing or towing.

We also warn parents that leaving your car with the motor running, or leaving a child in the car unattended (even while you quickly run into SGS) is illegal in TN.

**Personal Safety Curriculum**

Because SGS is licensed by the TN Department of Human Services, we are required to provide an approved Personal Safety Curriculum for children ages 3-5. We recognize the importance of personal safety and want to do our part to educate and empower our students. We have chosen the Keeping Kids Safe curriculum, developed by the Department of Human Services (DHS). This curriculum is specifically designed for preschool ages 3, 4 and 5 and is available for your review at any time by clicking: KSC. The lessons are designed to cover a wide range of safety topics. All sessions are taught by a staff member who has completed the DHS required training.

**Pets at School:**

Children love animals, and we love children, but sometimes children and animals don’t mix! Therefore, we prefer pets only come to visit on special occasions. If your child wants to bring a pet to share with the classroom, please make arrangements with the teacher so we can be considerate of children who have pet allergies.

Classroom pets or visiting animals must appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Teaching staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Program staff will make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed to visit or as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection.
Photography at Susan Gray School:

Photographs of our children are taken often! Each year we ask you to review and sign our information and consent form that explains how we use photography. If you give SGS photography permission you can look forward to seeing your child’s smiling face presented in a variety of materials. If you did not grant photography permission, please know we do our best to make sure only children with parental consent for photography get into the many photos of our children.

Potty Training

The decision to potty train a child in the classroom program should be done in cooperation with the parents, and communication with parents should be maintained throughout the process. Potty training should not be started until a child is able to understand, to demonstrate some degree of bodily control, to do what is asked of them, and to communicate their need to use the bathroom. When potty training, children shall not be made to sit on the potty for more than five minutes at a time.

In order to determine, whether a child is ready for potty training the following indicators should present: (1) the child stays dry for long periods of time; (2) child shows interest in wanting to use the potty by watching peers or sitting on potty with clothes on; (3) indicating whether they are wet, had a bowel movement, or attempting to go to the potty but don’t make it on time; and (4) saying they want to use the toilet and talking about their urine and bowel movements using whatever words are used at home.

*Information adapted from DHS Regulations Dated February 2018 and Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos (2011)

Safety at Susan Gray School:

Ensuring your child’s safety while at school is of utmost importance to us at SGS. Susan Gray School has a variety of security measures in place to ensure the safety of staff and children in the building. Staff members, except for student employees, are given prox cards that allow entry during regular business hours. Parents are given a six-digit code that allows them entry during regular business hours as well. All other people entering the school must be buzzed in by someone at the welcome desk. In addition to meeting all security, health and safety requirements, we conduct monthly safety checks throughout the school. We also ask that families and visitors assist us in maintaining a safe environment for our children. Listed below are some ways you can help:

- Always close the classroom door when you enter or exit, even if children are not present
- Never let small items a child might swallow (pills, buttons, coins) fall out of your...
pocket or purse
- Don’t let your child run in the hallways or swing on the gates and doors
- Avoid distracting our staff when they are supervising children
- Always close the outside gates when entering or exiting the school
- Alert us to any safety concerns you observe

Sick At School:
There are times when children get sick during the school day and according to our regulations need to go home. SGS personnel will attempt to contact parents in the event their child is sick. If parents are not accessible, emergency contacts will be called. Once a family member is notified of a child’s illness, the child must be picked up within a timely manner. In most cases, this would be within an hour.

If any of the following occur, someone from the school office will call you and ask you to pick your child up as quickly as possible.

- Fever of 100 degrees or above
- Diarrhea (twice)
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Trouble swallowing
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Vomiting (twice)
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of appetite
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye
- Gray or white stool
- Headache and stiff neck
- Inability to comfortably participate in normal classroom activities
- Illness creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
Staff Transition Plan
When a staff member leaves a classroom of SGS, the parents will be notified by letter from the Director within two days of the departure.

When a staff member joins SGS, the parents will be notified through a letter and it will be published in the newsletter.

Staying Home Sick:
Because sick children are not comfortable at school and pose a risk to other children, we ask families to keep their children home at least 24 hours after beginning any antibiotic. We also ask that children be fever free without fever-reducing medication and/or free from diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. Keep in mind they also must be able to comfortably participate in normal classroom activities.

Toilet Training:
At SGS we work closely with families and children to accomplish toilet training goals. Most children indicate they are ready to use the toilet by showing discomfort over wet or soiled diapers, staying dry for longer periods of time, or even asking to use the toilet. We watch for these signs at school and hope you will let us know when you observe these signs at home. Our teachers are enthusiastic and supportive of children’s efforts to use the toilet and we make a big deal of “potty success.” We also use the toileting routine as a time to teach children about hygiene.

Transitions:
Children typically transition into the next age level classroom on the first day of the new SGS school year which is in early August. We build in supports to make the transitions to a new classroom as smooth as possible for children and families. Prior to the transition, we recruit input from parents and teachers regarding the best placement to meet each child needs in terms of teacher and peer matches. The process of building classroom communities is complex, and many things are taken into consideration. Some factors include ratio of girls to boys, peer matches, child birthdates, child characteristics, and teacher styles. Our goal is to create the best community for all children to grow and develop socially and academically. Families are informed in July of their child’s next-year classroom and in the last couple weeks of the school year, teachers plan activities to ensure children have opportunities to visit their new classroom and meet their new teachers.

When children exit SGS, our teachers are happy to speak with the new teacher and send a “Getting to Know Your Child” form to the new school, upon your request. Our teachers can also arrange to visit a new school with you and your child if you feel it is necessary.

Tuition:
SGS tuition rates are competitive with other early education programs in the area. Tuition must be paid in advance and is payable monthly or bi-monthly. If you make a monthly payment on or before the first business day of the month, you can credit yourself with a $25.00 discount!
If you choose to make bi-monthly payments, 50% of your tuition is due on the 1st of the month and 50% on the 15th. Fees will be charged for late payment. A $25.00 fee will be added to tuition if 50% of balance is not paid by the 15th of the month. An additional $25.00 will be added to tuition if payment is not paid in full by end of the month.

Tuition checks should be in the tuition box located on the wall outside the office unless you are paying cash. If paying cash, please see someone at the welcome desk. When your payment is posted to your account you will receive a receipt via email. SGS is a non-profit program supported by grants, contracts, donations and tuition. We are unable to extend credit or ignore unpaid balances and enrollment will be suspended if tuition is not paid after two consecutive months of nonpayment.

In addition:

- SGS gives a 10% sibling discount on the total monthly tuition bill.
- SGS tuition includes daily snacks and milk for all children. Parents have the option of providing their child’s lunch or paying a $75.00 hot-lunch surcharge per child, per month. Lunches provided by families must meet CACFP guidelines.
- SGS accepts children who are eligible for Child Care assistance through the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the School Day (8:30-3:00). Additional before and after school care can be purchased at regular rates.
- Parents of children receiving services from Metro Nashville Public School Exceptional Education program are responsible for any tuition not paid for by MNPS. Tuition will vary during MNPS breaks and Summer Sessions.
- Parents are asked to enroll their child on an annual basis. Completion of Enrollment packet and payment of fees secure child’s spot for the coming year.
- Parents are asked to provide an annual supply and enrollment fee

**Visitors at Susan Gray School:**

We love to have family members and friends visit SGS. Every classroom has an observation room and you are welcome to peek-in on your child at any time. If you would like to visit inside the classroom, we ask that you arrange the visit with your child’s teacher.

For security reasons, we require visitors (non-family member visitors) to complete background checks according to guidelines established by the Vanderbilt Background Clearance Office. If you are aware of a therapist or other visitor who will be coming to SGS, please have them contact the school office at 615-322-8200 or sgsoffice@vanderbilt.edu for additional information.
Supporters of Susan Gray School include:
Peabody College
State and Local grants
Louis Draughon Foundation
The Friends of Susan Gray
&
Private Donations

For information on making a gift to Susan Gray School visit
http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/admin-offices/sgs/funding.php
or call 615-322-8500

*Susan Gray School* does not discriminate against any child, parent or employee on the basis of
race, color, national origin, or disability.
The Susan Gray School (SGS) is a vital part of Vanderbilt University and Peabody College of Education. Within this unique structure, we have four distinct missions: (1) to provide high-quality services to children, families, and the community; (2) to participate in the training of university students (e.g., teachers, health care providers, therapists, researchers); (3) to demonstrate a program of high-quality early childhood education and early childhood special education practices; and (4) to help university researchers conduct research. To fulfill this four-fold mission, the children, families, and staff of SGS are continually involved in a variety of activities. The purpose of this document is to ensure you understand all the activities that occur at SGS and to ensure your consent to have your child to be a part of these activities.

MISSION: Provide High-Quality Services
SGS is committed to both providing and demonstrating a developmentally appropriate inclusive program for all children in the school. Visitors from across Nashville and around the world tour the school to see how our program operates, giving us the opportunity to describe our program and share our philosophy. To ensure we are providing the high quality program we demonstrate, we conduct developmental assessments of children in the program and use the information from these assessments to guide our instructional program. These assessments are conducted by SGS teachers or other SGS staff and focus on the developmental domains of cognition, language/communication, social, and motor skills. Assessment occurs throughout the school year to ensure progress toward goals is being made and the curriculum for the children is appropriate to meet needs and support growth.

Included in our commitment to high quality services is the availability of related service professionals (e.g., occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech-language therapist, nurse) to consult with our classroom teachers. Classroom teachers may request related therapy consult services when they need more specific input on how best to support the children in their classroom. Consultation typically would include the therapist discussing the teacher’s concerns, informally observing or interacting with the child in the classroom, and then providing the classroom team with advice, guidance, staff training, or materials. If the therapist felt a formal screening was warranted, parents would be contacted to give consent. Teachers may also request consult services if parents have questions pertaining to specific developmental domains the teachers are unable to answer. Consultation could include providing resources for the teacher to share with parent or meeting with the parent and teacher. Related therapy consult services are not assigned to an individual child, but rather a serve as a resource for the classroom team.

MISSION: Support Undergraduate and Graduate Training Programs
SGS plays an important role in the training of graduate and undergraduate students from Vanderbilt and other local institutions of higher education. Noted below is information about various ways SGS supports university students.

Student Observations and Course Assignments: University students receive valuable experience through field placements in a SGS classroom and through completing coursework assignments with SGS children. Most assignments require students to observe and evaluate children’s skills in one of the developmental domains (i.e., language, motor, social, and self-help) and develop an instructional program designed to
teach a new skill. Some assignments require students to access a child’s SGS educational record. All student activities are conducted with the knowledge and supervision of a SGS teacher as well as a university supervisor. SGS children are never required to participate in a student activity if they indicate an unwillingness to do so.

Audio- and Video-recorded Observations Related to Training: As part of university training, university students sometimes need to have audio and video recordings of their activities with children in SGS. These recordings are viewed only by the university student, other students in their course, and their university professor. University students are required to destroy training recordings at the end of the course.

Developmental Testing: Another part of university training involves learning to administer developmental assessments to young children. Assessments are conducted in the classroom or another location in the school. Assessments are not conducted with any child who indicates reluctance to participate. All assessment training done at SGS is supervised by SGS staff and the trainee’s university supervisor. Assessments conducted by university trainees are not considered valid and trainees do not share results with a child’s family.

MISSION: Support Research

SGS supports student and faculty researchers in two very different ways. First, SGS supports research preparation activities that do not involve parental informed consent. These include activities such as:

- Providing researchers with contact information of potential research participants
- Providing a site for researchers to pilot a research protocol
- Providing a site for researchers to become proficient with a research coding procedure
- Providing a site for researchers to test audio and video equipment

The second way SGS supports research is by providing a site for research to occur. Most often, this research is conducted by students for their theses or dissertations. These studies must first be approved by the Vanderbilt University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure compliance with federal, state, and university research guidelines. If a researcher wishes to work with your child, you will be provided with written information about the study (known as an informed consent document) and you will have the opportunity to decide whether you want to grant permission for your child to participate. Your written informed consent must be obtained by the researcher before your child can participate in any IRB approved study.

Studies conducted in SGS are educationally appropriate and often involve opportunities for children to learn a new skill or activity. We encourage SGS families to consider any study that is presented to them. However, we want families to understand participation is research is strictly voluntary. Your child will never be asked to participate in a research study unless you have given specific written consent for participation.

SUMMARY

This general information covers standard mission-related activities that occur at SGS. A copy of this information form is provided in the SGS Parent Handbook for your records. If you ever have questions about your child’s involvement in any of these activities, you should ask your child’s teacher or the Associate Director.
Health Physical and Immunization Record:
An annual health examination and current immunization record must be provided each school year. The accepted forms are available at your child's pediatrician's office.

Sick at School:
We will call and ask you to pick up your child if any of the following occur: 1) temperature of 100°F and/or, 2) if an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities and/or, 3) illness creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children and/or, 4) if a child's condition is suspected to be contagious and requires exclusion as identified by public health authorities. Noted in the SGS Parent Handbook are other, less common conditions that may prompt a call for a sick child pick-up.

Staying Home Sick:
Because sick children are not comfortable at school and pose a risk to other children, we ask families to keep their children home at least 24 hours after beginning any antibiotic. We also ask that children be fever free without fever-reducing medication and/or free from diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.

Medications at School:
SGS staff does not give fever-reducing or cough medicine. In some situations, prescribed medications (over-the-counter medications, antibiotics, breathing treatment, feeding tube, etc.) may need to be administered at school and our staff can accommodate this need when the following conditions are met: 1) a SGS Medication Consent Form is completed, 2) SGS has received prescription information from your child’s physician including name of medication, dosage and delivery, and 3) the medication is brought in its original container with the prescription affixed if applicable and 4) training by a medical professional is completed if needed.

Bug Spray:
SGS staff will apply bug spray to children when mosquitoes are present. Families wanting their children to use a particular brand of bug spray may bring a bottle labeled with the child’s name.

Sun Screen:
Because our playgrounds are fairly shady, we do not routinely apply sun screen. However, on sunny days when protection is needed, SGS staff will put sunscreen on children as needed. We use hypoallergenic-fragrance free 50 SPF or above sunscreen. If you have a particular brand of sunscreen you would rather us use for your child, please send it in with their name on it.

Safe Footwear:
SGS children are very active, especially outdoors! As a preventative measure against potential accidents, children must wear full shoes, such as athletic sneakers, or sandals with a solid rubber sole and a heel strap. On water play days, children must wear water shoes. These typically have rubber soles and are made of mesh and nylon. Flip-flops or crocs are not appropriate for active SGS play, even on water play days!

Walking Trips on Campus:
When the weather is nice classrooms often take short excursions around the Peabody campus. On these short trips we do not cross 21st Ave. or Edgehill Ave but may use pedestrian bridge to access Vanderbilt’s main campus.

Release from School:
Children are released from the school only to their parents or a person the parents have authorized to pick up the child. Anytime someone unknown to SGS staff comes to pick up a child, we will request a photo ID and verify that the person is on the authorized pick-up list for the child. We will not release a child to any adult suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Should the appearance of intoxication present a concern, the Vanderbilt Police and/or TN Dept. of Human Services will be called to help us make an appropriate decision regarding safe release of the child.
Early Care Arrivals:
The Early Care program operates between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Children in Early Care can be dropped off in the Early Care rooms anytime during the 7:30 to 8:30 hour.

School Day Arrivals:
The SGS school day begins at 8:30 a.m. Parents who arrive with their children before 8:30 are responsible for supervision of their child until the classrooms open for the school day. Morning snack is offered between 8:30 and 9:00. If you want your child to participate in morning snack, they need to arrive by 8:50. Morning snack is not served after 9:00.

Late Arrivals:
It is important to us that all children are present to participate in the day’s activities. Because late arrivals disrupt the morning routine, we discourage arrivals after 9:00 a.m. by charging a late fee of $1.00 per minute. We understand mornings with young children can sometimes be difficult, so we excuse one late arrival (up to 15 minutes) each month.

Excused Late Arrivals:
If your child has a scheduled appointment that necessitates a late arrival, we will not charge the late fee if you bring verification of the appointment to the office when you bring your child to school. Please note we do not accept children between 11:45 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., to avoid disrupting nap time. It is also important to check with your child’s teacher about the lunch schedule. We cannot hold lunch for excused late arrivals.

Late Pick-up:
To discourage late pick-up, we also charge a $1.00 per minute fee, per child. Please note we do not extend the once-a-month fee waiver for late pick-ups. Late pick-up fees apply to all pick up times (3:00, 4:30 and 5:30).

After 5:30 Pick-up:
SGS closes at 5:30 p.m. and families who purchase Late Care are expected to pick up their children before the school closes. Only three pick-ups past 5:30 per year are allowed. After the third pick-up past school closing, your child will no longer be permitted in the Late Care program.

I have read and understand the SGS Arrival, Pick-up, and Late Fee Policy. I acknowledge this information can be found in the current SGS Parent Handbook for my reference.
LIABILITY WAIVER AND RELEASE

I understand and agree that Vanderbilt University by and through the Susan Gray School, its students, observers, volunteers and staff (collectively referred to as “Vanderbilt”) accepts no responsibility for the acts of my child or the acts of others while enrolled in the Susan Gray School (“the activity”). I will not seek to hold Vanderbilt liable for any injuries incurred by my child in connection with the activity whether caused by equipment or the acts or omission of others except damage or injury solely caused by the gross negligence of Vanderbilt or its employees, students, observers, volunteers or agents.

Furthermore, in consideration of Vanderbilt allowing my child to participate in this activity, I do agree to and hereby do release, discharge, and hold forever harmless and indemnify Vanderbilt, its trustees, agents, officers, students, observers, volunteers and employees against loss from any and all claims, demands, rights, or causes of action of any kind or nature that may hereafter at any time be made or brought by me (and/or my child), or anyone on my or my child’s behalf, or by any other person having a legal interest therein, arising from or by reason of any and all known or unknown, foreseen and unforeseen bodily or personal injuries, damages to property and consequences thereof which may be sustained by me (and/or my child) in consequence of any accident or injuries on the premises of Vanderbilt, or in connection with the activity, except such liability or claim of liability as may result from gross negligence on the part of Vanderbilt. Said indemnification shall include, but not be limited to, court costs and reasonable attorneys’ fees.
Family Resources:

ARC of Davidson County [http://www.arcdc.org/family-support/](http://www.arcdc.org/family-support/)

Other links: [http://www.thearctn.org/Links.php](http://www.thearctn.org/Links.php)

**What We Do**

- Advocacy & Education
- Document Management
- Employment
- Family Support
- Support Coordination
- Future Planning

**Family Support**

Family Support is a state funded grant that provides financial assistance for families who have a family member with a disability.

The Arc of Davidson County & Greater Nashville administers the Family Support grant for Davidson County. For the fiscal year 2013-14, our allocation of the overall Family Support Program is $701,276.

The Arc's Family Support Program serves approximately 650 individuals with disabilities in Davidson County. The participants represent all socio-economic backgrounds and types of permanent disability. Currently there are over 500 people on the waiting list for Family Support. Yet it is estimated that the people on the waiting list are only a small percentage of the true population of persons with disabilities in Davidson County.

Family Support assistance varies between $500-$1,000 which is determined by funding and availability. Assistance is provided to residents in the Davidson County area that meet specific criteria. This amount is determined by The Arc of Davidson County & Greater Nashville's local council. The money may be used for anything the family needs to improve their quality of life. Such expenses might include specialized equipment, medical supplies, respite care, or transportation. Additionally, there is some funding for emergency situations for families on the waiting list. By vote of the local council, the emergency funding is earmarked for emergencies only (which is determined by need and availability of funds).

Many of the participants in Family Support are dependent on Social Security Supplemental Income (SSI) for the bulk of their income, and often the Family Support grant means the difference between being able to buy medicine or put food on the table or having to do without.
In addition to the dollars committed by the State of Tennessee to our Family Support Program, we also administer Community Enhancement Funds provided by the Mayor’s Office Metro Davidson County. In general terms, these dollars are also available to persons with a permanent disability, although there may be slight differences in the manner in which the funds are allocated.

For further information about any of the programs mentioned, please contact Lorie Golden at (615) 321-5699 ext. 211 or lgolden@arcde.org.

Tennessee Department of Human Services

The Child Care Certificate Program provides assistance to families who need help paying for child care in order to meet the requirements of the Families First program. Child care assistance not only gives Families First parents/caretakers peace of mind while they participate in work and work-related activities but also provides quality child care for children. See more at: http://www.tennessee.gov/humanservices/topic/child-care-services#sthash.7ONmitMG.dpuf

Child Care Certificate Program:
Davidson County TDHS Office
1000 Second Avenue, North
Nashville, TN 37243
Office Hours: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Phone: (615) 532-4000
Fax: (615) 532-5690
Program Supervisor: Kimberly C. Moore
- See more at: http://www.tennessee.gov/humanservices/article/child-care-certificate-programoffice-locator#sthash.cCjzA2hV.dpuf

3. Tennessee Respite Coalition:

Voucher Program

The Family Directed Respite Voucher program helps defray some of the cost of respite to family caregivers. It encourages families to be in control of and empowered to use respite as it meets their needs. Call our office to begin the application.
Phone: 615-269-8687
Website: http://tnrespite.org/services/

4.) TN Disability Programs:

https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/disability-services.html

5.) Kidcentral TN

http://kidcentraltn.com/article/have-a-child-with-a-disability-you-need-support-too
6.) Children Special Services

http://kidcentraltn.com/article/children-s-special-services

7.) Tennessee Disability Coalition

http://www.tndisability.org/familyvoices

8.) Tennessee Disability Pathfinder

https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/pathfinder/

9. Family and Community Engagement


10. Nashville Parent

http://www.nashvilleparent.com/