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.
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. 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 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,” “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.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

At SGS we are aware of our role in preventing, not just reporting, child abuse and neglect. In the Parent Meeting scheduled at the beginning of each year, we provide families with specific information related to abuse and neglect. We also want our families to know, in TN, anyone who suspects a child has been abused or neglected must call 877-237-0004 to report it.
Child Care Regulations

TN Child Care Regulations are available online at http://www.tennessee.gov/sos/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.pdf 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.

Diapers:

If your child is not toilet trained, please send diapers to school. Most parents find it
conv

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 should 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 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 daily through notes sent home that let you know specifics about your child’s day. We encourage teachers and families to connect as often as possible to ensure that information is shared regarding children enrolled at SGS.

We encourage parents to communicate with teachers in person, by email, or by phone.
Teachers 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.

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, 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 and 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.

Toddler Talk
Beginning in fall 2014, the Frog Friends and Turtle Buddies classrooms adopted an environmental design and incidental teaching approach to provide optimal support for early communication and social interaction. The Toddler Talk model combines evidence-based principles from the University of Kansas Living Environments Group, the Emory Walden Preschool, and Enhanced Milieu Teaching (www.kidtalk.org). The goals for children are maximizing engaged
learning time, providing children developmentally appropriate choices in activities, and building independence in play, learning and self-care. The classrooms have clearly defined procedures and teaching strategies with teacher checklists for daily activities so that all teaching staff focus on teaching and interacting with children across the day in play and learning activities. Individualized goals for children with special needs are targeted across activities and instruction, and progress monitoring are embedded in the classroom schedule. However, developmental goals for all children form the basis for daily activities. Parent collaboration is a key component of the model and individualized plans for teaching and supporting children’s development across home and school are offered.

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.

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 kept 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 of Curriculum and Instruction, 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. During re-enrollment 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 one of the Site Directors:
   - Kiersten Kinder, Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction
     615-343-9351 or Kiersten.kinder@vanderbilt.edu
   - Michelle Wyatt, Associate Director of Operational Management
     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 Susan Gray School Faculty Directors.
   - Ann Kaiser, Faculty Director, Department of Special Education, Vanderbilt University—
     615-322-8160 or ann.kaiser@vanderbilt.edu
   - ML Hemmeter, Faculty Director, Department of Special Education, Vanderbilt University—
     615-322-5648 or ml.hemmeter@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 Education) 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.

**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. If Metro Nashville Public School (MNPS) close due to weather, the Susan Gray School will open at **9:30.** 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 Snowbird and an announcement will be put on the SGS answering machine. We encourage families to visit WSMV.com and sign up for a Snowbird Alert, which will send you an email if SGS is on a delayed opening or is closed.

**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 $50 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 $50 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 $3.00, we will provide you with a tasty lunch and lots of enjoyable conversation!

**Medications at School:**
The SGS does not administer over the counter medications that may mask potentially contagious symptoms (e.g., fever, rash). SGS administers OTC medications that are given in conjunction with other lifesaving, or emergency medications (e.g., Benadryl after Epi-Pen), as well as diaper cream, sunscreen, and bug spray.
Before administering any medication, whether prescription or OTC, 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 Education, 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 at [http://tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/kksv.pdf](http://tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/kksv.pdf). 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.

![Image of children engaged in activities](Image)

**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.

![Image of children engaged in activities](Image)

**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. 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
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 or overnight 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 typically coincides near the first day of school for Metro Nashville Public Schools. 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 can be left in the lock-box located on the wall outside the office. Receipts will be emailed to you or placed in your child’s cubby. 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 $50.00 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).
- Parents of children receiving services from Metro Nashville Public Schools Exceptional Education program are responsible for any tuition not paid for by MNPS.

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.