



Parent Handbook

~Sparta Cooperative Preschool, Inc.~
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**SPARTA COOPERATIVE
PRESCHOOL, INC.**



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Sparta Cooperative Preschool, Inc. (SCPI) is a member of the West Michigan Council of Cooperative Preschools. SCPI is a cooperative, non-profit association licensed by the State of Michigan, Family Resource Agency. A cooperative learning environment offers a parent the opportunity to participate and share in their child’s early education.

Parents have a choice in their level of involvement, but all will have a role. Parents can share in the activities of the school and formulation of its policies. All parents will receive a copy of the SCPI constitution, which contains our rules and regulations.

COOPERATIVE OBLIGATIONS

1. Fulfill your committee/job responsibilities according to the job description list.
2. Attend ALL General Meetings (a fine of \$10.00 will be assessed for failure to attend a meeting).
3. Pay all fees promptly.

If you are unable to meet your obligations, this will lead to fines or your child’s dismissal from the program.

FULL CO-OP

- In addition to your job responsibility, you are scheduled to work in the classroom.
- You are responsible for providing a snack and a drink on that day.
- The number of days you are required to work will depend on the class size.
- Full participation in the cooperative program reduces your tuition payments.

PARTIAL CO-OP

- The parent does not have to work in the classroom or have a job responsibility.
- Tuition payment is higher; cost is 30% of the current tuition rate.
- There are only two partial co-op slots per class that are filled on first come, first serve basis.

BOARD MEMBER OBLIGATIONS

1. Attend monthly board meetings.

CLASS TIMES

Four-Year-Old Class: Child must be 4 by December 1st.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday – AM Class 8:30 – 11:00 AM

Monday/Wednesday/Friday – PM Class 12:15 – 2:45 PM



Three-Year-Old Class: Child must be 3 by December 1st.

Tuesday/Thursday – AM Class 8:30 – 11:00 AM

Tuesday/Thursday – PM Class 12:15 – 2:45 PM

CLASS SIZE

The State of Michigan requires that the three year old class be limited to 16 children and the four year old class be limited to 20 children.

Enrollment is based on a first come first serve basis.

PROGRAM GOALS OF SCPI

SCPI'S program gives each child a pleasant, informal learning experience which will aid and enhance the child's positive attitude toward school and learning. We encourage each child to develop at their own rate and we share experiences with your child that will aid and enhance their ability to learn skills when they are ready. We do not expect that your child will learn to read, write or compute arithmetic problems as a result of our program.

Rather, we instill in each child a sense of "I CAN!" so that these skills will be more easily accepted when your child is ready. Learning can and needs to be FUN!

PROGRAM GOALS

Three-year olds

1. Large muscle development
2. Small muscle development
3. Socialization
4. Development of creativity
5. Development of cognitive skills

Four-year olds

1. Physical Development
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
2. Cognitive Skills
 - Recognize shapes
 - Recognize colors
 - Recognize written names
 - Counting
 - Introduce numbers and letters
 - Pre-reading
 - Pre-math
3. Social development
4. Development of a positive self concept
5. Emotional development
6. Development of creative expression
7. Communication/Language skills

Our preschool routine for both age groups includes a free choice of activities that enhance development in all areas. Although the activities may vary throughout the year, the children will be able to experience a variety of learning activities through:

- Paint/sensory exploration
- Housekeeping/dress-up
- Blocks
- Sand/Water area
- Group time (indoor and outdoor)
- Table games/craft area
- Snack time
- Science area
- Clean up

**If there are ever any questions, comments or concerns, you can address them with the teacher, your class representative or any board member.
Let's work together to make this the best experience yet for your child!**

DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. Speak in positive terms.
 2. Use a quiet and pleasant tone of voice.
 3. Redirect undesirable behavior.
 4. Set only necessary limits.
 5. To handle behavior problems - telling, approving, correcting and time out chair are our choices.
- Our rules reflect concern for basic health and safety.
 - Working parents are expected to use the above methods at all times when working at SCPI.
 - **PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE IS NOT ALLOWED** and if used could be grounds for dismissal from membership in SCPI.

TUITION POLICY

- Tuition is payable either in full at the beginning of the school year or on a monthly basis.
- **All tuition must be paid by the 1st of each month, with the exception of the first and last month's payment, which is due at the General Orientation meeting in August.**
- Checks should be made out to SCPI (no cash please).
- Tuition payments must be mailed to:

**SCPI
PO Box 62
Sparta, MI 49345**

LATE TUITION POLICY

Tuition is to be paid by the 1st of each month. If payment is not in the hands of the treasurer or assistant treasurer by the 7th of the month, a \$20.00 fine will be assessed.

Prompt payment of tuition is taken seriously and is essential for our school's success.

Your child will not be able to attend class until late tuition payments including fines are paid.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- SCPI operates on the same schedule as Sparta Area Schools (SAS)
- If SAS schools are closed (for any reason) so will SCPI.
- If SAS has a delay due to fog, etc., only morning classes will be canceled.
- If severe weather develops during session, parents will be notified. In the event of a tornado watch, parents may pick up their children immediately.
- If there is a tornado warning, the students and staff will take cover. Students will not be allowed to leave the building during a tornado warning.
- Tuition will not be refunded for emergency or weather related closings.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUTION PROCEDURES

- Fire drills will be conducted once a month.
- Tornado drills will be conducted at least once during the spring.
- Emergency procedures and evacuation plans will be posted in the kitchen and the coat room.



ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- Daily session begins when the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the working parent are present.
- The State of Michigan may require the school to close if the working parent is not present.
- The parent (or responsible person) is required to stay with the child until the working parent is present.
- Children can be dropped off no earlier than 5 minutes before class.
- Children must be picked up promptly after dismissal. Failure to do so will result in a \$10.00 fine.
- Children can only be released to the persons listed on their Child Release Form. Please communicate directly to the teacher if your child will be released to someone else (they will be asked to present identification).
- All children must be signed out prior to leaving the building.

WORKING PARENT

1. The working parent is required to be present 15 minutes prior to the start of class and stay until all work and clean up procedures are complete.
2. The working parent is there to assist the teacher or the teacher's assistant with what needs to be done prior to, during and after class.
3. Review the cleaning procedures that are posted in the kitchen prior to cleaning up at the end of the session.
4. State regulations allow only the teacher or the teacher's assistant to help children in the bathroom.
5. Due to state regulations, children not enrolled in the preschool may not remain at the school during session.
6. If you are unable to work as scheduled, you are responsible:
 - to arrange for your own substitute
 - if your substitute parent brings in the snack and drink, we suggest that you reimburse the cost. If they do not supply a snack and drink, it is your responsibility to supply this.
 - to let the class representative (or teacher, if short notice) know of any changes in the schedule.

SNACKS

- The working parent will bring a snack and drink for each child in the class.
- Lesson plans will be communicated and the teacher may have a special request for snack choices.
- Nutritious snacks are encouraged.
- Always wear latex or plastic gloves when handling food.
- Please refer to the allergy listing on the refrigerator prior to selecting a snack.

CLOTHING

- Clothing should be comfortable, sturdy and washable so that it does not interfere with any activities.
- Children's clothing should be marked with their name.
- Rubber soled shoes are requested because they are quiet and safe (except orthopedic).
- Please keep an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack or leave at the school in case of accidents.
- Working parents should also wear clothes that are comfortable and washable.

HEALTH POLICIES

The State of Michigan requires that all forms and requested information be completed prior to the start of class. A child will NOT be able to attend class until all forms are complete, with signatures.

Forms to be completed:

1. Green Health Appraisal Form
2. Child Information Record (which includes the Child Release form)
3. Enrollment form (which includes the Criminal History check, Working Parent information, Job Preference and SCPI Contract)

GREEN HEALTH APPRAISAL FORM

1. Vaccination information needs to be completed and up to date.
2. Fill out all requested information
3. If your child has an allergy to a substance (food, medication, etc), please communicate the nature of the allergy (description of the reaction) and any special instructions on the Health Appraisal Form.
4. All allergy information will be listed by class and kept on the front of the refrigerator in the kitchen.
5. Requires a physician (physician assistants and registered nurses cannot sign the form) to evaluate the child and sign the back of the form.
6. Please allow enough time to get an appointment with your physician.
7. Forms without a physician's signature are considered incomplete.
8. Green forms must be updated every TWO years.



CHILD RELEASE FORM

- Your child can only be released to those people identified on this form.
- If someone else is going to be picking up your child, this information must be communicated directly to the teacher.
- Identification will be requested.
- A signed child placement contract must be on file.

CHILD INFORMATION RECORD

- This card provides emergency contact and medical insurance information.
- Please make sure that the insurance information is completed and that the cards have been signed in all the appropriate locations.

CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

SCPI runs a criminal history check on all employees and school volunteers.

TB TESTING

SCPI requires that all working parents spending more than four hours per week in the classroom have a tuberculosis (TB) skin test completed (at their own expense).

TB skin tests can be obtained from your physician or the Kent County

Health Department:

Main Location	North County Clinic
700 Fuller NE	4388 14 Mile Rd NE
Grand Rapids	Rockford
(616) 632-7020	(616) 866-0632

Cost of test at the Health Department is \$13.00.

VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX) VACCINATION

1. As of January 1st, 2000 the Michigan Department of Community Health requires any child who is 15 months through 4 years of age and is enrolled in a program or group residence, care or camping have evidence of immunity against varicella.
2. Immunity may be shown by any of the following:
 - One dose of any appropriate varicella vaccine at or after 12 months of age
 - Laboratory evidence of varicella immunity
 - A parent, guardian or physician statement that the child has had the varicella disease.

LICE POLICY

SCPI follows the Sparta Area Schools lice policy.

- If your child has been exposed to lice, please contact the health chair immediately so the proper cleaning procedures can be initiated at the school if necessary.
- The child can return to class after they have been “nit-free” for 24 hours.
- All parents will receive notification that there has been a lice exposure at the school, but the class will not be specified.
- If you have any questions on the treatment and home cleaning requirements, please contact the health chair or the Kent County Health Department Lice Specialist.
- It is our obligation to maintain confidentiality.



WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

- Fever above 101 degrees
- Sores on the skin
- Unexplained rash
- Diarrhea that prevents normal play
- Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Cough that lasts longer than a few days
- Sore throat that lasts longer than a few days
- Tiredness that prevents normal play
- Headache that prevents normal play
- Wheezing when taking a breath

If you see any of these signs of illness, call your doctor (or health care provider) and watch your child to see if the symptoms persist or worsen.

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

You have the right to know whenever your child has been exposed to a potentially contagious illness. All information regarding the illness reporting is kept strictly confidential. SCPI will send home a letter with each child in their bag or backpack if there has been an exposure to a contagious illness.

ABSENCES

Please call the teacher at 887-1180 whenever the child will not be attending class. Provide the following information:

1. Name of the child
2. Which class they are in
3. Reason for not attending

There is also an answering machine at the school for you to leave this information.

We are required by the Health Department to provide a weekly report of all the illnesses to the Kent County Health Department (names are not used in the report).

SPECIAL PERSON'S DAY

Special Person's Day is a time set aside for your child to share his/her school with the special people (mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, etc.) in his/her life.

- It is always held on a Saturday, usually in February.
- You will have advanced notice of the exact date.
- Refer to your newsletter for more information.

BIRTHDAYS

Each child will have the opportunity for their birthday to be celebrated at school.

- Special snacks can be provided in honor of your child's birthday.
- Please do not bring take home treats or candy.
- The parent can also provide special birthday cups, plates or napkins.
- Grandparents or special guests may attend during the last half-hour of the child birthday.
- If your child has a summer birthday you may choose an alternate day. The class representative will provide a calendar.
- Please do not distribute "At Home" birthday invitations or exchange personal gifts at SCPI.

HOLIDAY PARTIES

This can include Christmas, Halloween and Valentine's Day.

- Parents are encouraged to attend.

- Siblings are not allowed at class parties.
- Party details will be provided in a letter sent home to parents by the class rep.

GOOD BYE PARTY

This party takes place following the end of the school year.

- The school will provide the snack and the drink.
- An adult must accompany each child to the Good Bye Party.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips consist of either a walking trip to some local spot or a driving trip to a nearby location.

- Parents are responsible for getting their own child to and from the location of the field trip (if not within walking distance).
- Parents are encouraged to attend but state regulations do not allow children who are not enrolled in the program to attend the field trip.
- Please dress children accordingly: i.e. boots and outdoor clothing when necessary.
- If a trip must be postponed, it may be rescheduled.
- If a trip must be cancelled, the parent will be notified.
- Field trips will be limited to locations within ten miles of the preschool.
- The working parent on the field trip will stay at the location and assist the teacher/assistant as necessary.

NEWSLETTER

A newsletter will be sent out periodically so the teacher and board members can communicate important information to you regarding the school's activities.

FUNDRAISING

A fee of \$150.00 per family is included in your monthly tuition.

- You can earn back up to \$150.00 (based on profits) with the different fundraising activities throughout the year.
- A refund check will be issued at the end of the year. The amount will depend on your participation.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Please report any changes in address or phone number immediately to the Membership Chairperson.
2. Each child should have a bag/backpack for carrying objects to and from SCPI.
3. Emergency procedures of SCPI are posted in the kitchen and the coatroom.
4. Minutes of all SCPI board and general meetings are posted in the coatroom.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. The President, Treasurer, assistant Treasurer, Membership Chairperson and Fundraising Co-Chairperson shall be bonded.
2. The Treasurer's books will be reviewed annually.
3. The Treasurer's annual financial report is to be made public.
4. Expenses:
 - A. Any expenditure for SCPI over \$5.00 by a General member must have the approval of the President and the Treasurer in advance.
 - B. Any expenditure for SCPI over \$10.00 by a Board member must have the approval of the President and the Treasurer.
 - C. Any unusual/non-business expenditure for over \$25.00 must be approved by a majority of the Board. Exceptions to this rule are expenses in the area of daily supplies and art supplies.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Michigan Council of Cooperative Preschool announces that Sparta Cooperative Preschool, Inc. admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. SCPI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic admissions policies, scholarship/loan program and athletic or other school administered programs.

RECIPES

Playdough

Bring to a boil:

1¾ cups water

½ cup salt

dash of food coloring

Remove from heat and add:

2T alum

2T oil

2 cups flour

Knead until smooth. Store in plastic bag or container.

Fingerpaint

Beat until smooth:

2 cups flour

2t salt

3 cups cold water

Add:

2 cups hot water

Boil until clear, stirring constantly.

Remove from heat, beat until smooth.

Add food coloring.

Claydough

Mix:

1 cup flour

½ cup salt

Add (a little at a time) about 1/3 cups of water.

Goop (Good for items you want to harden)

Mix and heat 3- 4 minutes:

2 cups salt

2/3 cup water

Remove from heat and quickly add a mixture of:

1cup cornstarch

½ cup cold water

Stir quickly; return to heat briefly if too goopy.

Silly Putty

Mix together:

1 cup glue

¾ cup liquid starch

food coloring

Add more starch if necessary.