

Stratham Circle Learning Center Parent Handbook



At Stratham Community Church
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Our mission is to provide a caring and nurturing environment where each child learns through a developmentally appropriate and emergent curriculum. We are an inclusive school committed to the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of each child.



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Stratham Circle Learning Center, a place where children learn and grow. As educators of young children, we encourage and support the educational journey of each child. Through purposeful play, we provide our students with opportunities to explore, imagine, wonder, and experiment with language and materials to develop a lifelong love of learning.

As teachers, we encourage parents to be a part of this process. Our open door policy invites parents to participate in a variety of activities in our school community. Sharing a family tradition, reading a favorite story, or joining us for circle time are just some of the ways to be involved.

We welcome you to our school and look forward to our partnership.

Christine & the SCLC staff

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Our School

The Stratham Circle Learning Center is a private, secular, non-profit organization. We are owned and managed by the Stratham Community Church. The center was established in 2005 to serve the community by providing a quality educational experience for children.

We are a community-based preschool. We work together to develop trust and a sense of belonging for each child, while encouraging growth and independence. We guide children as they learn to handle their feelings and emotions in safe and appropriate ways.

We are an inclusive school. Children and families of all abilities are welcome. Modifications and reasonable accommodations can be made to serve children with special needs in our program.

Curriculum

At the Stratham Circle Learning Center, children learn through exploration and play-centered learning. Children grow and learn at their own pace through a developmentally appropriate and emergent curriculum. Parent/Teacher conferences are offered two times a year. During the after-school program, children have the opportunity to receive help with their homework, explore theme-based projects, and socialize with their peers.

Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children at SCLC. We have an open door policy. Parent/Teacher conferences will be offered during the fall and spring for all preschool children.

Staff Qualifications

The Stratham Circle Learning Center is staffed with teachers and staff members that meet and exceed the educational requirements determined by the New Hampshire Bureau of Child Care Standards and Licensing.

Hours, Programming & School Closures

Early morning care is offered between the hours of 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. Preschool begins at 9:00 and ends at 12:00 p.m., with the option to stay for lunch until 1:00. Our school offers an extended day program from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. for preschoolers and elementary age children. The Stratham Memorial School bus picks up and drops off children at SCLC during our before and after school programs. Our school is open year-around and we provide a summer camp offering, which operates during these same hours.

SCLC generally follows the Stratham Memorial School holiday schedule and closures. We are closed for all federal holidays as well as the Thanksgiving & December holiday breaks. Our school is open for both February & April vacations. SCLC is closed for one week before our summer camp session begins.

Parent/Teacher Organization

Parents are welcome to join our Parent/Teacher Organization. Information for meeting days and times will be shared with families during the school year. This organization is instrumental in helping the school with school wide activities and assists in raising funds for special equipment purchases.

Registration/Enrollment, Tuition Payments, & Financial Policies

When you register your child, SCLC needs certain documents on file. Our state governing agency requires a signed and dated Registration and Emergency Release Form along with a record of your child's current health exam and an up-to-date vaccination report. A completed Enrollment Form, Photography Permission Form, Student Profile, and SCLC Policy and Procedures Form are also needed upon your child's enrollment. Once enrolled, some of these forms will need an annual update.

When parents first register, a \$50 non-refundable fee is required. When your child begins attending our school, the first and last week's tuition is due. The last week's tuition will be applied towards your last week of attendance. We would appreciate a two week notice for any children who will not be continuing programming at SCLC.

Tuition payments are due at the beginning of the school week before services are rendered. Payments may be made on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. Check payments should be made out to Stratham Community Church and may be dropped off in the tuition box located on the entryway shelf. Credit card and automatic payments are managed by Christine, our director. Any question that you may have about your tuition billing may be directed to her.

Parents are responsible for paying for all of the days that their child is scheduled on their Enrollment Agreement. This also includes sick days, federal holidays, snow days, teacher-in-service days, personal time away, and school vacations. Families are not charged for the Christmas break.

If your payment is late, we will automatically charge the credit card that you have given us on file. Parents receiving NH state grants are also responsible for all balances due. If there are outstanding balances due, it will be the family's responsibility to cover any legal costs that are incurred. If any family needs financial assistance, please feel free to speak with our director Christine.

Drop Off and Pick Up

A parent/guardian must accompany their child during drop off at school and sign in and out on the daily attendance sheets, located by their morning/afternoon classroom or with their teacher. Please drop your child off with one of the teachers in attendance. Children should be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m., which is at the end of the school day. It can be very unsettling for a child when a parent is late. There is a \$1.00 per minute late fee at the 1:00 and 6:00 p.m. pickup times.

At pick up time, children will only be released to their parent/guardian or someone listed on the Emergency Release Form. If for some reason your child is being picked up by someone else, it is important that you send a written note to the school. Picture identification will be required for all authorized persons picking up a child.

If for some reason the school staff suspects that any person picking up a child is under the influence, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way, we may refuse to release the child to that person. We will request that another adult (parent or guardian listed on the Emergency Release Form) pick up the child. The protection and care of your child is our primary concern.

Health, Safety & Injury Prevention

Stratham Circle Learning Center adheres to health and safety policies mandated by NH Child Care Licensing regulations. All primary SCLC staff members undergo criminal background checks and are certified in CPR and emergency first aid.

Play equipment and classroom furniture are inspected for safety. Damaged or defective equipment will be removed promptly. In the event that a child sustains an injury, an accident report will be completed and then reviewed/signed by the parent. If the injured child needs medical attention, the parent will be notified immediately.

SCLC does not allow any type of weapons on the school or church property.

Our program is licensed by the New Hampshire Bureau of Child Care Standards and Licensing. For information on regulations refer to: New Hampshire Child Care Program Licensing and Rules.

Positive Discipline

At the Stratham Circle Learning Center children are treated with respect. Through role modeling and guidance, teachers help children feel good about themselves and behave in socially responsible ways.

- Our expectations are realistic.
- We emphasize pro-social behavior.

- We encourage problem solving, negotiating, and collaborative skills to build social understanding and growth.

Snacks/Lunch

Morning snacks are provided our preschool parents on a rotating basis. Teachers will assign snack days to families roughly twice per month. However we wish to fit the needs of all families. Please let your teacher know if it's best for your family to bring in snack less. The school always has extra snack available if you have forgotten or it was an inconvenient day.

Parents are asked to provide healthy food choices (fruit, crackers, vegetables etc.) for lunch. Food and drink need to be in non-breakable containers. Cold packs should be used if it is necessary to keep food cold, and we can heat up lunches in the microwave. We are a nut free center so please read all labels carefully, making sure there are no nuts and that they are processed in a nut free facility.

Rest/Nap Time

Preschool children will have a rest time each day as required by NH Child Care Program Licensing Rules. The school will provide mats to rest on. Parents may request whether their child naps or rests during this time. If a napping child does not fall asleep within 30 minutes, the child will be released to the resting area. Parents of napping children are asked to provide a clean sheet and blanket for the child's mat. Linens should be taken home and laundered each week.

Clothing

Children are involved in active and sometimes messy play. It is important that they are dressed appropriately, wearing comfortable clothing that the child can manage independently. Footwear should be suitable for outdoor play and exploration. Please provide outdoor clothing for both rainy and winter weather. Each child should have a complete change of clothing labeled with their name. This will be kept in each child's backpack, tote bag, or cubby hook.

Toys

Children love bringing in special toys and items from home to share with friends. Children can have difficulty sharing their special toys, and items can get lost or broken. We ask that toys are brought from home only when there is a special classroom activity and teachers have requested a toy. A nap time buddy, (i.e. stuffed animal, soft doll, or special blanket) is always welcome. Please keep in mind that the center does not allow violent action figures, toys or games.

Daily Health

If your child comes to school ill and cannot be made at ease, you will be asked to take your child home. If a child has a fever of 101°F during the school day, we will notify you and make the child as comfortable as possible until you arrive. Please allow 24 hours before your child returns to school if they have had a fever or have been vomiting. In some cases, SCLC may ask for a doctor's note for your child to attend school.

Absences

Please notify the school if your child will be absent.

Snow Days/Inclement Weather

SCLC will be closed when Stratham Memorial School is closed for snow days or inclement weather. Please tune to WMUR, Channel 9 News, or go to www.wmur.com for SMS cancellations. If we have inclement weather during the school day, please check the WMUR listings for early releases and your personal e-mail. We will send along an e-mail letting you know our closing/pick up times.

If more than three days are canceled due to inclement weather within a school year, parents may request additional programming for their child. These requests will be considered by the director on an individual basis. Decisions are based on maintaining the appropriate teacher/student ratio requirements set by the state.

Fire Drills

Fire Drills are practiced according to NH Child Care Licensing regulations and are conducted at various times of the day throughout the school year.

Emergency Response Information

SCLC has a Crisis Management booklet, outlining our response to a variety of emergency situations. These emergency situations are practiced with the children during the school year.

Since the Town of Stratham falls within the Seabrook Station 10 mile EPZ (Emergency Planning Zone, FEMA guidelines require that licensed preschools/after school programs have a REP (Radiological Emergency Plan) filed with the state and local authorities in order to ensure a timely and efficient response to an incident. Based on the type of event, we would either shelter in place, conduct an early release, or be told to evacuate. Most incidents would not require an evacuation. If an evacuation order was given and your child needed to be transported out of the EPZ, the designated reception center is Memorial High School in Manchester, NH. We would

make every attempt to notify you of this action if it were to take place in order for you to reunify with your children.

If you would like to see a copy of our Crisis Management booklet or the Radiological Emergency Plan, please speak to Christine, our director.

Smoking

The Stratham Circle Learning Center is a smoke free environment. Please refrain from smoking on school property.

Grievances

If a parent has a grievance, please speak with a teacher or the director. Should a parent be dissatisfied with the response from the teacher or director, grievances may be forwarded to the SCLC Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will make every effort to address any issues appropriately.

Medical Records

To insure the care and protection of all of our students, we request current medical information on each child prior to enrollment, including all vaccinations. These records need to be updated annually if your child is under 6 years of age and every two years if they are 6 years or older. Medical record forms are available at the school or you may provide us with a pediatrician's copy of your child's medical history.

Confidentiality

The information on your child's registration and health forms is privileged and confidential. It is only accessible to center staff, personnel from the Division of Child, Youth, and Family Services, and the Bureau of Child Care Licensing. Any other requests for information from your child's file will not be released without parental permission.

Termination of Enrollment

Occasionally a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more appropriate school setting. Some examples of behavior may include:

- A child is a danger to themselves or others.
- Medical or psychological conditions may be beyond the scope of the staff.

In these instances, the director will communicate any issues with the family and written documentation will be put in the student's file.

Allergy Prevention

Parents should notify the school of any known allergies. Precautions will be taken to alleviate allergic reactions. The staff will be made aware of each child's allergies.

Infection Control

Our staff is trained in proper hygiene, which includes hand washing, general infection control, safe food handling, and toileting procedures. All surfaces and facilities will be sanitized with a disinfectant on a regular basis. The disinfectant will either be a bleach solution or an approved and registered commercial disinfectant. The following duties are performed on a regular basis:

- Toys are washed and sanitized after they have been mouthed
- Furniture and equipment are washed and sanitized regularly
- Blankets and sheets are to be brought home by the parent weekly for laundering
- Water tables, water equipment, play tables and nonporous floors are cleaned daily or more frequently as needed.
- Lavatories are cleaned and sanitized daily or more often if needed.

Medications

We administer medications to children with a signed note from the parent and a written order from the child's physician. You will need an Authorization to Administer Medication Form for any and all types of medicine to be administered. Each time a medicine is given it will be written on the authorization or medication record form, including type of medication, specific dosage, frequency and time given. All unused medicine will be returned to the parent.

- All prescription medications must be in the original container.
- Non-prescription medications must be accompanied by a note from the parent on the day the medication is to be given, including specific dosage, time and reason for medication.
- Topical ointments and lotions must be accompanied by a note from the parent including time and dosage.
- All medications (prescription and over the counter) will be kept in the locked cabinet in the director's office.
- Refrigerated medications will be kept in a ziplock bag, to keep separate from food and drinks.

Reporting Communicable Diseases

It is our responsibility to contact the Board of Health if we suspect a child or staff member has contracted a serious communicable disease. In order to insure the health and safety of all our students and staff, we will strongly adhere to the recommendations of the Board of Health. We will notify families of exposure to communicable diseases in order for children to receive medical assistance if needed.

Responsibility to Report Child Abuse and Neglect

The State of New Hampshire requires teachers and child care workers to report to the Division of Child, Youth and Family Services when they suspect an incident of child care neglect or abuse.

Please sign this page indicating that you have read and understand SCLC policies and procedures in the Parent Handbook

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

I have read and understand Stratham Circle Learning Center's policies and procedures.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please share your e-mail address with us.

Parent Name _____

E-Mail Address _____

Parent Name _____

E-Mail Address _____