

*Springhurst*  
*Children's Center*  
**Parent Handbook**

*2024- 2025*

<b>School-Age Care for Working Parents</b>
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## **Welcome to the Springhurst Children's Center!**

We are very proud of our program and believe that your child will have a safe, happy and enriching experience with us. The SCC is a childcare program designed for the working parents of school-age children. It is open to children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade who attend Springhurst School.

### **THE PROGRAM**

The SCC is a private, not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of New York State and has tax exempt status. It is a registered childcare facility and meets all the fire, safety and health requirements of the Office of Children and Family Services. The Center operates independently of the Dobbs Ferry School District and is funded by parent fees, fund-raising activities and private donations. It is governed by a Board of Directors. The Center's overall operation is carefully monitored to ensure the safest and happiest environment for all children.

Our program is essentially recreational in nature, with organized activities such as arts & crafts, music, sports, and homework assistance/supervision. Based on a freedom of choice philosophy, children have the opportunity to choose structured play on both an individual and/or group basis. Children have enjoyed this open choice concept and play includes construction materials, board games, indoor/outdoor games as well as creative projects. Children are always encouraged to share in program planning.

The SCC also offers a Kindergarten Phase-In Program. This special program is provided during the month of September while Kindergarten students are attending a half-day of school.

### **SAMPLE SCHEDULE**

#### **Before School: 7:00 am to 8:15 (K-2) or 8:45 am (3-5)**

Supervised play, board games, and/or quiet activities

#### **Kindergarten Phase-In: 11:40 – 2:30 p.m. during half days in September.**

Arts & crafts, free play, outdoor play, music, story time and group activities.

Snacks are provided, but a bag **lunch must be sent from home.**

#### **After School: from class dismissal until 4:00/6:00p.m.**

Snacks, arts & crafts, computers, music, drama play, homework, quiet activities, board games, sports and indoor/outdoor play. Special events are planned throughout the year.

## Employees

Employees of the Springhurst Children's Center are committed to providing quality care for all enrolled children. Staff responsibilities include organizing the environment, initiating group games and responding to the individual needs of students.

Each employee possesses experience working with children and references are verified to ensure that the most responsible individuals are hired. In addition, employees are screened by the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment to verify that they have not been the subject of any child abuse cases. Each employee is fingerprinted by OFCS to ensure that a criminal record does not exist. In accordance with the regulations of the Office of Children and Family Services, the Center ensures a minimum staff/child ratio of 1:10 (Kindergarten – 1:9).

## Calendar

The Springhurst Children's Center follows the school district's calendar. The center will be closed for emergency closings and snow days. The Center will remain open if there are scheduled half-days of school. However, **no lunches will be provided and your child must bring a bag lunch.** Additional fees apply. Also, the center will be closed the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, as well as the last two half days of school in June.

## Admissions

### Criteria

The SCC is considered a "mainstream" program. Children with special health needs that require a "one on one" during the course of the school day are required to have one on one supervision at the parent's own expense as determined by the Director. A determination is made case by case with children who have special needs.

### Application & Registration Procedure

- Parents should **only** request the days and times needed that correspond to their work/school schedules. Once this request is made, the Center will write a **ten month contract**, not to be re-written unless specific work or school schedules have changed.
- Should a contract need to be re-written, request for such a change must be in writing at least two weeks prior to the beginning of a month in order for credit to be issued. A family's first contract change shall be written without fee. Any further changes will be subject to a \$20.00 fee.
- The following forms must be on file before any child is admitted:

1) Application	4) Contract	7) Behavior Agreement
2) Registration	5) Policy	8) Fees Agreement
3) Permission	6) Emergency Card	9) Medical Form (on file)

*Any changes made throughout the year on the above listed forms (i.e. address, phone*

*numbers or emergency contacts) must be reported to the Center immediately.*

### **Placement**

- A child's placement is guaranteed once their first month's payment along with a signed contract is received.
- Signed contracts and the first month's payment will be due by July 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Policy**

- Families receiving a registration packet in the Spring who request space after the registration period has expired, yet prior to the start of the school year will be admitted if space is available and only after a \$25.00 late sign up fee is paid.

### **Daily Schedule**

- It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child's teacher is aware of his/her daily SCC schedule. This includes those that are contracted as well as those using the program occasionally. The Springhurst Children's Center is an independent entity from the School District, thus communication regarding this issue may not occur.

## **FEES**

All fees are structured and designed to cover costs. As a not-for-profit organization, all income in excess of expenses are invested back into the Center in the form of additional equipment, supplies and staff development.

A \$60.00 non-refundable application fee per family is required each school year.

**Contractual payments are due on the first day of each month** with payments covering care one month in advance of service. A **late fee of \$25.00** is charged if tuition is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month. The Center reserves the right to suspend or terminate childcare services should the terms of the contract be violated.

The Center does not refund fees for days children are absent, nor can it accommodate make-ups for missed days. In cases of exceptional or unusual circumstances (i.e. a prolonged illness of more than one month), the Center may consider granting a tuition credit. Supporting documentation will be required if such a request is to be considered.

A sibling discount is available on long session childcare fees excluding late charges or other assessed extra charges. Scholarship information is available upon request and will be based on financial need provided the family meets the Federal guidelines for the reduced/free lunch program. Proof of eligibility is required before a reduced rate may be granted.

If you have a **five-day long session contract** with us, the extra hours of childcare for the half-day sessions allowed for staff development are included, at no additional cost. If you have a contract for less than 5 long sessions, a payment of \$40.00 will be required if it is one of your child's scheduled days. All students attending on an occasional use basis will require \$40.00 for half day provided your child is picked up by 4:00 pm. If after 4:00 an additional fee will apply.

### **Occasional Use Agreement**

Children may be admitted to the Center on an occasional use basis provided requests are made at least 24 hours in advance and the Center is fully staffed. In addition, all appropriate forms as outlined in the admissions section of this booklet must be on file. Families opting for this program **must pay \$40.00 for one day of childcare**. Coupon books are priced at the daily rate for a long session, plus a small surcharge. Parents utilizing the program on an occasional use basis must contact their child's teacher notifying them where to send their child at the end of the day as well as calling and leaving the information with the SCC.

### **Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures**

Children using our Before School program **must** be escorted into the Center by a parent or guardian. Those children using our Kindergarten Phase-In program and our After School program will be released to the Center by their classroom teacher upon written permission by you. Upon arrival, children are accounted for by Center staff.

The Center will only release a child to a parent/guardian. Permission for pick up by a person other than a parent/guardian must be reported to the Center by either written note or phone. Such notification must specify the name of the person and the day(s) he/she will be picking up. Please note upon arrival, this changed, authorized pick-up person will be required to show a photo identification. Furthermore, no child will ever be released to walk home on his/her own.

Children **may not** be signed in or out of the Center by any employee due to insurance and liability reasons.

## **Absences**

Parents are required to call the Center **each day** their child is absent whether due to illness, play dates, sent home from school sick, etc. **The school does not notify the Center of absences.** You may leave a message on our answering machine, which is accessible 24 hours a day. Failure to notify the Center of absences will result in the following:

1) 1 <sup>st</sup> Occurrence	Warning/No Charge
2) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Occurrence	\$5.00
3) 3 <sup>rd</sup> Occurrence	\$10.00
4) 4 <sup>th</sup> Occurrence	\$15.00*

\*\$5.00 increments will be charged for every occurrence thereafter\*

The Center regrets that it cannot refund fees for days children are absent, nor can it accommodate make-ups for missed days. Missed days are considered to include snow days, sick days, after school recreational activities and any play dates.

## **Late Pick-Ups**

**Parents must call to notify the Center if they will be late.** Those who have contracts until 4:00PM may receive an extension of time as long as the Center is fully staffed. Those contracted until 6:00PM must make alternate arrangements for pick up of their child. **The Center closes promptly at 6:00PM**

### **4:00PM Contracts**

- If a parent is unable to pick-up by 4:00PM, a fee of \$10.00 per half hour or fraction thereof will be charged.
- The Center reserves the right to extend a 4:00PM to a 6:00PM contract if lateness becomes excessive.

### **6:00PM Contracts**

- If a parent is not at the Center by 6:00PM and has failed to call, emergency names on file will be immediately contacted to come pick up your child.
- Should pick-up occur later than 6:00PM a \$30.00 fine per family for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged. A written warning will also be issued. A child whose parent receives two such warnings and then has an additional lateness may be withdrawn from the program.

**\*No child will ever be left unattended\***

**\*Please be sure to sign your child out before leaving the Center each day\***

## **Emergency and Snow Closings**

If school is closed because of snow or any other emergency, the Springhurst Children's Center will also be closed.

### **AM Session**

- On mornings when Springhurst School opens with a delay, the SCC will open for the morning session, 30 minutes prior to the start of school. Therefore, a one hour delay, the center will open at 8:30 a.m., a two hour delay, the center will open at 9:30.

### **PM Session**

**If school is open and the Dobbs Ferry School District closes early or cancels all afterschool activities because of snow or due to any other emergency, the Center must close as regulated by law according to our attorney. Please make sure your child's teacher knows where to send him/her in the event this should happen.**

## **ILLNESS AND MEDICATIONS**

Each day upon arrival, children are observed for ailments or symptoms of contagious disease. Parents will be immediately called to pick up their child if such symptoms (i.e. red eyes, rash, itchy head, fever) are suspected.

The Springhurst Children's Center reserves the right to make the determination whether or not a child should remain in our care on those days when a potential medical situation occurs. It is the Center's policy to contact parents, guardians or emergency contacts immediately so that a child can be picked up and cared for by that person. Until such time that a pick up person arrives, the Center will provide isolated care for that child as the situation warrants.

All children enrolled with the Center must have a current medical form on file submitted yearly, or at the time of registration.

**\*Please note the SCC is not allowed to administer medications, prescription or over the counter medications to any of our students.\***

## **CHILD ABUSE, MALTREATMENT & NEGLECT**

The Springhurst Children's Center is mandated by the Office of Children and Family Services to report any suspicion of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect. Reports will be submitted when any member of the SCC staff has reasonable cause to suspect that in *his/her professional capacity a child has been abused, maltreated or neglected.*



## **LUNCH AND SNACKS**

The Springhurst Children's Center provides nutritious snacks at appropriate times during the day. A refrigerator is available for storage of any special food item. Kindergarten students who are in attendance during the Phase- In period in September and all students during the four half day sessions throughout the school year **must bring their own lunch from home**. Snacks will be provided. Children requiring special diets must have written instructions indicating all restrictions and special needs.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

Parents will be notified if a child is disruptive or presents a safety problem to himself or others. Unacceptable behavior will be documented and may result in an initial one-day suspension from the program. Although this will most likely inconvenience the working parent, the Center is obligated to all families to maintain a safe environment. This suspension will hopefully allow for both parent and child to discuss the seriousness of the situation. Any future occurrence after a suspension may result in your child's immediate withdrawal from the program. Suspension is considered a warning prior to a possible expulsion whereby the Center then reserves the right to terminate the contract.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Should it be necessary to withdraw your child at any point during the period of the contract due to medical issues (i.e. a prolonged illness of more than one month), the Center may consider granting a tuition credit. Supporting documentation will be required if such a request is to be considered.

If both parents and the Center administration agree and find that a child is unable to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time, the Center will honor a request to withdraw from the program.

The Center also reserves the right to terminate a contract should the parent(s) fail to adhere to Center guidelines as outlined in the policy, this handbook and contract.

### **Change in Schedule**

To make a change in your child's schedule, the best way to contact us is via e-mail at [scc.afterschool@gmail.com](mailto:scc.afterschool@gmail.com). You may also text Juliana Tsiamtsiouris at 914-582-9430. Please be sure to **text your child's name, grade and class** when leaving a message. If you are making a change to your child's schedule after 10:00 a.m., you must email us and notify the front office. If you have a question regarding your account, please be as specific as possible.

You will be notified of special events or changes at the Center by memos which will usually be sent home with your child and will also be made available at the sign out sheet.

Parents are always welcome to view the program at any time. We encourage you to participate in the Center's continued growth and development. In addition, parents may arrange for an individual meeting with regards to their child by calling the Director. Your child's best interest is always of utmost importance to us.

\*Please note that the Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion or national origin.

\*\*Please note if your child has a 1:1 teacher assistant during the school day and requires the same level of support in the afterschool center, it is the parent's sole financial responsibility to provide the 1:1 teacher assistant for their child. The 1:1 teacher assistant must have fingerprint clearance.