

ELAN ESPRIT PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

PARENT HANDBOOK



The Parent Role

Through many years of experience we are certain that the children that do best in our program have parents that are intimately involved in their child's accomplishments, with their friends and their group.

This includes bringing home the work from their cubbies and letting them share with you each accomplishment. This could include anything from a bunch of cut-up pieces of paper, to an art project, to a page they can read to you. Kids also learn to read faster when they are read to and when they are allowed to read their work papers to you. Even noticing when something they made is hanging in the room will delight them.

Other areas of involvement are the school parties and other get togethers. Your child hears about the parties and performances, hears the other children speak of their parents coming—If you then don't attend, and/or pick your child up early so they also don't attend, they and you are not part of the camaraderie of our group. Part of their education certainly includes a group spirit.



We watch a child grow to be a part of our group. If a child does not want to stay and play a bit more when you pick them up this to us is often a sign that something is wrong. It could be that they are not yet really a part of the group, or they may not be including you in their group (This is of course not true of a new student). You might want to plan to

sit and watch what the kids are doing or play with your child at school a couple times a week, before going home.

Often a child will need extra help in the academic or social areas. Sometimes their only chance of succeeding in our school is for school and family to very strongly team up. Ultimately your child's education, manners, ethics, and integrity are your responsibility. You have allowed us to help with this—all may not be well without your help.

If you are concerned with something regarding your child, please talk with your child's teacher. If the problem is not resolving, speak with the Dean (Diana Matthew). If it is still not resolving, ask to meet with the Headmistress (Candy Mathews).



Note: When speaking about an area of concern, please remember to make sure your child is not listening. Our philosophy is to not talk about a child in front of the child as if they don't exist. If needed a child can be included in a conversation about him. Many conversations about a child can easily sound like a label to the child. So if you were to tell a teacher (in front of your child), my child is weak and cannot carry his lunch, the child will often decide to be weak and that he couldn't possibly learn to carry his lunch. Or my child never says "good morning", the child probably will take longer to begin saying "good morning".

You've probably noticed that children will more readily act out a negative than a positive. Here is an example of how

you can get around this: In class if I say, “please don’t put your feet on the table” to a child, others will put their feet on the table. If I say “Bobby, you’re sitting in your chair so nicely,” the child with his feet on the table will usually put them down. This is putting the attention what you want, rather than what you don’t want.

If you're concerned about a particular area regarding your child, or pleased about a change you have seen, please let us know.

When a Child is having difficulty with ethics, or a child does not control his own attention.

This can be a tough area to address and work with both for you and us. There are several basics that we suggest be handled before other help can be very successful. These are often difficult to do, but often open the door to further help.

1. No TV.
2. No Videos.
3. No Movie theaters.
4. No computer games.
5. Good amount of sleep.
6. Healthy food, high in protein, low in carbohydrates.
7. Sometimes allergy testing with a nutritionist.
8. Lots of outdoors and mountains.



The above should be fully done for 4-6 weeks before beginning the next steps on the program. One time of watching TV and the 4-6 week count would start over.

Illness and medication policy

Children should not come to school when ill. It is sometimes difficult to define “ill”. When children have a runny nose and a bit of a cough, but are eating well and the energy level is normal, school is probably in order. Children can have a slightly low or elevated temperature and not be ill if all else seems normal. When children have the flu and are vomiting they should not come to school until the vomiting has been gone for 24 hours. When medication is needed to come to school the child is not well. Also a child does not learn well on medication. An exception could be an allergy medicine or antibiotic. Our policy is that we do not accept children on drugs or medicine without special approval by the Director of Elan Esprit Preschool.



What to bring to school

A lunch box with room for an ice block is also needed daily. Also a refillable bottle for water is needed during all seasons. Lunch and snack should include healthy food. Please do not send sugar foods or foods with artificial sweeteners. You may include juice sweetened cookies and cereals.

A bike helmet approved by Elan Esprit should be at school daily. Keep diapers well supplied (if applicable). Bike (optional). We do have bikes at school.

Following is list of what is needed at school daily by season:

Fall-Winter

An extra set of warm clothes.

A coat with a hood. If not waterproof then also a raincoat with a hood.

Sweatshirt or sweater.

Rain boots—These should be tall, not short boots. They also should have no liner. Rain boots should remain at school all winter until the rains stop.

2 extra pair of socks.

Check your child's cubbie daily for dirty or wet clothes.

Spring

An extra set of spring clothes.

A lightweight coat.

Sweatshirt or sweater.

Sneakers or a good shoe (for sports), if your child wears sandals or dressy shoes to school.

Summer

An extra set of summer clothes.

Sweatshirt or sweater.

Sneakers or a good shoe (for sports), if your child wears sandals or dressy shoes to school.

Bathing suit.

A pair of sneakers or **approved** water shoes for creek walking.

Water shoes for the pool (optional).



Some additional tips:

Sunscreen your child as needed with an all day waterproof sunscreen.

If your child is a roller skater, a bike helmet is required. Also socks and long pants

If your child is an ice skater, a bike helmet is required. A pair of mittens and socks are also needed on skating day. We have sample of the best mitten to use. A snow bib is often helpful for children learning to skate as the padding makes falling less cold and less painful. They can usually be purchased for about \$12.

Biking trips—children should wear a lightweight pant. Pants should not be baggy from the knees down or the pant legs can get caught in the chain of the bike. A bike helmet is also required. No dresses please.

Hiking trips—children can wear shorts or a lightweight pant depending on the season. If your child tends to fall often when walking, pants may be better than shorts. If your child does not have sneakers or a good shoe for hiking on or at school to change into, for safety reasons we will not take the child on the trip. We expect that you will not let this happen. During the spring and summer please check your child for ticks after a hiking trip in the mountains.

Potty training--if your child is potty training, loose fitting



clothes should be worn. No snaps, zippers or shirts that snap over the pull-up.

If your child is potty trained, clothes should be worn that your child can take off and put on by self.

Basic Agreements and policies

When you enroll your child in the Elan Esprit Program you have agreed to:

1. Pay fees due by the 5th of the month or pay for the week your child is beginning each Monday or pay for each 2 week period your child is beginning.
2. That you will be billed in good faith for the days your child is signed up for. Also that there are not refunds for illness or vacation time.
3. That you will give 30 days notice if leaving our program, or pay for the 30 days.
4. That if you would like to add a day on a regular basis or for the occasional need, you will get an OK from the Dean or Headmistress. We do give first priority for adding days to students enrolled over new students.
5. That your child is drug and medicine free unless you have gotten written permission for an exception from the Headmistress.
6. That you will be a part of your child's group.
7. That your child will mostly attend all classes. This includes being at roll call at 9:15 through the whole day till 4:30 p.m. for younger children and 5 p.m. for older children. (Your child may,



of course, arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. And stay as late as 6 p.m.

This is an important point. We enroll children that we think we can get the product of our program with. (We are not a daycare.) If they do not attend the program we cannot get our product, which is what you are paying for. There is no point to your child attending our school unless they are here to make progress in all aspects of the program. The only exception would be a new student that is getting to know us for the first few weeks.



Daily Duties

1. Check your child's work and clothes cubbies.
2. Check your parent file.
3. Read all notices on the front door and parent notice board at the back of the school.
4. Check lost and found in the shoe room.

Parent Hatting

Our Future

Children--our challenge, our love, our future leaders. Parents, teachers, family and friends are their guides.

You have probably noticed that there is a delicate balance between running good control on children and allowing them to grow-up. Children have little bodies that put them at a great disadvantage with all of us adults. Children require that we provide a safe, sane environment for them while still allowing them to show what they can do for themselves and communicate their views of everything around them.

Treating children with the same respect for their abilities and views as you do a friend is another challenge. Children get hauled around, have food shoved in their mouths, are dressed and undressed, washed, wiped, told to be careful, don't do this and that, told to clean-up their mess before even getting a chance to do it on their own.

Have you ever noticed how children will fight with all their might (loudly or silently) to wear a certain piece of clothing, not eat when you want them to, not talk when you tell them to. There are also children that have stopped fighting. They wait to be dressed, wait to be told to sit or stand, seem a bit scattered or inattentive, not demanding to be allowed to grow up.



A child's main goal is to grow-up to be an adult.

It is the job of parents, educators, family and friends to help a child grow-up.

A ridiculous example.

Picture yourself being treated like a child. You're sitting at your desk and your boss walks over with tissue in hand and wipes your nose! Now it's almost time for an important meeting and your colleague straightens your clothes and wipes your face. You would likely be outraged at being stripped of your dignity in this manner.

This doesn't mean you can't wipe runny noses, straighten clothes that are on crooked or wash dirty faces. Consult children first on what help they need. The help needed may be for you to teach them the skills.

A good rule is to consult the child before doing something for them or to them. To children you might say, “Hi sweetheart, can I help you wash your face,” or “Wash your face please” or “let's go change your diaper, OK?”

The trap: The children can end up running the family. This is where good control comes in on the part of the parents, teachers, family, etc.

Children should have privileges that go with their age. Adults should always have more privileges or the child might reason that there is no reason to grow-up. Adults should also have fun being an adult in front of children. If children observe adults mostly being tired or complaining about their work—why aspire to grow up!

Here is an example of adults being in charge. If you were to say, “my darling child we need to leave in 10 minutes” and the child then does not go with you, you have two choices: don't tell the child you're going to leave at a certain

time, or “my darling child, you can either walk out with me or I will carry you out.” Yes, you may walk out with a screaming child, but you are in charge and in the long run will be respected. Be careful, you don’t want to put yourself or your child in a position of doing this for every little thing.

Children do best when their freedoms and barriers are very predictable. If the rules change from day to day they are not able to predict what to expect. This can cause them to be nervous, a bit afraid, insecure, or even put them into a constant challenge of the rules around them.



Another good rule, before you tell children to do or not to do something, ask yourself “is it important?”. If it's not really important, ignore it. Wearing shoes outside in the winter—important. Children choosing clothes that match—not important. Children sitting at the dinner table with the family—important. Children getting dirty—not important. Wearing their best clothes outside to play—not important, treating others kindly—important.

Children look mostly “up” at this big world of so many things that they don't understand yet. This can be a bit frightening. Their ability to look at things analytically and reason with all that exists around them and all that is happening around them is only beginning to develop, and



will continue to develop for many years. In the meantime, life can be a bit hard on them.

Imagine a dog. Children will usually do one of two things. One--see a dog and back-up quickly, or run while screaming. Two—walk up to a dog and pet it, or go running wildly to hug and pet the dog. Well, here's the problem. We want children to not be afraid of dogs, but we also don't want them running up to just any dog, as children don't always possess the reasoning powers yet to determine if the dog is safe to run up to. Here's where the adults come in. Adults can tell children that they should always stay away from dogs (not good), or they can think fast, evaluate if the dog looks like a nice one and get to the dog before the child to make sure. If all is well say, "Would you like to pet the dog with me?" If not, "This dog only likes to be with his owner, let's go look at _____."

The more skills children learn and the more they are allowed to own and control what is theirs, the better their ability to evaluate and evolve data. The more they are allowed to do things themselves, help you and others, not be wronged for the poor decisions they make, the better their ability to evaluate and evolve data.

There are too many adults in this world that have the degrees, can pass the tests, but can't build the bridge, or write a workable program, or teach a child to read. Go research the statistics of the number of children having difficulty reading, writing, or doing mathematics.



Go research the percentage of children that are labeled “ADD” or any other of the “AD” type names. Go research the statistics of the number of children being drugged (Ritalin, Prozac, etc.). The adults in this category obviously cannot evaluate the information taught them. They cannot evaluate correctly that what they are doing is not working, nor can they come up with solutions that solve problems to a good end result.

It is very important for children to be allowed to grow-up, be educated for themselves, learn information that they can use, think with, evaluate with, evolve new data from.

It takes a lot of creativity to stay one step ahead of children while guiding them on their path to growing up. It is also a great deal of fun (most of the time!).

Enjoy your children and let them enjoy you.

Note: It would be a good idea to have any adult, that spends much time with your child, read this handbook.



Reward Charts

To Do	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Eat breakfast							
Carry lunch to car							
Help mommy do a job							
Get self undressed							
Put dirty clothes away							
Brush teeth							
To bed on time							

Privilege Ideas



Extra story at bedtime
 Walk with dad
 Help set table
 Play a game with a parent
 Play ball with a parent
 Pour the milk for dinner
 Make ice cube Popsicles
 Eat ice cube Popsicles
 Set the table for dinner

The above are sample ideas. You would tailor the chart to your child. The idea is to help them to win. One item on the chart would be something that is a problem for the child and the family. The rest of the items would be things the child normally does well.

If a day gets all stars, the child wins and gets a privilege. If child does not get all stars he loses. The penalty is not to get the privilege. Remind him that he could win tomorrow. There could be a reaction to losing.

Some don'ts

1. Don't penalize this reaction other than to move him to his room if he is crying or yelling or in any way being unpleasant to have around you. Let him know that when he is done he may join you again. Remind him again that he can win tomorrow if HE/SHE wants to.

2. Don't say, "If you don't do _____, I'm going to give you an X. Just quietly mark the X. If a star or sticker, let the child know you are marking a star or have them put the sticker on the chart.

All chart items should be worded as a positive not a negative. For example: goes to bed cheerfully, rather than doesn't cry when asked to go to bed. Put dirty clothes away, rather than doesn't leave dirty clothes on the floor.

On the chart you can use stars and X's or stickers and X's.



Places to go and things to see!

- ☺ Roller Skating-Cal Skate in Milpitas
- ☺ Ice Skating-Ice-O-Plex in Fremont or Eastridge IceArena
- ☺ Alum Rock Park, Alum Rock Youth Science Institute
- ☺ Stevens Creek County Park-Cupertino
- ☺ Sanborn Park, Sanborn Youth Science Institute in Saratoga
- ☺ Ed Levin County Park in Milpitas
- ☺ Baylands Park in Sunnyvale-great for biking
- ☺ Shoreline Park in Mountain View-great for biking
- ☺ Children's Discovery Museum in San Jose
- ☺ Happy Hollow in San Jose
- ☺ Junior Museum and park in Palo Alto
- ☺ Rancho San Antonio Park in Cupertino
- ☺ Minolta Planetarium at DeAnza College in Cupertino
- ☺ A Bus ride
- ☺ A ride on Amtrak
- ☺ A ride on the Light Rail
- ☺ A ride on Bart
- ☺ Trout Farm-Fishing in Half Moon Bay
- ☺ Prush Farm in San Jose
- ☺ Phipps Ranch-Animals and berry picking in Pescadero
- ☺ Bean Hollow/Pebble Beach-Tide pooling near Pescadero
- ☺ Monterey Bay Aquarium
- ☺ Glass Bottom boat ride-Monterey
- ☺ The library

Children--our challenge, our
love, our future leaders.
Parents, teachers, family
and friends are their
guides.

