

# St. Andrew's Cottage

## Parent Handbook

### 2022-2023

#### *About our Policies and this Guide*

*This parent guide of our policies and procedures is issued each Fall and to new families served by the center. Policies may change at any time, and parents will be made aware of such changes through the newsletters from the Director of Early Childhood. Comments and suggestions about school policies should be brought to the attention of the Director of Early Childhood.*

#### **COVID-19**

Given the COVID-19 crisis, St. Andrews's Cottage is continuing to monitor the situation closely. Based on information we have at this time, we will continue to operate St. Andrew's Cottage to minimize disruption to you and your family. If the situation should change, we will notify you immediately.

#### **St. Andrew's Cottage: Our Program**

##### **Our Mission and Values**

The St. Andrew's Cottage, a program of St. Andrew's Episcopal School, exists to offer a quality learning experience and child care to children from families in the greater New Orleans area without regard to race, religion, gender, or ethnic origin for admission.

The mission of our larger school community is as follows: *St. Andrew's Episcopal School strives to educate the mind, body, and spirit of children by promoting academic excellence and social responsibility in a small, nurturing environment that values faith, reason, and diversity.*

To that end, St. Andrew's Cottage is designed to nurture the development of all children in attendance. The curriculum is child-driven and will reflect scholarly literature regarding early childhood enrichment and mental health. Our goal for each participating child is two-fold: to fulfill his/her potential for intellectual, social, and emotional functioning; and to be prepared to succeed in school and life.

St. Andrew's values are a direct manifestation of the Mission and Philosophy. They represent an essential component of the School's intentional emphasis on character development and decision-making. The values are: Respect, Honesty, Service, Gratitude, Faith, Personal Integrity, Social Responsibility, Diversity, Nurture, and Kindness. Our daily work with children of all ages is an active modeling and nurturing of these values, and distinguishes St. Andrew's Cottage in the New Orleans community.

## **Licensing/Disclosure of Information Policy**

St. Andrew's Cottage is an early learning program licensed by the Department of Education that exists to serve high quality care and education to children ages 12 months to three years. We implement the licensing requirements as set by the Louisiana Department of Education, the City of New Orleans Fire Code, the State of Louisiana Fire Department, and the Department of Health. Licensing surveys/inspections, regulations, and information regarding early learning centers can be found on the Department of Education's website, [www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com)

Our year-round early childhood program serves children 12 months-three years of age. The program is open Monday-Friday, 7:30am-6:00pm. Nutritious meals and snacks are offered to all children in attendance. Outdoor play is a valued part of each day.

Our program is designed to support the total development of young children through high quality interactions. Through intentionally planned activities and learning center experiences, teachers facilitate the development of cognitive, expressive and receptive communication skills, as well as fine and large motor skills. In full realization that children learn as much from their interactions with each other, social interaction, play, and small group experiences are a valued part of our curriculum.

Several components work together to create an inspiring and appropriately challenging setting:

- Guiding questions identified by teachers for areas of study each week
- Carefully selected and intentionally presented materials in learning centers with which children can explore, manipulate, and create
- Books, stories, and songs that build depth in relevant topics, areas of interest, and areas of study.
- Whole group experiences that build a shared vocabulary for understanding new concepts
- Facilitated play experiences that shape prosocial behaviors, including self-regulation techniques, conflict resolution strategies, richer schemas of play, and rich contextual knowledge
- Language modeling practices that support a growing expressive language in young children
- A collegial setting among teachers in the program that supports the value of supporting curiosity, exploring concepts deeply, and the continuous growth and learning of adults and children

Parents will receive regular feedback on their child's interests, friendships, growth, and progress and are asked to share information that supports our knowledge of and service to the children in our care. The faculty of the Cottage view ourselves as partners and collaborators with parents in creating a dynamic and responsive program for children.

## **Teacher Qualifications**

Our teachers are established emerging early childhood educators with experience and training working with young children. In choosing staff, our teachers are invited to join our team after

several interviews, an observation of their interactions with children, a reference check, and a Child Care Civil Background Check, as well as several days of observed training alongside faculty. Teachers also participate in numerous training: medication administration, First Aid and CPR, universal precautions, child development, curriculum and pedagogy.

## **Enrollment and Admissions:**

### **Non-discrimination policy**

St. Andrew's Cottage does not discriminate against any person in admission, employment, or otherwise because of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, or whether a child is being breastfed, in violation of existing state or federal law or regulations.

### **Inclusion**

St. Andrew's Cottage believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance, and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs. We encourage an open dialogue between administration and families to determine the suitability of our program in meeting your child's needs.

### **Admissions/Placement**

Because we want children to be placed in developmentally appropriate contexts, factors such as the month of birth help determine which waiting pool registrant would be the best fit for the vacancy. Additionally, we fill vacancies to ensure that there will be a space available for the child once they age up into the next classroom. Within children of the best-fit age range, we contact families at the top of the waiting pool.

Priority is given to returning students, siblings of enrolled children, faculty children, families we have served in the past, and other members of the St. Andrew's community. We do have an admissions calendar, with children being enrolled from August to August. If a sibling family wishes to enroll later than this timeframe (for example, starting in November), they will have to pay tuition for holding the spot until the family uses the placement.

Prior to admission, a consultation between parents and the Director of Early Childhood agreeing that the St. Andrew's New Cottage suits the family/child's needs and a tour of the facility must be documented.

### **Enrollment Process**

Upon acceptance into the Cottage, you will be sent an enrollment packet. All parents will receive a Parent Handbook with information and policies pertaining to the St. Andrew's Cottage program. You will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging receipt and your agreement to abide by these policies. In addition, the following forms must be filled out, returned, and will be kept on file for each child enrolled:

- A Child Information Form with authorization to secure emergency medical treatment

- A signed Permission to Release to Third Parties (on the Child Information Form)
- A record of the child's immunizations (must be current and up to date)
- A Photo Release Form
- A Water Play/Activities Permission Form
- A Child Introduction Form
- A Non-vehicular Excursion Permission Form
- A Topical Medication Form/As Needed Medication Form (if desired)
- An Enrollment Contract

### **Tuition and Fees:**

Tuition rates for the school year are established in the early Spring before each school year.

Tuition is due by the first of each month. Tuition not received by the 1st of the month is subject to a late fee. **Along with enrollment, all payments are made through the TADS online portal. Parents can either pay by automatic bank draft (ACH) or by credit card which adds a 3% fee. There are three payment options; a single payment due in August, two payments split 60/40 and due in August and January of the following year, and eleven monthly payments running from August through to June of the following year. The eleven payment option adds a single 1% fee.** Non-payment of tuition and fees will be cause for dismissal from the program. There will be no reduction of fees for holidays or regular closings. (A schedule of days when the Center will not operate is included in the Handbook). Likewise, absences of the child do not cause a reduction in tuition. Our budget is based on many fixed costs, and these do not lessen during times when the center is not operating. All financial terms of enrollment will be included in the Enrollment Contract with each family. Financial aid is only available for PreK-4 through 8th grade.

### **Re-enrollment**

Families may re-enroll into the next Cottage classroom by following the steps described below. Each Spring, families wishing to return for the next school year are required to complete an online re-enrollment form and submit a non-refundable deposit, which is due on the date indicated when we send out the re-enrollment information. This amount will be applied to tuition for the following school year. Families not submitting their forms and fees forfeit their spot for the coming year.

Families matriculating to other programs are asked to give an end date for the contract on a special form distributed February/March each year. The school year for the Cottage ends at the end of July. Families not re-enrolling beyond this date must find care beyond this July end date.

## **Admissions into St. Andrew's Episcopal School**

The St. Andrew's Cottage is overseen and operated by the School, which is itself a ministry of St. Andrew's Episcopal School. Children in the three year old Cottage classroom are strongly encouraged to apply to the School and are offered priority consideration in the admissions process. Parents should apply to the School's Pre-Kindergarten program for the year in which they are the appropriate age (children must turn four no later than August 31st of the year in which they wish to enroll). However, enrollment in the Cottage does not automatically guarantee enrollment in the School. We encourage Cottage families to explore opportunities and programming of the School by visiting the School website, [www.saesnola.org](http://www.saesnola.org), and by speaking with the Director of Advancement, Enrollment, and Financial Aid.

## **Termination of Contract**

If your child will not be returning to the Cottage for the next school year, or if you are withdrawing your child, you must give (at least) one full month of notice to terminate the relationship. *For example, a family would give notice on May 31 to terminate the contract for June 30.* If the last day is not the last day of the month, you will be charged the full month's tuition unless we have another child to enroll immediately after your last day. In this case, we will prorate tuition for both families.

## **Dismissal from the Program**

The goal at St. Andrew's New Cottage is to secure a long-lasting relationship between our program and its families. Dismissal from our center would be considered under these circumstances:

- Non-payment of tuition (see payment policy for guidelines)
- Indecent or inappropriate behavior on the part of the parent, family members, or associated guests
- The family and School cannot reach an understanding about the best interests of the child
- Continuing to serve the family would cause harm to the children served by the center or the staff
- Disregard of policies, including chronic tardiness at evening pick up
- Any reason that is determined to be disruptive to the School culture and the well-being of the students, as identified by the Director of Early Childhood and the Head of School of St. Andrew's Episcopal School.

## **Confidentiality and Security of all Children's Records**

The Cottage will maintain the confidentiality and security of all children's records. Employees of the Cottage will not knowingly permit the disclosure of any information concerning the child or his/her family, directly or indirectly, to any unauthorized person. This information is available only to you, the Director, your child's teachers, and to state licensing inspectors during regular inspections.

No recordings, visual or auditory, or photographs from which the child might be identified will be released without prior informed consent from the parents. (see Photo Release Form in enrollment packet)

### **Daily Life**

All children will need to be sent to the program with: a rest mat, two sets of extra clothes (including socks) **LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME**, and all diapering supplies if the child is not toilet trained (diapers, wipes). The school will supply your child with a sippy cup that is sanitized each day. Your child's teacher will let you know when diapering supplies or extra clothes need to be replenished. A labeled bin for diapering supplies is provided for each child near the changing table, and a cubby storage basket is supplied for their personal supplies and mat.

**TOYS FROM HOME ARE DISCOURAGED** and will be stored in their cubbies, as these can create problems in the classroom. Toddlers are often not great at sharing! The exception to this rule would be if the child is having separation anxiety and bringing something treasured from home could help them feel more secure. The center will provide all educational materials and supplies so there is no need to send these.

Please dress your child in appropriate play clothes. We want them to participate fully in the program, and this will often include messy play. We don't want you or your child to be anxious about their "good clothes". **Please wear tennis shoes with velcro straps and socks and shorts/bloomers underneath dresses.** We discourage the wearing of jewelry because injuries can occur when jewelry is caught or pulled.

### **Daily Schedule:**

7:30	Cottage opens, Learning Centers available
9:00	Breakfast
9:30-11:30	Morning Meeting/Learning Centers/Outside time(varies in each class)
11:30	Clean-up, then Lunch
12:00-2:30	Nap/Rest Time
2:30	Quiet Centers/Reading
3:00	Clean up, then Snack
3:30-6:00	Learning Centers/Outside time (varies in each class)
6:00	Cottage closes

This schedule reflects the overall organization of the children's day. It allows for flexibility and special events, as needed, and adapts to the needs of individual children. Morning Meeting refers to a whole group time to set the day, sing, share information about new center choices or activities, and community building. This is not passive sitting time but active participation. Each class gets 60 minutes of physical activity (teacher-led and free play), both indoors and outdoors (weather permitting) each day.

### **Open Door/Parental Access Policy**

Parents of enrolled children are welcome to visit the center anytime during regular program operation hours and when children are present. We encourage you to participate in your child's program whenever possible, and will advise you of opportunities for participation. Regular communication with teachers is encouraged, but we ask you to be sensitive to staff schedules and responsibilities so as not to disrupt the program or keep staff at the Center after their working hours.

### **Dropping off your Child**

Children may not be dropped off before 7:30am. Parents must bring the child into the classroom and sign them in. All children must be signed in and out on the Sign In/Out form. Please make sure that the teachers know the child is there before you leave. We ask parents to wash their child's hands upon arrival and also to arrive before 9:00am. Please notify a teacher or the Director of Early Childhood of later arrivals. **Children will not be admitted after 11am unless there is a recurring medical issue.** Please plan any extra curricular activities for your child in the afternoons after they are picked up for the day.

A designated drop off zone for our Toddler classes is located in front of the Cottage on Oak Street. Please use this zone only for this stated purpose. If you park in the neighborhood, please follow all parking laws and be a good neighbor!

### **Picking up your Child**

Your child will only be released to you or those people you have listed as Emergency and Release contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick up your child, you must notify the Director of Early Childhood or a classroom teacher in advance in writing. We require your signature on this written communication. Your child will not be released without prior written and signed authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### **Right to Refuse Child Release**

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick up the child, or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

In the event there is a court ordered custody agreement, the custodial parent is responsible for providing a copy of this agreement to the Director. We will not be responsible for enforcing court-directed custody mandates if the official papers are not on file.

### **Water Activities Policy**

Young children need to be provided with various sensory experiences. At the Cottage, water play is an important aspect of the program. Children learn many cognitive skills through play with water, i.e measurement, conservation. Social and independence skills are boosted through giving baby doll baths. As a sensory experience, it's just plain fun to play with water! All water play activities will be closely supervised by staff. Activities may include sprinklers and water tables. A Water Play Permission Form is included in the enrollment packet and must be on file for each child.

### **Behavior Management Policy**

Our policy is formulated to facilitate the development of responsibility and self-regulation in children. Teachers set clear, consistent, and fair limits for children's behavior and hold children accountable to standards of acceptable behavior to enable children to function in a safe and secure learning environment. Teachers redirect children to more acceptable behavior or activity and use children's mistakes as learning opportunities, patiently reminding children of rules and their rationale as needed. Teachers listen to and acknowledge children's feelings and frustrations, respond with respect, guide children to resolve conflicts, and model skills that help children to solve their own problems.

The following methods of discipline are never used:

- Physical or corporal punishment which includes but is not limited to yelling, slapping, spanking, yanking, shaking, pinching, exposure to extreme temperatures or other measures producing physical pain, putting anything in the mouth of a child, requiring a child to exercise, or placing a child in an uncomfortable position
- Verbal abuse, which includes but is not limited to using offensive or profane language, telling a child to "shut up", or making derogatory remarks about children or family members of children in the presence of children
- The threat of a prohibited action even if there is no intent to follow through with the threat
- Being disciplined by another child
- Being bullied by another child
- Being deprived of food or beverages
- Being restrained by devices such as high chairs or feeding tables for disciplinary purposes
- Having active play time withheld for disciplinary purposes

We do not use Time Out.

Remember: Development of responsibility and self-regulation skills are our goal!

## **Biting Policy**

Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all toddlers bite, biting is considered a typical stage in child development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent of hurting another child. Frustration, anger, impulsivity, lack of experience using words and/or an inability to do so, may set the stage for a biting incident to occur. Karen Miller, author of Things to Do with Toddlers and Twos, suggests that toddlers may bite for any of the following reasons:

- Teething: Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain momentarily.
- Sensory exploration: Toddlers are very good at using all of their senses to learn about the world. The “oral mode,” an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just playmates.
- Cause and effect: Toddlers are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often the response is dramatic: there is a lot of noise and attention from adults.
- Self-assertion: This is probably the most common reason toddlers bite. It is a way to express frustration when they don’t have the language skills to do so yet.

There are preventative strategies that can be used to reduce the number of biting incidents, including: an adequate number of toys and materials (and duplicates to decrease the time a child must wait for a turn), providing numerous sensory exploration activities, giving children words to express their feelings and interpreting the child’s attempts at communicating with the other children, and offering options and alternatives to reduce frustrations. Our staff will take the actions to lessen the likelihood of a child being bitten.

When a child is bitten, that child is immediately comforted and the bite is washed with soap and a band-aid is applied if the skin is broken. The biter is told firmly that, “It is not okay to bite. Biting hurts very much.” If possible, the bitten child will be encouraged to share their feelings. “It hurts” or “Don’t bite me” are sentences the teacher will model for the child to repeat. The child who bit will be offered alternative actions for their feelings (verbal expressions). Parents will be informed and work together with teachers in hopes of preventing further incidents. Consistent with our privacy policy, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. We recognize how upset parents may be when they learn their child has been bitten; however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child development.

Despite our concerted efforts to prevent biting incidents, they are bound to occur. Staff will also track incidents of biting to gain information to help prevent future occurrences. Please feel free to ask the staff any questions about toddlers and biting. Parents should understand and take comfort in knowing that biting is a normal stage in the course of a child’s development, and like all stages, will be outgrown.

## **Media Usage**

### *Electronic Devices*

Electronic devices activities for children under the age of two are prohibited. For children two and up, electronic devices will be used in a limited way when it supports the curriculum.

Occasionally, there may be a special movie day. Time allowed for electronic device activities for children two and up shall not exceed two hours per day.

### *Computers*

We use TV and computers to enhance learning on rare occasions when it adds to the overall understanding of a concept (research) or for a special "movie day" event. Children will not have access to computers that allow internet access.

### *Programs, Movies, or Video Games*

Programs, movies, and video games with violent or adult content, including but not limited to soap operas, television news, and sports programs aimed at audiences other than children, shall not be permitted in the presence of children. Only content with a "G" rating for General Audiences will be used, and all television, video, DVD, or other programming shall be suitable for the youngest child present. Video games are not used in our center.

## **Ongoing Communication**

Communication with parents is supported through notes home, daily parent-teacher communications, and parent information boards. Parents are encouraged to develop relationships and support with other families. Additionally, families are welcome to share ideas on new projects for students to pursue or other ways that our program and school community can grow and improve.

We ask that during work hours you are mindful that the teachers' focus needs to be on the children. If you text them, do not expect a response. They will be in touch with you with any important information during naptime. If you have a message or need to speak to your child's teacher, you may call St. Andrew's between 7:45am-3:30pm at 504-861-3743. Otherwise, you may contact the Director on her cell phone.

## **Parent Involvement Policy:**

### ***Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Once in the Fall and once in the Spring, teachers will compile their observations of your children using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). The ASQ is used to track children's growth and development by their parents and caregivers and covers five key developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. We ask that at least one parent attend both the Fall and Spring conference. Conferences are made by appointment.

### ***Special Events***

The Cottage hosts several special events throughout the year for parents to be involved in the life of the Cottage. These include: Parent Night, Fall Fest, Christmas Breakfast, and the Mardi Gras parade. These will be announced in the monthly newsletter.

### **Emergency Closings:**

In city-wide emergency situations, St. Andrew's New Cottage will follow St. Andrew's Episcopal School's schedule. In emergency situations, such as hurricanes, St. Andrew's will announce its closing through its One Call Now telephone notification systems, email, the website, and/or media outlets. Dismissal for such emergencies will be at the discretion of the Head of School. Parents who wish to call for their children will be permitted to do so; children should then be collected from the Cottage or School Office. In order to properly contact parents during an emergency, please ensure that the Cottage has your correct contact information in its database.

The School website, [www.saesnola.org](http://www.saesnola.org), is hosted off-campus and should be available at all times. In case of a mandatory evacuation of the city, please check the website regularly for news and updates.

### **Closings for Professional Development of Staff**

Training of your child's teachers is scheduled throughout the year and for a week each summer. During these days, we are closed to children. Please plan accordingly.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Handwashing**

Handwashing is a practice we model and encourage because it keeps children and adults healthy in our program. We recognize that with developing immune systems, young children will likely get sick during the course of the year. We work hard to implement universal precautions that minimize this. It is for this reason that we ask parents to wash their child's hands at one of our handwashing sinks at morning drop-off. Our teachers continue this practice throughout the day, before and after meals.

### **Health Guidelines**

In order to protect your child and the other children at the Cottage, we follow health guidelines that we expect all parents to follow. Please keep your child at home where he/she can rest and be comfortable if your child:

- Has a temperature of 100.4 degrees (child should be free of fever without any medication for 24 hours before returning to the Center)
- Has conjunctivitis, which is an eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye". The eye is generally red with some burning and there is a thick yellow drainage being secreted. (Child may return when there is no discharge and the eye has been treated with medication)
- Has rashes that you cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a physician
- Has impetigo of the skin
- Has diarrhea (two or more loose stools, or above what is normal for the child. Child may return when he/she has not have diarrhea for 24 hours)
- Has two consecutive vomites (child may return to school when he/she has not vomited for 24 hours)
- Appears to have symptoms of a cold. This includes consistent runny nose with green mucus, consistent coughing or sneezing, and fatigue

- Seems sick without obvious symptoms (unusual paleness, irritability, unusual tiredness or lack of interest and cannot participate in regular classroom activities)
- Has been diagnosed by a doctor with an ear or throat infection and has been placed on an antibiotic (the child may return when he/she has had medication for at least 24 hours)
- Has a contagious condition such as measles, chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, or Hand/Foot/Mouth. There is a communicable disease policy on file in the office. Please check for attendance recommendations.

### **Dispensing Medications**

Parents must complete an Authorization to Administer Medication form in order for a trained staff member to be able to administer medication. Only medications prescribed by a licensed health care professional will be given. All medicine must be in the original container, with the leaflet of possible side effects, and have the child's name on the label. We will not give the first dose of any medication. We do not administer medicine on an "as needed" basis (this includes fever reducing medications). Please give the medicine to the Director of Early Childhood--do not leave it in children's bags or cubby!

By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child, as well as the other children who attend the Center. Sometimes these conditions are not noticed by the parent before arrival to the center. When teachers notice the condition, it will be brought to the parents' attention so that the child can be removed from the center. When children become sick at school, parents are asked to pick up their child within 30 minutes of being notified and to communicate with the school when we can expect you.

### **Minor Injury/First Aid**

For minor injuries, accepted First Aid procedures will be followed by the staff and the parents will be advised. For more serious injuries, the center will take the necessary actions to protect the child from further harm and will immediately attempt to notify the child's parent/guardian. The Child Information Form signed by the parent empowers the center's representative to authorize medical treatment at a local medical facility.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy**

All Cottage staff will report any allegations or suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child (in accordance with R.S. 14:403) to the local child protection agency as mandated by law. Any suspected cases should be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services toll free number: 855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437). An early learning center shall not delay the reporting of suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protection Statewide Hotline in order to conduct an internal investigation to verify the abuse or neglect allegations; and an early learning center shall not require staff to report suspected abuse or neglect to the center or management prior to reporting it to the Child Protection Statewide Hotline.

### **Food Policy**

Well balanced and nourishing meals and snacks will be served to children in attendance at meal times (See Daily Schedule for times of meal service). All meals meet the requirements of the

Child Care Food Program of the USDA. Monthly menus will be posted in the Center and emailed to families. Your child will be served milk with breakfast and lunch and will have access to water throughout the day.

Children are not allowed to bring food into the Cottage except under the following circumstances:

- When a child requires a special diet, a written statement from a medical authority shall be on file
- Children with food allergies/intolerances shall have a written statement signed by the parent indicating the specific food allergy/intolerance
- When a child requires a modified diet for religious reasons, a written statement to that effect from the child's parent shall be on file
- Refreshments for special occasions such as birthday parties and holidays, with prior approval from the Director, may be served

### **Nut-Free Program**

In the interest of keeping all children in our program, including those with severe allergies, safe, St. Andrew's Cottage is a **nut-free program**. At this time, there is at least one student in the Center with a significant nut allergy. The act of ingesting any form of nut (peanuts, almonds, nut oils, etc.) can be very dangerous to the child. In addition, simple exposure to nuts or nut products, through contact of nut residue from another student or adult, can be dangerous.

When sending in food, please read **ALL** product labels carefully and refrain from sending in any of the following:

- Peanut butter or any other nut butter, including crackers with peanut butter filling
- Any muesli bar, biscuit, or other product that lists nuts as an ingredient
- Trail mixes with nuts, granola bars with nuts, or dried fruit with nuts
- Cereal with nuts, like Honey Nut Cheerios
- Nuts in salad
- Candy or cookies containing nuts
- Loose nuts of any kind (peanuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, pistachios)
- Any nut pastes (such as almond paste)
- Again, please read all food labels carefully. **Any food label that reads, "Contains or may contain peanuts or tree nuts" is prohibited.**

### **Governance**

The Rector designates the St. Andrew's Episcopal School Board as the agent responsible for governance of the School and the Cottage. The School Board is composed of 15 voting and two non-voting members. The voting members are the following: two members elected by the Parents' Club, the President of the Parent's Club (ex officio), a member of the Vestry appointed annually by the Rector, three members of the communicants of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church elected at the Annual Meeting of the Parish, seven members appointed by the School Board subject to the approval of the Vestry, three of whom must be communicants in good standing at

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and the Rector (ex officio). The non-voting members are the President-elect of the Parent's Club and the Head of the School (ex officio). While the School Board takes a keen interest in all aspects of the School, its principal charges are the development of policy and fiduciary well-being of the School. The School Board is empowered to hire a Head of School to whom it delegates the authority to manage and operate the School and to implement policy.

Queries and concerns that parents may have should be brought to the attention of the person best able to resolve them. Matters that involve one's child should first be addressed to the child's teacher. Managerial issues that relate to the operation of the Cottage are within the purview of the Director of Early Childhood, and matters of the School are within purview of the Head of School and should be brought to his or her attention. Areas of finance and policy are the principal focus of the School Board, the appropriate forum for these topics.

### **Grievance Policy**

Providing childcare for small children can be sensitive work. We suggest that you develop relationships with your child's teachers to facilitate a collaborative approach that allows us to best serve your family.

Parents with concerns should schedule a meeting with their child's teacher to discuss any problems that require an in-depth conversation. In the event that the meeting is unsatisfactory, the parent or teacher may schedule an additional meeting with the Director of Early Childhood, or the Head of School, to try to resolve the situation. If there is no final agreement in the meeting, the Head of School will make a final judgment in the best interest of the child and other students in the class. If the parent is unsatisfied with the matter in which the process was managed, or in the event that the parent has a major concern with the Head of School that cannot be resolved directly with the Head, he/she may send a written letter of concern to the Executive Committee of the School Board.

### **Complaint Policy**

Parents may call or write the Licensing Division with any significant, unresolved licensing issues  
Louisiana Department of Education

Department of Licensing

P.O. Box 4249

Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Phone: (225) 342-9905

Fax: (225) 342-2498

[ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov)

### **Resources for Families with Young Children**

The Parenting Center at Children's Hospital: Offers parenting resources, advice, classes, and play groups for families

504-899-9511 or [www.chnola.org/content/ParentingCenter.htm](http://www.chnola.org/content/ParentingCenter.htm)

Zero to Three: Supports healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers, and their families

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

Early Steps: An Early Intervention Resource for infants and toddlers with developmental delays/disabilities and their families

1-800-922-3425 or [www.laeikids.com](http://www.laeikids.com)

Parent Source: Parent enrichment resources and individual consulting for families by child psychologist, Pat Blackwell

504-433-2428 or [www.WeeWonders.com](http://www.WeeWonders.com)

Shots for Tots: A network of public and private entities working cooperatively to update and educate parents and providers about immunizations

[www.shotsfortots.com](http://www.shotsfortots.com)

Families Helping Families: A family support resource for families of children ages 0-18 with disabilities

504-943-0343 or [www.fhfla.org](http://www.fhfla.org)

I/We acknowledge receipt of the Cottage Parent Handbook and agree to abide by these policies.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

