



Voluntary Pre-K

Handbook



2023-2024



Welcome to VPK

Your child is about to begin an exciting time of learning. Top Spot Academy's Voluntary Prekindergarten Program is designed to prepare children for kindergarten and to focus on early reading, writing, math and social skills.

Our program offers high quality, stimulating and developmentally appropriate practices which include:

- Encouraging children to achieve their highest potential through healthy, innovative, educational and fun activities.
- Modeling the character values of honesty, respect, responsibility and kindness.
- Building a sense of community among the public schools and families.
- Encouraging children to learn about their culture, and the culture of others, by exposing them to books, music and toys that celebrate diversity.
- Extending the range of play and learning experiences outside the classroom through an emphasis on outdoor and natural learning environments, field trips and classroom visits from a wide variety of community resources.
- Supporting inclusion of children with special needs. » Integrating classroom centers that support the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for a 4 year old.
- Providing a content-based curriculum with opportunities for language development, early literacy, writing, mathematical thinking, science and social studies



School Year Calendar

2023-2024

Monday August 14	First Day of School
Monday September 4	Labor Day Holiday
Monday October 16	Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
Friday October 27	Teacher Professional Day/Student Holiday
Monday-Friday Nov. 20 - 24	Thanksgiving Break
December 25 - January 5	Winter Break
Monday January 8	Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
Tuesday January 9	Classes Resumes
Monday January 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday /No classes
Monday February 19	Presidents' Day Holiday /No classes
Friday March 15	Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
Monday-Friday March 18-22	Spring Break (NO Classes)
March 28	Good Friday (School Closed)
TBA	Last Day of School



Attendance Policy

Parents are required to sign the VPK Attendance Policy at the beginning of the year. The VPK Program funding is based on student attendance. The State of Florida requires parents sign the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate (Short Form) at the end of each month.

Absences

Regular attendance is critically important for children to become successful life-long learners. Please make every effort to notify your child's teacher when your child is going to be absent from school. Every time your child is absent due to an illness, you must provide written documentation. For illnesses resulting in absences longer than five school days, a doctor's note is required.

Students who have excessive unexcused absences (more than five) may be required to attend an attendance meeting with school personnel. After an attendance meeting, continued excessive absences, either excused or unexcused, may result in your child being dismissed from the program.

Excessive Tardiness

It is also important that your child arrive promptly to school. Students dropped off late more than five times may be dismissed from the program.

Late Pick Up

Children will be dismissed on time every day after VPK if there's a need for extra care Top Spot Academy could provide it for \$185 weekly, please inform the office any changes on schedule on time so we can work with the requirements of DCF.

Be aware that for children that are not enrolled in our wraparound it's a fee of \$5.00 per minute when they are pick-up after 12:00PM, it is vital that he/ she is picked up on time. Students picked up late more than five times may be dismissed from the program.



Excused Absence Form

Date: _____

My child, _____, was absent on
_____ through _____ for the following reason(s):

_____ Illness/Injury of the child or immediate family member requiring hospitalization and/or bed rest (to include life-threatening illness/injury).

_____ Medical Legal Appointment (i.e. doctor, dentist, court, etc.).

_____ Infectious disease or parasite infection (i.e. lice). (up to four (4) days per school year).

_____ Observation religious holidays/service instruction, which forbids secular activity on an instruction day.

_____ Funeral/memorial service, or bereavement upon the death of a child's Immediate family member.

_____ Catastrophic disasters that significantly impact the life of the student (e.g. loss of residence from natural disaster).

*(Top Spot Academy's practice has been to define immediate family as the student's mother, father, brother, sister, stepmother, stepfather, step-siblings, and other relatives who live in the student's home)

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Please attach any supporting documents (e.g. doctor's notes, dentist's note, etc.)



Attendance Agreement

Dear Parent/Guardian,

To prepare your child for success in VPK, it is vitally important that he/she attends school every day, on time, and stays for the duration of the day. The TSA VPK Attendance Policies are listed below. ***(Please sign this form and return it to school)***

Initial on each line if you have read, agree to, and understand the policy.

- You are required to fill out a TSA Excused Absence Form each time your child is absent due to illness. _____
- You are required to send a doctor's note for absences due to an illness lasting more than five (5) consecutive school days. _____
- Unexcused absences (more than five) can result in an attendance meeting with school personnel. _____
- Continued excessive absences may lead to the dismissal of your child. _____
- Repeated late pick-up of more than five (5) times, may result in dismissal from the program. _____
- Picking up your child before the end of the school day more than five (5) times may result in dismissal from the program. _____
- Continued tardiness may result in dismissal of the program. _____

I have read and agree to the terms of the TSA VPK Attendance Policies.

Child's Name: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____



Curriculum Guidelines

Curriculum and Standards TSA has approved the Creative Curriculum materials for the VPK programs. Creative Curriculum fosters the social-emotional, intellectual and physical development of children while nurturing natural curiosity and sense of self to build a foundation for lifetime learning. The Creative Curriculum materials are aligned with the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for 4 and 5 year old children.

The standards can be found at: <http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com/standards.html>

Florida adopted the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards in Fall 2017. The standards and benchmarks reflect the knowledge and skills that a child on a developmental progression should know and be able to do at the end of an age-related timeframe.

Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards are grouped around eight domains of early learning and development:

- I. Physical Development
- II. Approaches to Learning
- III. Social and Emotional Development
- IV. Language and Literacy
- V. Mathematical Thinking
- VI. Scientific Inquiry
- VII. Social Studies
- VIII. Creative Expression Through the Arts

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Hands on activities are encourage in VPK. Worksheets are not longer a tool inside the classroom as well as report cards. Students are evaluated through interactions and expe-

Daily Routine

The teacher will post a daily schedule of activities in sequential, pictorial form. This will help children learn time concepts, planning and predicting skills.

Large Group (Circle Time)

Daily, the entire class will gather for group activities that encourage relationship building, turn taking, music, storytelling and other activities that address the VPK standards to prepare children for success in kindergarten.

Small Group Time

Children will spend time with an adult and in a small group learning and practicing skills in early literacy, math, science and social/emotional areas.

Learning Centers

Each classroom will have areas set up where children can go individually or in small groups to read books, build with blocks, use a dramatic play center, listen to music and books, and explore materials in reading, writing, math, art, science and sensory centers. Children are encouraged to make choices, play together, solve problems and practice small and large motor skills



Discipline Policy Statement

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief, Top Spot Academy uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following discipline and behavior management techniques.

WE DO

- “ Communicate to children using positive statements.
- “ Communicate with children on their level.
- “ Talk with children in a calm quiet manner.
- “ Explain unacceptable behavior to children.
- “ Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- “ Praise and encourage the children.
- “ Reason with and set limits for the children.
- “ Apply rules consistently.
- “ Model appropriate behavior.
- “ Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
- “ Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- “ Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- “ Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.
- “ Listen to children and respect the children’s needs, desires, and feelings.
- “ Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- “ Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

WE DO NOT

- “ Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)
- “ Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.
- “ Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.
- “ Use food as a form of reward or punishment.
- “ Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- “ Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- “ Embarrass any child in front of others.
- “ Compare children.
- “ Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- “ Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- “ Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- “ Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child’s parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Conferences will be scheduled with parents if disciplinary problems occur. If a child’s behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate childcare services for that child. Note: If, at any point, there is an indication/suspicion that a child may have special needs, Top Spot Academy will inform the child’s family for assessment and assistance.



Discipline Agreement

The following interventions may occur if a child's behavior is detrimental to the learning process and/or the child becomes injurious to him/herself, other students or staff members:

- Parent will be contacted via written notification and/or phone call.
- Parent will be asked to participate in a parent-teacher conference.
- Parent may be asked to pick up the child from school.
- If the interventions listed above are not working to correct the child's behavior, the child can be dismissed from the VPK program.
- School-based administrators have the authority to dismiss a student from the VPK program for non-compliance issues of this discipline policy.

I have read, agreed to, and understand this Discipline Policy. ***(Please sign this form and return it to school)***

Name of Child: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Name of Teacher: _____

Signature of Teacher: _____

Signature of School Administrator: _____



Health Guidelines

After being notified, a parent must pick up a sick child as soon as possible. Please make sure the teacher has your most current phone numbers. If the child has been exposed to a communicable disease, the parent must notify the school.

Medical Emergencies

The school will contact the parent immediately if a serious accident or injury occurs. If there is a minor injury, the parent will be notified by the end of the day.

Please make sure to update your phone number (s), as well as emergency contact numbers so the school can reach you or another responsible adult during the day, in case your child needs medical attention

Graduation

Our Pre-School & Private School has a formal graduation ceremony on May. A Graduation fee of \$75 will be due on April 2024, which is mandatory and not refundable and could be paid it by installments. Every child graduating may bring up to five family members to the ceremony, a list with the names of the child's guest must be submitted to the office two weeks before the ceremony. TSA reserves the right of admission.

Dress code:

As part of our program, TSA requires that every child attending our center wears the TSA uniform, it consists of a TSA polo shirt, navy or khaki pants or shorts for boys and girls (girls also have the option of navy blue, or khaki scooters), and black shoes. Please refer to the Parent Handbook for winter uniforms guidelines. You can order the uniforms through this website: [MoHo Uniforms](#) . Spirit t-shirt must be purchased at the school office for \$12.00.

The use of the uniforms is **Mandatory** for all children attending VPK Program at Top Spot Academy.



Pre-School Supply List

2023—2024

- Complete change of clothes (underwear, pants/shorts, shirt, & shoes)
 - Play dough (1 pack –primary colors)
 - #2 Fat pencils (1 box)
 - Elmer’s Glue (2 Bottles) 6 glue-sticks
 - EXPO Erasable markers (1 pack)
 - 3 Reams of copy paper
- 2 pack of Construction paper (Assorted colors)
 - 1 package of paper plates (Boys)
 - 24 color box of crayons (2 Boxes)
 - 8-count washable markers (1 Box)
 - Primary Journal (1)
 - Pair of Kid’s Blunt Tip scissors (1)
 - Art Smock (1)
 - 2 box of Ziploc 1 gal. bags (Girls)
 - Clorox wipes (2 Bottles)
 - 1 Bottle of Hand sanitizer
 - 1 Box of Band-Aids assorted sizes
 - 2 Box of Kleenex

During the year you might be asked for additional items for special activities and/ or projects. Students should ALWAYS have an extra set of clothes in case of accidents. Except for the clothes, please do not label the supplies, they will go to the community center of the classroom .

Parents please do not bring backpacks, sippy cups, sleeping bags, purses, make up, or any other personal belongings to the center.



Parent Agreement Form

Initial each statement that you read, agree to, and understand. As a parent/guardian of a VPK student, I will:

- Sign and adhere to the TSA VPK Attendance Policies and I have received a copy of the policies. _____
- Supplies are donations and not required. _____
- Ensure that a designated adult, who is at least 18 years old, will sign my child in and out of the classroom daily. _____
- Sign the Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate (Long Form) at the end of each month. _____
- Sign and adhere to the TSA VPK Discipline Policies and I have received a copy of the policies. _____
- Attend at least two parent/teacher conferences. _____
- Ensure that my child's school has current contact information. _____
- Participate in a parent orientation. _____

I have read, agree to, understand and initialed each item listed above. *(Please sign this form and return it to school)*

Name of Child: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____