



CATALINA HILLS
PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

FAMILY HANDBOOK

CATALINAHILLS.ORG | (520) 529-5617 | 4440 N CAMPBELL AVE, TUCSON, AZ 85718

MISSION

At Catalina Hills, we partner with families to create a loving, play-based environment where every child is known, supported, and inspired to grow. Through small class sizes and caring teachers, we nurture the whole child and lay the foundation for lifelong learning and success.

Children learn best through play. At Catalina Hills, play is incorporated into every learning experience, whether it’s free play, guided play, or structured games. Play helps children develop critical thinking, social skills, creativity, and a love of learning.

MEET THE DIRECTOR

I graduated from Clemson University with a B.A. in Early Childhood Education. While raising my two sons, I earned a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Phoenix. I have over 12 years of experience as a preschool teacher and have taught kindergarten at Manzanita Elementary School.

*My husband is a practicing dermatologist in the area and I have two sons - one attending ASU and the other Baylor University. I am very passionate about the education and happiness of all children. I have always been dedicated to bringing enthusiasm to the classroom, and that dedication will make Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten the best early childhood learning center in Tucson. - **Kate Schwartz, Owner & Director***

MEET THE STAFF

Jennifer Landis
Assistant Director

Christie Stage
Jackrabbits

Lorraine Andrade
Spanish

Renate Combs
Assistant Director

Megan Roberts
Hummingbirds

Trisha Adcock

Joe Morrissey
Coyotes

Karla
Quails

Maria Fallon
Kinder

Rita Provencio
Roadrunners

Eliana Combs
Enrichment

Yaslin Figueroa
Woodpeckers

Shawna Melnick
IT

SCHOOLWIDE POLICIES

This handbook is intended to familiarize families with the current Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten policies and procedures. The director may, at any time, review and revise school policies as deemed appropriate. The staff at Catalina Hills are committed to providing a safe and fun setting for your child’s learning experiences. *We promise to:*

- Follow the standards outlined in this handbook.
- Listen to the questions, comments, and concerns that you may have and set up confidential meetings if desired. Share information with families about difficulties and successes.
- Inform you of any illness or accident.
- Provide newsletters, announcements, and calendars to keep you informed of classroom events and themes.
- Provide families with ongoing developmental assessment progress.
- Engage in staff training and planning to provide the highest quality education for your child.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff receive annual training on:

- Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect
- Curriculum and learning approaches
- Observation-based assessment methods
- Child development and developmentally appropriate practices

ASSESSMENT AND OBSERVATION

Teachers use ongoing, observation-based assessments to understand your child's development and learning. Observations inform individualized planning, track progress, and help improve classroom programs. Families can contribute by sharing insights, observations, or concerns about their child's development, which are considered during assessments.

SCHOOL HOURS AND OPERATION

- School Hours are from 7:30 to 5:00pm Monday-Friday. Summer hours may vary. School begins promptly at 8:30 AM. Tardiness is stressful for your child or children. This can also cause stress for the other children in class. Lessons and fun begin, and tardiness can interrupt the class.
- If you have an emergency delay and you are going to be late picking up your child, please call the school before closing time. You must designate two different contact numbers on your blue emergency card for reasons like this and others should we not be able to reach you. If you are late picking up your child at the end of school 1pm for 1,2's and 3's. 2:00 for Kindergarten. Or 4:00 for the Owl's program. Late fees will apply.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATIONS

At Catalina Hills, we hold high expectations for our students and believe that learning is most effective in the context of strong, supportive relationships. We provide clear guidance and consistent expectations while helping students make acceptable choices. When children misbehave, our approach is appropriate for all ages: we discuss alternative behaviors and encourage empathetic responses. Physical punishment, psychological abuse, and coercion are strictly prohibited. Disruptive or unsafe behavior is addressed through positive guidance, redirection, and teaching appropriate skills. Suspension or expulsion is only considered in extreme cases and is minimized whenever possible. We guide students in taking personal responsibility and developing decision-making skills that will support their success throughout the school year and beyond. Children are encouraged to problem-solve independently when conflicts or challenges arise during the day. Occasionally, a child may be redirected to another area of the classroom to help them make a better choice. If a child continues to be uncooperative or disruptive, parents will be contacted to pick up their child, with the expectation that the child may return the following day to try again. Repeated or serious behavioral concerns are reported to parents, and a parent-teacher conference will be scheduled with the director to develop a behavior modification plan. In cases where a child damages toys or classroom property, parents may be asked to repair or replace the item. If a child is deemed to endanger staff, other students, or school property, Catalina Hills reserves the right to dismiss the student.

REGISTRATION + ENROLLMENT

To secure a spot for your child, full tuition is required when a class has a waitlist. While it is ideal for children to begin in August, we do make exceptions for mid-year enrollment, provided there is availability in the desired class. To complete registration, all required information must be submitted, all necessary documents uploaded, and the registration fee paid. Once registration is complete, your child's enrollment will be processed and ready for their start date. After payment of the registration fee, a billing agreement will be emailed to you. This agreement allows you to select your preferred payment plan and payment method for tuition.

BRIGHTWHEEL

Catalina Hills partners with Brightwheel, a secure admissions and tuition management platform for private schools. The enrollment process begins with an initial application, where parents provide basic information about their child and indicate interest in Catalina Hills programs. Once the application is received, we will review availability for the requested program and schedule. If space is available, families will be notified by email or phone call of acceptance. A follow-up email will then be sent with instructions to complete the enrollment process through Brightwheel.

TUITION + PAYMENT POLICIES

- Monthly tuition is billed from August through May.
- Tuition remains the same each month, regardless of school holidays, vacations, or in-service days.
- A \$35 late fee will be applied if tuition is not paid within the first 10 working days of the month.
- Tuition for August is non-refundable.
- All families are required to use the tuition payment options provided by Catalina Hills.
- A 30-day written notice is required if you plan to withdraw your child.
- Any advance tuition paid beyond the required 30 days will be refunded.
- If immediate withdrawal is requested, the tuition for that full month will still be due.

EXTENDED CARE + DAILY DROP-IN

- Early Bird Program: available from 7:30–8:30 a.m. before the school day begins, \$5.00 per half hour. Reservations required.
- Owls Program: after-school care, running from 1:00–5:00 p.m., \$10.00 per hour. Reservations required.
- For registered students, drop-in care may be available when space allows. To request drop-in care, please message your child's teacher and copy the assistant director to confirm space, availability, and approval. Cost: \$40.00 per day. This rate does not include Early Bird or Owls programs. Approved drop-in charges will be reflected in your weekly extended care billing

DAILY SIGN IN AND OUT

In compliance with state regulations, each classroom is equipped with a tablet for daily sign-in and sign-out. For accuracy and accountability, parents/guardians are required to enter their first initial and full last name when signing their child in or out.

TRANSPORTATION + ON CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS

Catalina Hills does not provide transportation to or from campus; parents and guardians are responsible for dropping off and picking up their children each day. Our school will be closed on designated in-service and vacation days. A yearly calendar is provided to outline these specific dates so families can plan ahead. Throughout the year, we also host a number of on-campus field trips to enrich your child's learning experience.

PICK UP + DROP OFF CHANGES

For your child's safety, please provide written notification to your child's teacher whenever someone new will be picking up. In addition, confirm with the school office that this person is listed on your *Authorized Pick-Up Form*. All new pick-up individuals must present valid photo identification to the school office staff before signing your child out. For security reasons, we cannot accept phone calls granting verbal authorization for anyone not listed on the *Authorized Pick-Up Form* to take your child home.

SUPERVISION + PLANNING TIME

Our staff ensures active supervision at all times. Staff are intentionally observing, moving around the classroom, and engaging with children to ensure safe exploration and learning. Teachers have scheduled planning time each week. The Creative Curriculum is used by staff for lesson preparation and classroom implementation.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION & COMMUNICATION

Families are warmly encouraged to participate in our programs as they are able. While attendance at school events is not mandatory, we hope you will join us for as many activities as possible throughout the school year, these are wonderful opportunities to get to know your child's friends, their families, and our school community. Catalina Hills parents have access to areas of the facility where their enrolled child(ren) are receiving care. Because communication is essential to building strong partnerships, we share important messages, classroom updates, and announcements through Brightwheel, as well as a monthly newsletter. Parent/teacher visits may be scheduled directly with your child's teacher, and you are always welcome to check in, ask questions, or share feedback. If you ever feel communication could be more frequent or detailed, please see the director so that additional arrangements can be made. We truly value parent input and suggestions. **Family Responsibilities:**

- Read school and program information shared through Brightwheel, newsletters, parent boards, and other communication channels.
- Share relevant information about your child with staff members.
- Pay tuition fees promptly using the available payment options.
- Treat all staff and families with respect; concerns will always be handled confidentially.
- Notify the school by phone or email when your child will be absent.
- Sign your child in and out each school day.
- Update all emergency contact information and immunization records.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to participate in the classroom with their child, pending the approval of your child's teacher. The staff welcomes your participation and support, once the children are settled into the school routine. Volunteers are especially requested for special event days throughout the year. Volunteers need to sign in and out of the office and wear a special visitor badge when on campus. Teachers will each oversee volunteer days and times and will let parents know if and when this is a possibility in their classroom. Volunteers and external service providers are never left alone with children. They are always supervised by a staff member who has completed orientation and training.

BIRTHDAYS

- Birthdays are observed in each classroom with class birthday traditions.
- Each child is recognized in a special way in the classroom.
- Please talk to the teacher about arrangements for your child's birthday celebration.
- If you wish to bring a treat for the class, items need to be store-bought and brought in original packaging to comply with state guidelines.
- We encourage parents to come and spend some special time with their child, reading their child's favorite book to class and sharing in the special treat.

SNACKS + LUNCH

- Daily Snack: Children should bring a snack each day. We encourage parents to send healthy, low-sugar options.
- Water Bottles: Please provide a labeled water bottle filled with water only each day.
- Lunch: Lunchtime is determined by the classroom teacher and may vary depending on extracurricular activities.
- If your child is staying for lunch, please pack nutritious items.
- Include an ice pack if food needs to be kept cold.
- Clearly label your child's lunch box.
- Lunch boxes should be taken home at the end of each school day.

FOOD ALLERGIES

For the safety of all students, children are not permitted to share food with others while at school. Parents are responsible for clearly communicating any known food allergies to the teacher and staff. If a child enrolls with a diagnosed nut allergy, our nut-free policy will go into effect immediately and be enforced school-wide.

Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten is regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

CLOTHING

- Children should wear play clothes that they can fasten and manage on their own. Easy-on, easy-off items are ideal. Please choose clothing that can get messy, as active play is part of the school day. All belongings should be clearly labeled. An extra set of clothes will be kept at school in case of accidents. Soiled items will be placed in a zipper bag and returned at pickup.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Closed-toe shoes are required; Crocs are acceptable. Flip-flops and shoes with slippery soles are not permitted. If a child's shoes limit their ability to play safely, parents will be asked to provide alternative footwear.

SUN SAFETY + INSECT REPELLENT

- Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at school, as staff cannot apply sunscreen due to state regulations. Children are encouraged to bring a hat with a brim to keep in their cubby. Please label the hat with your child's first and last name.
- Insect Repellent: Please apply insect repellent prior to sending your child to school.
- Pesticide Notification: In the rare event that pesticides need to be applied on campus, a notification will be posted on the office information board 48 hours in advance. Notices will include the date and time of application, and additional information is available in the office upon request.

PERSONAL ITEMS & TOYS

Children should only bring favorite items or toys to school when requested for a teacher-led activity or shared opportunity. To ensure a safe and focused learning environment, please leave superhero toys, ropes, and toy weapons at home.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Catalina Hills staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. We will provide care for minor cuts and bruises. If we believe a child requires medical attention, we will contact the emergency contacts listed on your child's file, starting with the first contact, until someone is reached. In the event of a serious emergency, 911 will be called first, followed by notifying the parents. Please inform us promptly of any updates to your emergency contacts throughout the school year. In the event of a building safety issue, such as a fire, teachers will evacuate children following the posted escape routes or alternate routes as indicated on building maps, which are available in all classrooms and the office. Monthly fire drills are conducted to ensure children and staff are prepared. During an emergency lockdown, all classroom and office doors will be locked, and children will remain safely inside. No one will be allowed in or out of the building until the police have cleared the situation. Catalina Hills maintains a comprehensive crisis plan with additional safety procedures and protocols to ensure the well-being of every child.

ABUSE + NEGLECT

In accordance with the Arizona State Law, the staff at Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten must report suspicion of any form of child abuse. This includes sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Our foremost responsibility is to ensure the safety of your child.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten LLC admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. Catalina Hills does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, or any school-administered program.

INSURANCE

Arizona state law requires that licensed preschools carry general liability insurance. Please see the front office for more information.

TODDLER POLICIES

DIAPERING

Please provide commercially available disposable diapers/pull ups, wipes and ointment, if your child requires it. Diapers are checked often throughout the day, at least every two hours and after naptime. The changing area is cleaned and sanitized after each child's diaper is changed. Teachers and staff will wash their hands after each diaper change. We ask that your child not arrive at school in a soiled diaper. Please ask if you have any questions. Staff must follow state health and safety standards when changing diapers and washing hands. Handwashing is required: before and after meals, after toileting, and after handling bodily fluids. Diapering areas are sanitized after each use.

POTTY TRAINING

The toddler's teachers are happy to help with your child's transition from diapers to the potty. If we see your child become interested in potty training during their school experience, we will highly recommend and discuss with the parents that we begin the process. This is an exciting time for your child because they are becoming more independent. Through this transition, due to the amount of time it takes to clean up from a potty accident, that children continue to wear pull-ups or diapers to school until they have used the potty successfully for a full week at home and at school.

BOTTLES + WATER BOTTLES + SIPPY CUPS

- Bottles of milk are allowed but not recommended. If a bottle is sent in, it must be labeled with name and the date.
- We ask that each toddler bring in a reusable water bottle to school everyday. Please take and return to school each day with the bottle cleaned and refilled. Please fill with only water

PACIFIERS

If your child is still using a pacifier we will help with your child's transition. When the child is done with the pacifier it will be left in your child's cubby.

BITING

We all understand and accept that when toddlers are in groups, biting is unfortunately not unexpected. When a biting incident occur, we take it very seriously and try to find the reason why the child is biting and try to extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible. Here is how Catalina Hills will handle the situation:

1. We will maintain a structured, well-planned environment
 2. Staff will provide plenty of positive attention for appropriate behavior
 3. Staff will stay close to the children so that we can intervene early before a situation escalates.
 4. We will try to divert the child from biting and remove him/her from the area if necessary.
 5. We will notify both sets of parents about the incident and while respecting privacy convey what happened.
- Children who bite repeatedly present risk to themselves and others. In these cases, we will meet with the parents and discuss further. The child will be disenrolled if we see no progress.

NAP TIME

A rest time is required by state regulations for all children staying for more than 8 hours. Our program also requires toddler aged children to rest or nap. Nap time is from 1:30-3:30pm. Each child who takes a nap will need to bring: small blanket, small pillow and fitted crib sheet or a nap mat, labeled Catalina Hills Preschool bag. A child may bring a small stuffed toy or lovey they normally take to bed. Please mark these items with child's name. The bedding needs to be taken home at the end of each week washed and returned to school on Monday.

ILLNESS, MEDICATION, INJURY + ABSENTEEISM

ILLNESS POLICY

Catalina Hills Preschool and Kindergarten reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to school for reasons of obvious illness or to request early departure, should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day. We ask for parents to assist by keeping sick children at home. We do take into consideration your physician's recommendations nevertheless it is up to our discretion when your child may return to school.

WHEN A CHILD MAY NOT ATTEND SCHOOL

- **Fever:** Children will be sent home if their temp is higher than 100.4 or higher and must stay home until child is fever free for at least 73 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- **Rash:** Any rash other than a common diaper rash or skin irritation will require that child to be sent home for an evaluation and diagnosis from a doctor.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** Children will be sent home if there appears to be discharge from and irritation to their eye (s). Before returning to school they will need from their doctor.
- **Diarrhea:** Children will be sent home if they have two or more loose bowel movements in one day. They will need to stay at home and be diarrhea free for at least 24 hours.
- **Vomiting:** Children will be sent home if they vomit and must be symptom free with no vomiting for at least 24 hours.
- **Lice:** Children with head lice will be sent home from school immediately. Parents will need to treat the head lice before coming back to school. The child will be checked by a staff member before they reenter Catalina Hills.

MEDICATIONS

Medications, both prescription and over the counter are rarely given at school; there are exceptions made for special or serious problems when it is deemed necessary by the physician. Parents are urged to work out a schedule of giving medication at home, outside of school hours.

If medication is to be administered at school, all of the following conditions must be met:

- Signed request from a licensed physician specified the condition for which the medication is to be given, the name, dosage, side effect and specific instructions for emergency treatment must be on file at school. School staff is not authorized to determine when an "as needed" medication is to be given.
- Specific instructions must be provided
- A signed request from parent/guardian must be on file at school.
- Medication must be in your child's original, labeled pharmacy container written in English.
- All liquid medication must be accompanied by an appropriate measuring device.
- A separate form is required for each medication.
- Medications must be stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a cabinet if not refrigerated. Medication authorization form must always remain with the medication. Unused medication must be immediately returned to the family Catalina hills will not store.

FOOD SECURITY

Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona
Provides emergency food boxes, senior food boxes, and nutrition programs.
3003 S. Country Club Rd, Tucson, AZ 85713
(520) 622-0525
communityfoodbank.org

Interfaith Community Services (ICS)
Provides food pantries, meal sites, and emergency grocery services.
2820 W. Ina Rd, Tucson, AZ 85741
(520) 297-6049
info@icstucson.org
library.pima.gov/content/food-pantries-meal-sites-and-emergency-grocery-services-in-pima-county

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

City of Tucson Housing and Community Development
Offers rental assistance, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
310 N Commerce Park Loop, Tucson, AZ 85745
(520) 791-4171
HCDAdmin@tucsonaz.gov
tucsonaz.gov/Departments/Housing-and-Community-Development/Housing-Assistance

Pima County Rental Assistance & Housing Resources
Offers rental assistance and housing resources for families.
(520) 395-6420
housing.az.gov/general-public/rental-assistance-eviction-prevention-programs/pima-county

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

RISE Services, Inc. – Tucson
Provides support for individuals with developmental disabilities, including employment services and foster care support.
(520) 639-9006
riseservicesinc.az.org/tucson-arizona/

United Way of Tucson – Community Resources
Provides a directory of resources for financial stability, caregiving, and literacy.
(520) 903-9000
unitedwaytucson.org/community-resources