



Baby Program – Roly Polys



*"Children who live in an atmosphere of love and warmth, and who have around them truly good examples to imitate, are living in their proper element."
– Rudolf Steiner – Founder, Waldorf Education*

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Sycamore Childcare Center
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Please refer to the Sycamore Family Handbook for specific Policies and Procedures that the Childcare Center follows. This document is a summary outline of your child's program.

INTRODUCTION

Fremont Community School (FCS) recognizes that parents must often return to work soon after giving birth, and in Seattle, this is especially true. FCS established its baby program to meet the needs of full-time working parents by offering their children the most loving, supportive atmosphere. We believe the first three years of life are the most critical for developing a well-rounded human being. At no other time during a person's life is there such rapid growth in physical stature or learning ability. Our program is carefully created to nurture and care for babies in a gentle, warm environment.

While the Department Children, Youth, and Family (DCYF) mandates the ratio of babies to teachers as 8:2, we feel that there are times when babies need more caretakers; our staffing supports a ratio of 8:3.

When you step into our baby room, you will immediately notice the soft colors, the calm and soothing voices, and the natural materials we use; all of this helps babies to feel safe and secure. Love is essential to all humans. Babies need to feel loved and supported as they transition from home to childcare, and we want our families to feel 100% secure when they leave their children with us.



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SCHEDULES

Roly Poly/Baby Room Daily Schedule

Please note: This schedule is a guide, and it fluctuates from time to time depending upon the needs of children, families, and staff.

Time	Activity
7:00 – 7:30	Teachers arrive and prepare for children
7:30 – 8:00	Center opens, greetings as children begin to arrive Breakfast and feedings depending upon age of child, and diaper check
8:00 – 9:00	Exploration time and teacher led activities (songs, movements, stories, etc.)
9:00 – 9:30	Diaper checks as needed. Younger babies go down for a nap**
9:30 – 11:30	Feeding, diaper check, and early nap time, as needed, or outside play
11:30 – 12:00	Feeding and diaper check - according to need
12:00 – 1:30	Nap time for all babies**
1:30 – 2:00	Feeding and diaper checks
2:00 – 3:00	Outside time / Walk
3:00 - 3:30	Inside play
3:30 – 4:00	Feeding and diaper check
4:00 - 5:00	Exploration time and teacher led activities (songs, movements, stories, etc.)
5:00 – 5:30	Last diaper check and feeding on demand Parents arrive to pick up children
5:30	Center closes
5:30- 6:00	Teachers finish logs/reports, clean, close school

** If a baby falls asleep at a time that is not the usual nap time, we will allow the baby to sleep. There is a huge difference in babies from month to month – so nap times and feeding times will vary by child.



Roly Poly/Baby Room Weekly Activity Schedule

* This activity schedule is our guide, and it fluctuates week to week depending upon the needs of the season and of our children, families, and staff.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:00	Breakfast and Feedings	Breakfast and Feedings	Breakfast and Feedings	Breakfast and Feedings	Breakfast and Feedings
8:00-9:00	Activities Singing	Activities Finger games	Activities Reading books	Activities Playing w/balls	Activities Tummy time
9:00-9:30	Diaper Checks and Naps**	Diaper Checks and Naps**	Diaper Checks and Naps**	Diaper Checks and Naps**	Diaper Checks and Naps**
9:30-12:00	Early Naps Diaper Checks, Lunch, and Feedings or Outside Feeding Diaper Checks	Naps/quiet time Diaper Checks, Lunch, and Feedings or Outside Feeding Diaper Checks	Naps/quiet time Diaper Checks, Lunch, and Feedings or Outside Feeding Diaper Checks	Naps/quiet time Diaper Checks, Lunch, and Feedings or Outside Feeding Diaper Checks	Naps/quiet time Diaper Checks, Lunch, and Feedings or Outside Feeding Diaper Checks
12:00-1:30	Naps**	Naps**	Naps**	Naps**	Naps**
1:30-2:00	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks
2:00-3:00	Outside/ walk	Outside/ walk	Outside/ walk	Outside/ walk	Outside/ walk
3:00-3:30	Activities Reading books	Activities Playing w/balls	Activities Tummy time	Activities Finger games	Activities Singing
3:30-4:00	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks	Feeding Diaper Checks
5:00-5:30	Activities Reading books Last diaper check/feeding Parent's pickup	Activities Reading books Last diaper check/feeding Parent's pickup	Activities Reading books Last diaper check/feeding Parent's pickup	Activities Reading books Last diaper check/feeding Parent's pickup	Activities Reading books Last diaper check/feeding Parent's pickup

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EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Educators

Fremont Community School (FCS) is committed to hiring highly trained Educators for all positions working with the children at the Sycamore Childcare Center. Our connection to each family is essential in our work together, and we view our Childcare Center as an extension of each child's home. Creating those connections comes through a sharing of ideas, festivals, celebrations, and happenings. Unfortunately, there is not a word for a childcare center that also means "Home Away from Home," but that is how we view ourselves.

Each Educator cares for your child as if they were their own - loving all the things that makes each child unique - helping them to grow and become the best they can become. The first three years of a child's life lay the foundation for who they will become, and FCS takes these early years very seriously. We will fill your child's time at Sycamore with love, warmth, song, dance, and attention to their development.

Curriculum, Activities, and Room Set-up

Teachers strive to use language as much as they can around the babies. The language your baby hears now is supporting a foundation for further learning.

Using simple sign language can help babies communicate their needs. We use simple signs in the classroom and look forward to sharing these signs with you to use at home. Our curriculum provides opportunities for babies to feel successful in their development and entice them to reach further. Teachers factor in both the developmental needs and the interests of the babies when planning curriculum.

Teachers are responsible for planning weekly curriculum during their individual and team planning times.

Some examples you may see include:

Sensory with water, instruments, puppets, and stories.

Teachers are mindful when setting up the room. We want the classroom to look welcoming, warm, enticing, and relevant for younger and older babies. Songs, rhymes, finger plays, and books are a big part of the curriculum; be sure to let us know of any favorite songs or rhymes you may sing at home. Weekly curriculum plans are posted on the Brightwheel App.

We combine our Waldorf philosophy with emergent curriculum, which are both child-centered, age appropriate, and based on interests exhibited by the children in the classroom. For this reason, planned curriculum may be supplemented or replaced by something that the children find more engaging.

Your family's culture is just as important at school as it is at home. Teachers love incorporating different cultural festivals and celebrations into their curriculum and would love to work with families to learn how to best bring those into the baby classroom.

As the babies grow and are ready for a more dynamic curriculum and environment, and are not yet ready to be toddlers, we will provide more and more age-appropriate activities. We will always provide an environment that serves very young children, and still meets the needs of older babies.



Goals and Opportunities

The goals we strive for in the baby room may seem simple, but each step they master lays the foundation for further development. There are many stages of development in the first year of life; room set-up is key in providing opportunities to reach goals on so many levels. We work on six major goals in the baby room, each having various objectives.

- Our first goal for the babies is for them to learn about themselves. Objectives for this focus are to:
 - feel valued and attached to others,
 - feel competent and proud about what they can do, and
 - begin to assert their independence.
- Our next goal is for the babies to learn about their feelings. Objectives include:
 - communicating a broad range of emotions through gestures, sounds, and eventually words, and
 - expressing their feelings in appropriate ways.
- Thirdly, we want the babies to learn about others. The objectives for this goal include:
 - developing trusting relationships with nurturing adults,
 - showing interest in peers,
 - demonstrating caring and cooperation, and
 - trying out roles and relationships through imitation and pretend play.
- Next, our goal is to learn about communicating. These objectives include:
 - expressing needs and thoughts without using words,
 - identifying with a home language,
 - responding to both verbal and non-verbal commands, and
 - communicating through language.
- The fifth goal in the baby room is to learn about moving and doing. Objectives include:
 - developing gross and fine motor skills,
 - coordinating hand and eye movements, and
 - developing self-help skills.
- The last (but not least) goal in the baby room is to acquire thinking skills. Objectives for this goal include:
 - gaining an understanding of basic concepts and relationships,
 - applying knowledge to new situations, and
 - developing strategies for solving problems.

It is the teacher's job to provide opportunities for babies to achieve these goals; it is the baby's job to choose for themselves what they would like to focus on.



Child Observation and Assessments

Teachers keep ongoing assessments of each child's developmental progress which enables us to plan programs to meet the individual developmental needs of each child. Teachers collect and analyze data from their observations and conversations with parents, and other teachers and staff.

Our curriculum is geared to support individual children's development and interests. Conducting observations and completing the assessment tools ensures that the curriculum is appropriate for each child. During parent-teacher conferences, parents/guardians share information about their child and together, teachers and parents collaborate on the child's development and share ideas for building specific skills.

The completed conference form is signed by the parent and the child's teacher at the end of the conference. The family takes a copy of the reports with them, and the signed copy remains in the child's file. Parents can access and review the assessment tool upon request. Assessment and other sensitive child and family information remain confidential.

DAILY RHYTHM

A baby's first year of life is full of change, and so the schedule of activity changes frequently throughout the year. Often younger babies nap around nine, while older babies want to play, engage, and learn about their environment. We follow the napping routine of each individual baby.

Please let us know the routine and caregiving strategies you use with your baby at home.

Some babies' schedules fluctuate a bit at a childcare center, depending on the dynamics of other children, curriculum, indoor and outdoor environments, and the weather. Parent information helps teachers tune in to the babies and follow their cues. Teachers work closely with families and babies to follow the natural routines of the child and the wants of the parents and guardians. Babies are fed on demand. They nap when their bodies are tired. Thus, activity is very loosely planned. Our aim is to get all babies outside at least twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, when the weather permits, we exceed this goal.

We have three teachers per eight babies, and we also have a float teacher who can assist as needed in addition to that. We feel that having an extra teacher and having smaller teacher to baby ratios enables each teacher to truly learn what each child needs and ensure those needs are fulfilled.

Arrival/Drop Off

Having a smooth drop off is an important start to your child's day – and to yours!

Our Childcare Center and morning teachers are ready to welcome your child at 7:30am. Parents and guardians will be given the code to the garden gate so they may walk their baby to the baby room. Your child **must** be signed in via the QR code which is posted in the baby room. This is a licensing requirement. Parents will use their smartphone to check in their child via the Brightwheel App. Please let the teacher know of any important



information regarding your child such as: did not sleep well or anything else that may have impacted their usual routine.

*Children must stay with their parents or guardians during drop off and pick up times.
Children are always under the supervision of an adult at our Childcare Center.*

A successful drop-off with your baby is fundamentally important as it sets the tone for their day at the center. We understand the emotional challenges families may experience when dropping off their precious child at childcare. We encourage you to take a deep breath and get your cuddles in *before* arriving at the gate and handing your baby off to their teacher.

- Talk with your baby ahead of time. Though your baby may seem to be nowhere near talking, they are certainly listening. Using the names of teachers and the other babies in the program will help your child become familiar with us and establish relationships with teachers.
- Start the day by being positive and happy about dropping your baby off to childcare. This can be done from the moment your baby wakes up to the car ride to the center.
- Helpful phrases to tell your baby may be “You are going to have so much fun with Teacher ___ today” “Mama/ Daddy loves you and will be back to pick you up later.”
- It is important that you keep your goodbyes short and that you do not linger. Your baby can sense if you are worried or anxious.
- Tearful drop-offs are normal for babies and parents! Once your child has calmed down and been comforted by teachers, the lead teacher will send you an update and photo through Brightwheel so you can see your child happily engaging in the classroom.

Communication with Teacher

Please let the teacher know the time your baby usually eats, the time your baby usually sleeps, and what time you expect to usually pick up your child. This information helps teachers interpret cues and lets teachers know how long the bottles need to last. (We anticipate possibly six bottle feedings.) If there is any other information or directions you would like us to have, be sure to let your baby’s teacher know.

Also, please let the teachers know what you think your baby might need. Did your child sleep well last night? Was their morning feeding hearty? Any clues you have that may help us better understand your baby’s cues will help things go more smoothly. Please inform us daily of these details to help the teachers caring for your child.

Most babies transition comfortably into their environment gradually - some sooner, some later, some with a lot of noise, others quietly. We will empower your baby to transition at their own speed. For some families, starting childcare seems harder for the parents than for the child.

So, of course, we are here for you too! If you find yourself at work and you cannot put your mind at ease or if you are interested in talking with the staff about your child’s activities at our Childcare Center, please feel free to reach out to your child’s teacher for a quick morning check in. If you need a lengthier question answered it is best to contact the Administration office to arrange a time for a phone call with the teacher(s). Due to the nature of our Childcare Center day, it is best to minimize demand on the teacher’s time



during the day as they need to focus on the children. If you are unable to get through, please leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

Songs, Stories, and Rhymes

Teachers spend much of their time singing in the baby room. We read books, tell stories that go with finger plays, and recite silly rhymes. All these things help babies learn language and later help with reading.

Music is one of the ways we comfort, amuse, and expose babies to various cultures. When we sing songs, we create opportunities for babies to feel connected to school.

Here is a sample of our favorite songs, finger plays, and books:

Songs: Hickory, Dickory, Dock, 3 Green & Speckled Frogs, You are My Sunshine, Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Finger Plays: 5 Little Ducks, Itsy Bitsy Spider

Books: Guess How Much I Love You; Love You Forever; Goodnight Moon; and many, many more!

Outside Play Time

Our aim is to go outside at least two times a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Every child, regardless of age, needs time spent outside. We will provide a basic supplies list of appropriate clothing to provide for each of the seasons.

Typically, babies will spend one of their outside times climbing through the play tunnel, exploring the outside toys, engaging in water play, popping bubbles, or simply enjoying the feel of the elements.

Another outside activity might include a stroller ride through our beautiful neighborhood, a walk to the local park, or perhaps a walk to Lake Union. We go outside in all types of weather; rain sprinkles do not keep us indoors.

Babies 6 months old and older wear sunscreen when they go outside during the months of May through October. Sycamore Childcare Center does not supply sunscreen so please provide your own. As sunscreen is considered an over-the-counter medication, please complete the "Child Care Medication Authorization Form," found on the Brightwheel app.

Additional instructions are found in the Sycamore Childcare Family handbook. Please let us know that you have applied sunscreen already or note if you would rather we skip it on that morning. We will re-apply daily, as needed.

Meals



Food should be a joy, and at our Childcare Center, we delight in meals. While some babies have breast milk or formula, other babies are transitioning to pureed foods and ultimately to solids. Our role is to work hand in hand with parents, introducing a new food after it has first been safely introduced to a baby at home. Once a child is safely chewing



solid food, the center will provide all food **except** for breast milk, formula, pureed baby food, or specialized food for babies with special dietary needs.

Bottles must be marked prior to arrival with your baby's first and last name, the number of ounces of milk/formula, and the date. Licensing requires that unconsumed portions of formula be discarded after one hour to prevent bacterial growth. While we cannot reserve breast milk a second time, breast milk may be returned to parents at the end of the day.

Children in the baby room are fed on demand. Feeding time is not only a wonderful opportunity for relationship building, but it provides for sensory experience, self-help skill development, large and small motor development.

Parents supply the baby food for their child until their child can eat the food our Childcare Center prepares. Jars containing pureed baby food must all be marked prior to arrival with your baby's first and last name and the date. All jars (used and unused) will be sent home at the end of the day.

Once a baby can safely chew solid food, the center's cook will provide food from the same wholesome and delicious menu as the toddlers and preschoolers. The menu is posted weekly on the Brightwheel App. As children begin baby food and early solid foods, they are placed in low chairs to eat. During this time, they are given opportunities to explore the use of bowls and spoons as well as the textures of different foods. When it is developmentally appropriate (approximately 10-12 months), babies begin sitting at the table in chairs for meals and snacks. This practice helps them become prepared for mealtimes in the Toddler Program.

Let teachers know routines, schedules, and playful games your baby may have at home around feeding time. Also tell us of any difficulties you or your baby may be having around feedings and let us know about any eating plan you would like us to follow. Please be sure and let a teacher know if you think your child is teething or stressed about anything. Any information you have will help us understand your baby's cues. When parents and teachers work together good things tend to happen.

Cubbies

Each baby has their own cubby space clearly marked for their belongings. Please include two extra complete outfits, a familiar lovie (small stuffed animal), and multiple pacifiers (if your baby uses one). Blankets are not allowed; infant sleeper sacks provided by the family are required. Please label all your child's clothes and sleeper sacks with their name. We will place any soiled clothes in bags along with the baby's empty bottles in your child's diaper bag for when you pick your child up at the end of the day. We play hard, so if you have clothes you want to keep clean, please keep them at home.

Diapering

Diapering is another opportunity to build trust with your baby.

Teachers use diaper changing time to play one-on-one with the babies they are caring for. Diapers are changed at 2-hour intervals, or as needed, unless babies show cues that their diapers are dirty, they are ready for a nap, they woke from a nap, or we smell a need. Families supply diapers and wipes. Parents provide their own diapers. If you are opting to use cloth diapers, we will need a diaper pail with a tight-fitting lid and your child's cloth diapers will be sent home daily for you to clean. Please remember to routinely restock your child's supplies.



We provide a space for your baby's diapers and ointments in the diaper area. If your baby has a diaper rash and you would like us to use any diaper cream, please provide it and complete the "Child Care Medication Authorization Form," found on the Brightwheel App. Additional instructions are found in the Sycamore Childcare Family handbook.

Teachers and babies wash their hands before and after each diaper change and the table is washed and sanitized.

Napping

To lower the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires that babies under one year old be laid on their back to sleep. At Sycamore Childcare Center, all babies are placed on their backs to sleep. For safety reasons, there are no exceptions to this policy. When babies are showing signs of being tired, we lay them down to sleep.

Some babies are able to go right to sleep and others find falling asleep challenging. Teachers will hold, rock, pat the baby's back, sing to and otherwise comfort those that need extra comfort at nap time.

Please let teachers know if you have any specific guidelines you would like us to follow that may help your baby sleep well.

Per WAC requirements for state licensing, we do not use any blankets in the baby room. Children are placed in sleep sacks provided by the family. Please provide a sleep sack for your baby as we are not allowed to use blankets.

Pick-up/Departure Checklist

It is important to sign your child in and out each day. You can sign your child out via the Brightwheel app in the baby room or on your smartphone, just like signing in upon arrival. It is also critical that you check in with your child's teachers before leaving. If you arrive prior to 5:00 to pick up your child, or if you are running late and may arrive after 5:30, please call the center's Administration office.

- Always check in with the teacher when picking up your child.
- Sign out using your full name and the time you picked up via the Brightwheel App using your QR code.
- The teacher will bring you your child and your child's diaper bag. Double check the bag for soiled clothes and to ensure that you have everything your baby needs, including bottles, soiled clothes, etc. Also check on the Brightwheel App to see if your baby's diaper supplies, or anything else, need replenishing.
- For diapering information check the diaper chart on the Brightwheel App.
- Check your child's file on the Brightwheel App for any other information. This will have communications from teachers and administration and may include letters, notes, or reports.
- Please remember to take home and launder napping supplies every Friday.
- Try to arrive well before 5:30 when our Childcare Center closes. Your child has spent many hours with us, and no child likes to be the last person picked up.
- If you find that it takes time to pick up your child (i.e., if you want to talk to a teacher about something) please factor the time into your routine so the teacher can finish closing promptly at 5:30.



- Please note that we close the facility promptly at 5:30, so all parents and children must leave by this time.
- There is a late fee of \$5.00 per minute for parents and guardians who arrive after 5:30pm.

Injury/Incident

It is normal for children to get bumped or bruised in the course of a day of play. If your child has an injury/incident during the day (bumps, scratches, bites, etc.), the time, place and nature of the injury/incident are recorded on the child's log through the Brightwheel App, as well as the treatment and the name of the teacher who witnessed the injury and/or cared for the child.

For serious accidents or injury, teachers will contact the parents. Our Childcare Center will provide parents with a Childcare Injury/Incident report. Our Childcare Center's Administration office will also report the incident to DCYF and submit a copy of the report to DCYF within 24 hours.

FCS is committed to the safety and well-being of everyone at our Sycamore Childcare Center.

Illness

Serious illnesses which arise at our Childcare Center will be reported to the parents immediately. If your child is vomiting, has two or more incidents of diarrhea, or has a fever of 100 degrees or more, a teacher will call a parent to arrange for the child to be picked up immediately. A child must have no incidents of sickness related to vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours before being accepted back to our Childcare Center. A child must be fever free (without the use of fever reducers) in the last 48 hours before being accepted back to the center. Fatigue or discomfort that limits daily activities is also a sign that they are just not feeling well and should be kept at home. Please have alternative childcare arrangements in place for your child.

Medication

Inform the teacher if your child will need to take any medications while at our Childcare Center.

Parents must provide a completed Child Care Medication Authorization Form for any medications administered at our Childcare Center. This applies to any prescription, homeopathic medication, or over-the-counter medication, and topical, non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream, sunscreen, or powder. We cannot administer medication without this form completed (available on the Brightwheel App), including a parent or guardian's signature.

At the Sycamore Childcare Center, medications will be reviewed by our Childcare Center's Child Care Health Consultant and administered in accordance with Public Health-Seattle and King County regulations and the policies described below.

Medications will be stored in a locked cabinet in the classroom or in the Center refrigerator, depending on the medication. Medications for external use will be stored separately from medications for internal use.

Any time we administer medications, we record in the child's log on the Brightwheel App.



Child's Notebook

Each child has their own portfolio in which some of their artwork is kept. Materials are added to the notebooks periodically as the collection of materials expands. These books begin when your child first starts at Sycamore and continue with them through each program. When your family leaves Sycamore, at our annual Jump the Log ceremony or before, your child's notebook is given to you as a memory book of their time here with us.

Last Day at the Childcare Center

When your child leaves Sycamore Childcare Center, we look forward to their next adventure (even though we also get misty-eyed at the end of their time here). To help children with this transition to our Orchard location or to another program, we celebrate every child's "Last Day" as a positive event, which gives children a chance to say goodbye to peers, teachers, and our Sycamore Childcare Community. It is important for children to purposefully say their goodbyes, rather than to leave without the knowledge that it is permanent. Once you have informed the Administration office and the teachers know your child's Last Day, we can help you and your child have a positive experience saying goodbye.

Parent Support, Involvement, and Communication

Fremont Community School, as implied by its name, is more than a place parents send their children each day – it is a community - of parents, children, their teachers, grandparents, and their other care providers. To make Sycamore Childcare Center a community requires a commitment from all those involved, and we encourage parents to participate as fully as possible.

We are a family center and by giving of yourself in some way, you help define our community and create a deeper bond with all its members. There are many ways to do this: some of you can give of your time, wisdom, and experience, while some of you are able to donate to our Financial Aid program, called "The Seedlings Fund." Know that we welcome your contribution in areas where you feel you have a particular interest or expertise.

We understand that every family has a different gift of resources they can share with Sycamore Childcare Center. We want you to feel comfortable with and good about what you can offer - be it serving on committees or our board, participating in our spring-cleaning effort, helping with maintenance or site improvements, or taking a leadership role with fund-raising or community outreach. We encourage you to partner with us in demonstrating to our children the value of service and giving back.

Field Trips

Although we do not take many field trips with the babies, we do have one we love, and it is our hope that families will join us for the few field trips we take. Every year we meet at Meridian Park as a community to celebrate May Day and the return of spring. The older children will sing and dance around the Maypole tree. There will always be an option for your child to remain at our Childcare Center if you are unable to join us on May Day, as parents or guardians must accompany their child for the child to attend.

