



# The Oak Tree Playhouse

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Parent Handbook  
Nature - Play - Learn

## Leadership Statement

I imagine and hope that every child will be able to experience quality early childhood education filled with love and care. I wish to support, connect, and learn with parents and the community, honoring each individual child as a whole being. I will continue to educate and support myself and staff as a team. Children will develop their cognitive, social/emotional, and physical skills by exploring their interests and curiosity through PLAY. Even though the world is under pressure to achieve academic “readiness,” I will approach each child with love, giving them the opportunity to PLAY, as a way to develop the best version of themselves.

I will share my passion by approaching my work in a thoughtful way, developing strong communication with staff, parents and our community. I want to be known for being an open-minded, flexible director who continues to learn and grow with my team. I would like to lead with my vision of what children can be in the future — if we give them rich, warm, thoughtful experiences, they will remember. I want educators and parents to know the value of connection and curiosity over correction and curriculum. I want to emphasize the importance of PLAY, honoring and respecting each and every individual child.

## Mission Statement

When children play freely, they enhance and develop cognitive, social/emotional and physical development in a nature-enriched environment. The Oak Tree Playhouse values a whole-child approach to education, providing nurturing and loving care. Children will discover the power of play, joy of learning, and wonder of discovery in our program. We foster diversity, welcoming all families with open arms. We demonstrate our commitment to diversity through literature, art activities, and a wide range of rich natural materials.

## Vision Statement

We envision becoming advocates for children's lifelong learning. By following every child's interests and supporting their right to learn, we help them develop confidence and self-assurance. We believe healthy play creates a path toward healthy adulthood. We let nature be the powerful teacher — showing children how to engage with their community and share gratitude. We shall connect, respect, and inspire every child.

## Curriculum Philosophy Statement

Our curriculum is built on a deep passion for play-based education and is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach. When children freely play and discover what excites them, they gain skills more meaningfully than through teacher-led instruction. We follow children's interests and document their passions so they can grow at their own pace in a respectful, nurturing, and inclusive environment.

Our environment is intentionally designed as a third teacher. We especially value nature-enriched spaces where children can explore, imagine, and create with natural materials. This kind of play develops cognitive, physical, social-emotional, and language skills—through hands-on exploration and joyful learning.

Curriculum includes:

- Process art
- Story/movement time
- Gross motor skill opportunities
- Nature-based/open-ended materials
- Sensory/manipulative play
- Free/collaborative art
- Dramatic/creative play
- Mini hikes in the woods
- Mud kitchen
- Farm experience and animal care

## Operational Information

### \*\*Days/Hours of Operation\*\*

Tuesday – Thursday: 9:00am – 1:00pm

Friday (Farm Day): 9:00am – 12:00pm

\*Friday Farm Day is optional, however tuition remains the same. Families may choose to participate in Farm Day based on their child's readiness and comfort.\*

### \*\*Ages Served\*\*

Mixed Age 2.5–5

\*Children who are not yet toilet trained and/or in diapers are welcome.\*

### \*\*Ratio and Capacity\*\*

6:1 student-to-teacher ratio or fewer

12 children maximum

## Tuition and Fees

Tuition varies slightly depending on enrollment status (returning families, siblings, and new enrollees). Your exact tuition rate is outlined in your signed Admission Agreement.

Fees:

- \$45 Enrollment Fee
- \$250 Annual Materials Fee (due August 1, billed via Brightwheel)

Tuition is due on the first of each month. All billing is managed through Brightwheel. To ensure prompt payment, families are required to enroll in Auto Pay. If Auto Pay is not feasible for your family, please speak directly with Miss Yuka to make other arrangements.

Please note: There are no refunds or partial credits for closures due to smoke, COVID, or other conditions outside OTP's control.

## 2025–2026 School Calendar

August 8 – Warming Day – 10:00am–11:30am (Bring belongings and meet OTP families)

August 12 – First Day of School – 9:00am–1:00pm

August 22, 23 – Home Visits

August 29 – First Day of FARM – 9:00am–12:00pm

October 3 – Family Fall Festival at OTP – 4:00pm–5:30pm

October 7–10 – Fall Recess – No School (MDUSD Closed)

October 31 – Halloween Lunch at OTP – 12:00pm (No Farm Day)

November 14 – Parent/Teacher Conferences – 9:00am–1:00pm (No Farm Day)

November 25–28 – Thanksgiving Break – No School (MDUSD Closed)

December 19 – Winter Solstice Lantern Walk – 4:00pm–6:00pm

Dec 23–Jan 2 – Winter Break – No School (MDUSD Closed)

January 6 – School Resumes

February 14 – Happy Love Day at OTP – 12:00pm (Parents join for lunch)

March 27 – Parent/Teacher Conferences – 9:00am–1:00pm (No Farm Day)

April 7–10 – Spring Break – No School (MDUSD Closed)

May 29 – Last Day of School / End-of-Year Celebration – 10:00am–11:30am

## Health and COVID Policy

For the most current health and COVID-19 procedures, please refer to our updated Health Policy document. Our COVID-19 protocols follow the latest guidance from the CDC and other trusted early childhood health resources.

## Required Forms and What to Bring on Warming Day

The following forms must be completed and returned on Warming Day. Once your deposit has been paid, you will receive a link to download and print these forms at home.

- LIC 627 Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- LIC 700 Emergency Contact Information Sheet
- LIC 702 Child's Pre-admission Health History
- LIC 995A Parents' Rights

- LIC 613A Personal Rights
- LIC 9150 Parent Notification: Additional Children in Care
- Photographic Release Form
- Farm Day Waiver
- Signed Health/COVID Policy
- Vaccination Records
- Signed Parent Handbook
- Picture of Family

Please also bring:

- Sun Hat
- Two each: t-shirts, long sleeve shirts, shorts, pants, underwear, and socks
- Two packs of diapers and wipes (if your child is not toilet trained)
- Two wipes
- Earthquake kit (see Emergency Procedures section)
- Rain gear (boots, bibs, rain coat — can be brought later in the season)

## Guidance and Conflict Resolution

At OTP, we use positive guidance instead of traditional discipline, based on the recommendations of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We support children's emotional development by helping them understand and navigate social interactions respectfully and empathetically.

Our mantra:

- You may not hurt yourself
- You may not hurt others
- You may not hurt The Oak Tree Playhouse

Conflict resolution process:

1. Sit down together and invite each child to share their perspective.
2. Encourage children to speak directly to each other and listen with empathy.
3. Help children identify their role in the problem and understand the impact.
4. Guide them in finding a solution that helps both parties feel better.
5. Encourage them to try their plan and move forward respectfully.

## Emergency Procedures

We maintain up-to-date emergency supplies and conduct fire and earthquake drills at least twice per year. Each child must have an Earthquake Kit (non-perishable food, water, comfort note, photo, and N95 mask). These are stored on-site.

In the event of an evacuation, we will meet at:

- Golden Hills Park (Bernice Ln. & Blue Ridge Dr. Martinez, CA 94553)
- Sasa Johnson's house: 343 Blue Ridge Dr, Martinez

Medical services will be provided by John Muir Medical Center Emergency Room (2540 East Street, Concord, CA).

## **Family Engagement**

Families are a child's first teacher. At OTP, we believe in strong collaboration between families and educators to create the most supportive environment for every child. We connect through home visits, biannual conferences, weekly newsletters, and open communication by text, email, or meetings upon request.

## **Celebrations and Volunteering**

We welcome families to participate in seasonal events and volunteering opportunities such as reading stories or helping with lunch. For regular volunteers, or those who may be left alone with children, California Community Care Licensing may require fingerprinting, TB clearance, and certain immunizations. Please check with us if you're interested in volunteering regularly.

## **Technology Statement**

Children do not use screens or digital devices during class. Staff may use phones or cameras only for documentation or communication. If appropriate, technology may be used as a research tool to extend a child's interest or inquiry.

## **Code of Ethical Conduct**

We are committed to promoting a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every child and family. As early childhood educators, we follow the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to ensure the highest standard of care and professionalism.

## Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read The Oak Tree Playhouse Parent Handbook in its entirety. I understand and agree to the policies outlined in this Handbook, and I understand what is expected of me as a parent/guardian.

Print Parent 1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 1 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Parent 2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 2 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Yuka Johnson, Owner – The Oak Tree Playhouse (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_